

## Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup A Single Effort Started a Sea Change

**One woman walking along the beach** of South Padre Island, Texas was appalled at the amount of trash she saw – and she immediately felt compelled to do something about it. She organized a beach cleanup and in a mere two hours, 2,800 Texans picked up 124 tons of trash.

That was in 1986.

Today, a worldwide movement grew out of that single event with more than six million volunteers in 127 countries and all 55 U.S. states and territories over the last 23 years. On the third Saturday in September each year, the International Coastal Cleanup provides a direct and tangible way for individuals to make a difference for one of the largest problems we face – trash in the ocean.

Trash in the ocean kills more than one million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals and turtles each year through entanglement and ingestion. In 2007, volunteers found 237 ocean animals entangled in fishing line, plastic bags, six-pack holders and rope.

Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup is a year-round effort keeping our ocean free from trash and safer for people and animals. Our flagship event in September is a celebration of this effort and is the largest single day volunteer event to protect our ocean and waterways.

During the International Coastal Cleanup flagship event in September, volunteers record each piece of trash picked up at sites around every major body of water around the world. Local and regional coordinators then collect the raw data that is calculated by Ocean Conservancy including number of volunteers on each site, the number of pounds of trash removed, and what items were collected. Ocean Conservancy uses this data to produce a global snapshot of the issue of trash in our ocean.

The International Coastal Cleanup Data Report is a compilation of the information on trash in the ocean and the hazards of marine debris. It details the importance of every person to take responsibility for protecting beaches and waterways year-round.

The 2008 International Coastal Cleanup flagship event will be held Sept. 20th. For more information including country and state reports, photos and graphics, or to register, visit [www.oceanconservancy.org/icc](http://www.oceanconservancy.org/icc)

