



Mississippi Coastal Cleanup



The 2018 **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** event marked **30 years** for one of the largest volunteer efforts in Mississippi. Since 1988, thousands of volunteers have gathered each fall to remove trash and help collect data that is used to categorize the major sources of marine debris entering the coastal environment. Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Program staff submitted the data to Ocean Conservancy to be part of the International Coastal Cleanup data pool (<https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/international-coastal-cleanup/map/>).

On Saturday, October 20, 2018, **2,649 volunteers** dispersed to remove trash from Mississippi's coastline, waterways, and barrier islands as part of the **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** event. More than **30 cleanup sites** spanning the coastal counties—Jackson, Harrison, and Hancock—allowed volunteers to easily join the cleanup effort, covering **50 miles** of South Mississippi's beautiful coastal region. Throughout the cleanup, volunteers filled **1,059 bags** with trash, resulting in an astounding **20,756 pounds!** A detailed summary of the trash items collected is shown in Table 1.

Single-use plastic items were the most common materials collected. Some of the commonly found trash items included cigarette butts, food wrappers, plastic beverage bottles, and plastic bottle caps. These materials can be extremely harmful to wildlife on land, in the air, and in the water. When out in the environment for long periods of time, these items can break up into smaller pieces that wildlife can mistake for food, leading to the introduction of plastic into the marine food web. Volunteers found many small pieces of trash and plastic during the **Mississippi**

Coastal Cleanup event: **22,922 plastic, 14,468 foam, and 5,835 glass pieces.**

In each county, volunteers received a complimentary lunch following the beach cleanup. In Jackson County, The Shed Barbeque provided lunch for more than **400 volunteers**. In Hancock County, the David Baria campaign and Hancock County Democrats provided lunch to more than **130 volunteers** and, in Harrison County, Domino's provided pizzas to more than **350 volunteers**. During the Harrison County lunch, Mississippi State University's Marine Fisheries Ecology Lab, Dauphin Island Sea Lab, Wildlife Care and Rescue Center, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant's Oyster Gardening Program, EPA Gulf of Mexico Program, and Audubon Mississippi provided a variety of educational booths.

The **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** event is one component of the **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** Program. Its mission is preventing and removing litter from the coastal environment through education, outreach, research, and cleanup events. In addition to the large-scale cleanups, the **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** Program holds monthly, small-scale beach cleanups and citizen-scientist microplastic monitoring. It also offers in-class presentations and educational booths at multiple events throughout the year.

The **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** Program would not be possible without the support of our sponsors. We would like to thank and recognize **Chevron Pascagoula Refinery | Waste Management | The Shed Barbeque & Blues Joint | Mississippi Department of Marine Resources | Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality | Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium | NOAA | Ocean Conservancy | Domino's Pizza | Chemours | Singing River Electric | Ship Island Excursions | Allen Engineering and Science | and Airbus!**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The STAR SPANGLED CLEANUP will be **Friday, July 5, 2019**. The 2019 MISSISSIPPI COASTAL CLEANUP will be held **Saturday, October 19**.

If you are interested in volunteering, sponsoring, or learning more about cleaning up the coast, please visit the **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** Program website (<http://coastalcleanup.extension.msstate.edu/>).



Table 1. Marine debris collected during the 2018 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup.

CLEANUP SUMMARY

Number of trash bags filled	1,059
Weight of trash collected (pounds)	20,756
Distance cleaned (miles)	50
Number of volunteers	2,649

COMMONLY FOUND ITEMS TOTAL #

Cigarette butts	57,855
Food wrappers	12,251
Take-out containers (plastic)	3,162
Take-out containers (foam)	2,884
Bottle caps (plastic)	8,845
Bottle caps (metal)	4,078
Lids (plastic)	3,610
Straws/stirrers	3,884
Forks, knives, and spoons	1,604

PACKAGING MATERIALS TOTAL #

6-pack holders	526
Strapping bands	480
Tobacco packaging/wrap	1,957
Other plastic/foam packaging	3,891
Other plastic bottles (oil, bleach, etc.)	825

FISHING GEAR TOTAL #

Fishing buoys, pots, and traps	399
Fishing net and pieces	488
Fishing line (1 yard = 1 piece)	922
Rope (1 yard = 1 piece)	866

TINY TRASH TOTAL #

Foam pieces	14,468
Glass pieces	5,835
Plastic pieces	22,922

COMMONLY FOUND ITEMS TOTAL #

Beverage bottles (plastic)	11,295
Beverage bottles (glass)	4,436
Beverage cans	5,761
Grocery bags (plastic)	3,452
Other plastic bags	3,349
Paper bags	2,388
Cups and plates (paper)	1,600
Cups and plates (plastic)	1,538
Cups and plates (foam)	3,840

PERSONAL HYGIENE TOTAL #

Condoms	397
Diapers	150
Syringes	174
Tampons/tampon applicators	200

OTHER TRASH TOTAL #

Appliances (refrigerators, washers, etc.)	106
Balloons	547
Cigar tips	3,831
Cigarette lighters	467
Construction materials	1,958
Fireworks	1,514
Tires	379



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