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Ban Plastic Bags in Oregon

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Long, Slow Death of a Sea Turtle

by [cathrynw](#) | July 3, 2011 | 8:40 am

23 comments



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317 pieces. That's how much plastic clogged the digestive system of the giant [sea turtle](#) found dead on a beach in New South Wales. The animal had quietly and slowly starved. Food could no longer find its way past the bits of fishing line, plastic bags, small lids, plastic tape, and lollipop sticks the turtle had mistaken for food.

This was a young animal so the plastic was packed into a body that had grown to only 15 inches (40 centimeters). Australian Seabird Rescue volunteers who performed the necropsy called their findings the worst example of plastic ingestion they had seen in 15 years.

Plastic rubbish in 30% of dead turtles

A new study from Earthwatch in Queensland looked at the guts of over 120 dead turtles found in Moreton Bay. [Dr. Kathy Townsend](#) found plastic rubbish in [over 30 per cent](#) of them.

In an interview with ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), Townsend describes the [turtles' lingering deaths](#). As bits of plastic get stuck in their digestive systems, the debris mixes with what organic material they can still take in. The toxic mix decomposes, creating gas. The now-buoyant turtles are unable to dive. They can't feed or avoid boats. "So it also means that they basically become very dehydrated, and they starve to death, and this can last for months."

In the ABC footage seen at this [link](#), seabird rescue spokeswoman Rochelle Ferris calls on all levels of government to invest more money in "reducing the amount of marine debris that's coming from our urban environments into the ocean. If we do control this marine debris issue, I'll be out of work, but I'd like to be doing something that doesn't break my heart every day."

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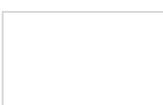


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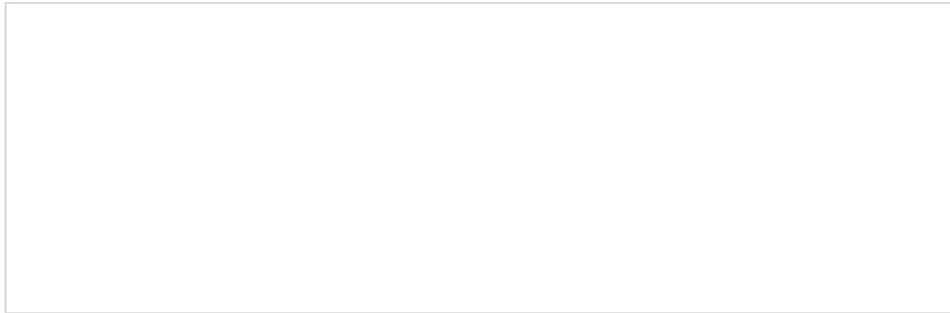
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Photo by rogerimp

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23 comments



Manuela C.
Jul 4, 2011
7:04 AM

Poor turtle. I agree, plastic bag shouldn't be free.



Sue H.
Jul 4, 2011
6:53 AM

We need to stop allowing ships to dump all their waste at sea. It is disheartening to see all the garbage left after the snow melts in Spring. We humans are destroying our planet with our garbage.



Tamara H.
Jul 4, 2011
6:45 AM

There are too many biodegradable or recyclable alternatives to keep using plastic in so many ways.



Linda W.
Jul 4, 2011
6:40 AM

Our ancestors did without plastic and so should we.



We need to ban plastic bags! Use reusable or paper bags! Charge \$10.00 per plastic bag and soon you will not see them blowing across the landscape.



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Thanks.



Hannah W. comments on [Morning Mix: Happy Fouth! We're Still In Debt](#)

Very good news.



Anne Marie S. comments on [Victory! New York and low a Ag Gag Bills Die](#)

Poor turtle. I agree, plastic bag shouldn't be free.



Manuela C. comments on [Long, Slow Death of a Sea Turtle](#)



Cynthia S. Cynthia Samuels, currently Managing Editor of Care2, Causes, has been working with blogs and... [more](#)



Jennifer



Laura



Angel

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Steven H.
Jul 4, 2011
6:16 AM



KAREN D.
Jul 4, 2011
6:08 AM

What a horrible death...and the blow was dealt by man!



Julie D.
Jul 4, 2011
4:47 AM

This is so sad and so preventable. Plastic is not only harmful to our environment and wildlife, it is also made of petroleum products and is part of what keeps us dependent on oil. It is bad for us on both levels, It breaks my heart to see so many beautiful and innocent creatures suffering and dying because of mankind's ignorance and selfishness.



Janet R.
Jul 4, 2011
4:41 AM

How sad, humans are pigs.



Manuel V.
Jul 4, 2011
3:57 AM

Judith C. the European Union has a project where it will pay fisherman that are idle to collect litter from the oceans. It's already under way in some countries.

Although "a drop in the ocean", we surfers do a great effort to make surfers beach and sea cleaners (I myself did ruin some wetsuits when I exceed the capacity of plastic bags and ropes I can fit). Yesterday I had an argument with line fisherman (not sea people) that were littering the sea with plastic boxes and bags.

But collecting litter is reactive. We need a pro-active approach to the problem, like reducing the amount of plastic. Governments could impose a environmental tax on this type of containers versus paper or cardboard.



Lesley R.
Jul 4, 2011
3:48 AM

Plastic was the medical cause of this poor sea turtle's agonisingly slow death but HOMO SAPIENS was, of course, the vector. When are plans to be rolled out for the control of this verminous ape which has now reached plague proportions? The UK govt is hell bent on killing some little green parakeets that escaped from their cages (good for them) into the countryside yet without thinking we let any old Homos sapiens ape in to stay and get welfare benefits; they arrive in the backs of lorries, on little boats to deserted beaches to clog up our hard fought for National Health system and Social Security benefit payments offices. Most of them are islamic so they've all got murder on their minds and if they haven't then they are not being very good muslims. I HAVE

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