Who Trashed the Ocean?

Marine debris is man-made trash that enters the coastal or marine environment.

Earth’s oceans are constantly polluted with a wide variety of trash ranging from soda cans and plastic bags to derelict fishing gear and abandoned vessels. Every year, marine debris injures and kills marine animals that become tangled in plastic debris or eat pieces of plastic trash. Humans are threatened too, because divers, ships, and boats can also become tangled in debris. Garbage that litters beaches and water fronts not only looks awful; it also costs thousands of dollars to clean up.

The NOAA Marine Debris Program is part of a national effort to protect our coastal resources from damage caused by marine debris. One of the main goals of the Program is to reduce the amount of marine debris in the environment. Another goal is to find out where marine debris comes from. One of the most important goals of the Program is to educate people about the consequences of marine debris and why we need to stop trashing the ocean.

And this is where you come in!

What You Will Do

Make a poster to inform people about why marine debris is bad and why we need to stop it.

~ from NOAA Ocean Explorer Expedition to the Deep Slope Log for May 15, 2006
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http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/explorations/06mexico/logs/may15/may15.html

Evidence of human activity extends even hundreds of miles from shore and 7,260 feet below the ocean surface. Image courtesy of Expedition to the Deep Slope.
What You Will Need
- Crayons, colored markers, or colored pencils
- Poster board
- Scissors (Be careful with sharp scissors!)
- (Optional) Copies of images from “Some Examples of Marine Debris Posters”

How to Do It
1. Use the examples and your own ideas to create a poster that explains the consequences of marine debris, and what we can do to eliminate it.

2. Show your poster at school, to your parents, and to other groups. The more people know about marine debris and what it does, the more they will take personal action to prevent it.

Want to Do More?
1. Visit the NOAA Marine Debris Program Web site at http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/ for more about marine debris, as well as information and photographs of clean-up and prevention projects.

2. See http://www.yoto98.noaa.gov/books/debris/debris1.htm for more marine debris poster ideas.
DON'T SPLASH YOUR TRASH!

LITTER IN THE OCEAN CAUSES POLLUTION WHICH HURTS THE SEALIFE

AHOY THERE MATEY! HAND OVER YOUR TRASH!

FISH EAT PLASTIC PIECES WITH THEIR NATURAL FOOD.

OSCAR THE OCTOPUS & HIS FRIENDS DON'T WANT YOUR TRASH!

Washington State Department of Ecology