



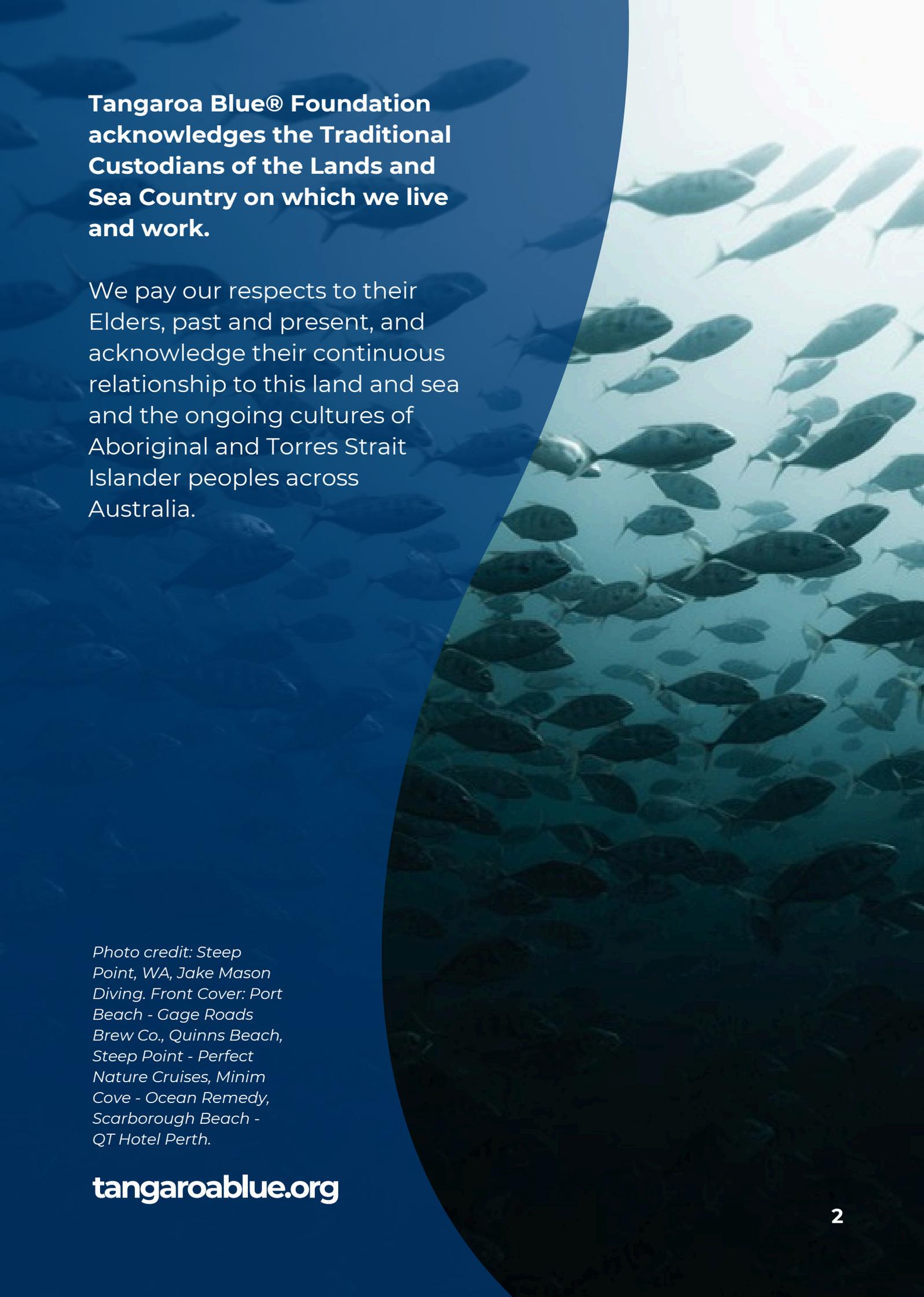
The WA Beach Clean-up

tangaroablue.org

Tackling Marine Debris Together Since 2005

2025 Report





**Tangaroa Blue® Foundation
acknowledges the Traditional
Custodians of the Lands and
Sea Country on which we live
and work.**

We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and acknowledge their continuous relationship to this land and sea and the ongoing cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

Photo credit: Steep Point, WA, Jake Mason Diving. Front Cover: Port Beach - Gage Roads Brew Co., Quinns Beach, Steep Point - Perfect Nature Cruises, Minim Cove - Ocean Remedy, Scarborough Beach - QT Hotel Perth.

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Executive Summary

Every October since 2005, communities across Western Australia have taken part in the WA Beach Clean-up (WABCU), making it Australia's longest running large scale annual community-led beach clean-up event.

This report recognises the efforts of 1,579 volunteers, 70 organisations, long-term partners, sponsors, and Traditional Custodians who removed 5.3 tonnes of marine debris from 70 locations across the state.

Beyond cleaner beaches and waterways, participants contributed critical data to the Australian Marine Debris Initiative (AMDI) Database, strengthening the evidence base needed to identify litter sources and prevent marine debris at its source—protecting our WA coastlines now and for future generations.

The continued commitment of Western Australian communities, AMDI Partner organisations, and Traditional Custodians



reinforces environmental stewardship, raises awareness, and demonstrates the state's leadership in coastal conservation. Tangaroa Blue Foundation is proud to deliver this flagship initiative, enabling local action that drives meaningful national change.

Tangaroa Blue Foundation acknowledges the vital funding and support of Keep Australia Beautiful WA, Tallwood Custom Built Homes, GHD, Containers for Change (WARRRL), and Southern Ports, without whom this year's WABCU would not have been possible.

Pictured: Above: Ammo Jetty Clean-up with MUEenSA – Murdoch University Environmental Science Association. Below: Gage Roads Brew Co. Clean-up at Port Beach.

The WA Beach Clean-up

2025



WA NRM Regions and Clean-up Locations

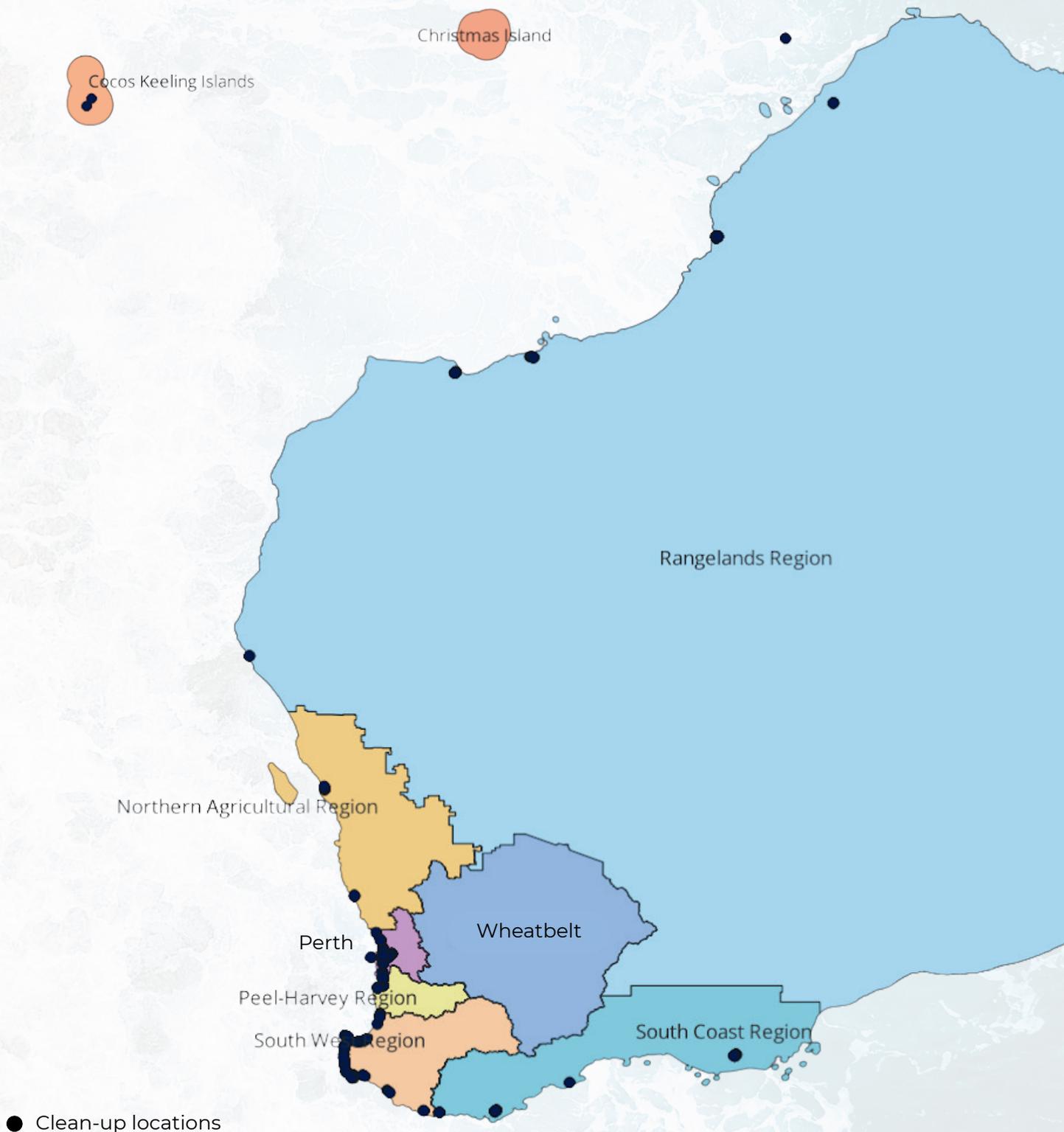


Figure: Map of Clean-up locations for WABCU 2025.
Map not to scale.

The WA Beach Clean-up

Since its inception in 2005, the annual October WA Beach Clean-up (WABCU) has evolved from a local Cape-to-Cape initiative into one of Western Australia's largest community-driven coastal stewardship events. What started as a small regional effort is now a coordinated, statewide event involving NRM groups, Coastcare teams, Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers, schools, businesses, and community volunteers who share a commitment to reducing marine debris.

2025 Results

This year, participants collectively covered 112.8 kilometres of land, beaches, rivers, and estuaries, ensuring even the most isolated coastal areas received care and attention. This broad, on-ground effort continues to strengthen community connections to our marine environments.

The 2025 event brought together more than 70 community groups, volunteers, and partner organisations, delivering another impactful year of coastal care. Across Western Australia, 92 clean-up events were held, with 1,579 participants giving their time to remove over 5,000 kilograms of debris from local beaches and waterways. Beyond the physical clean-up, the long-term dataset generated by the WABCU event has become a powerful tool for shaping policy discussions, guiding preventive strategies, and raising widespread awareness of the escalating issue of marine debris in Western Australia.

5.3

Tonnes of Debris
Removed

1,579

Volunteers

92

Clean-ups

3,028

Volunteer Hours

113

Kilometres
Covered



Pictured: Volunteers at the Wedge Island Clean-up.

2025 Marine Debris Top 10



Top 10 Items: Method

The table on page 7 represents recorded macro debris items only, items larger than 5mm in size.

Microplastics are grouped into two categories: (1) primary microplastics such as primary plastic feedstock, used in the manufacture of plastic items; (2) secondary microplastics, which occur following the break up of plastic items.

Microplastics have been largely excluded from this report because data from the general public are irregular.

In addition, the time required to count them is immense and is typically not considered a viable use of volunteer hours. Microplastics are reported in place using the Operation Clean Sweep rating tool (learn more in the Data Impacts section).

Microplastics

Microplastics were recorded at 12 sites, totalling 30,940 items, including an estimate for Minim Cove.



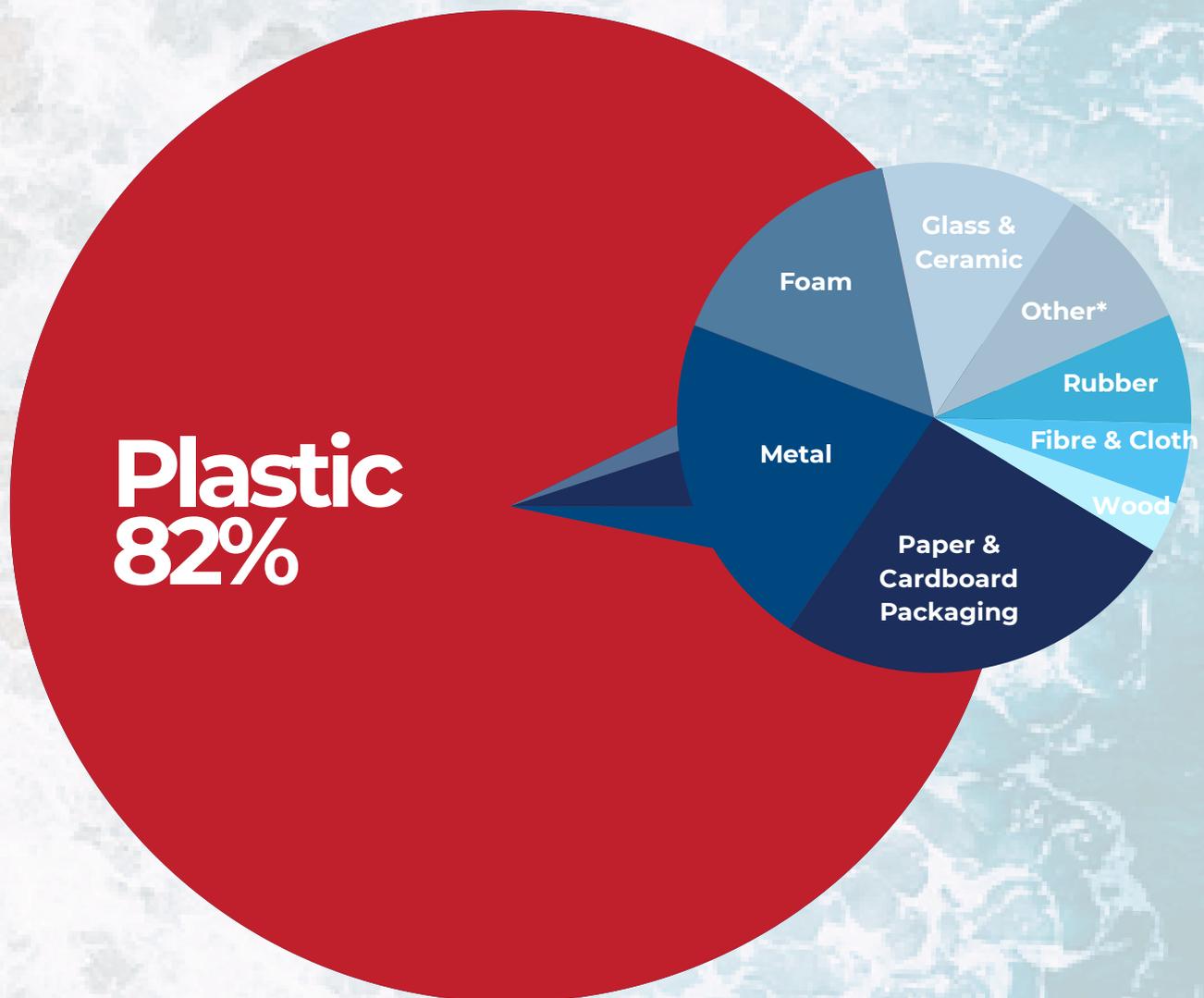
Pictured: Weighing debris at the Margaret River Brewhouse Sip n' Sort event.

Site	Region	Number of Microplastics Recorded per Site	
		Primary Microplastics	Secondary Microplastics (Hard Plastic Remnants)
Hardy Park	Perth	1	None recorded
Minim Cove	Perth	30,000	None recorded
Rosslare Park Beach	Perth	None recorded	1
Sorrento Beach	Perth	2	5
Warnbro Beach	Perth	11	117
Foul Bay	South West	13	None recorded
Geographe Foreshore	South West	1	21
Hamelin Bay	South West	521	None recorded
Vasse Rivermouth	South West	5	166
Wilyabrup	South West	None recorded	72
Blossoms Beach	South Coast	3	None recorded
Wharton Beach	South Coast	1	None recorded
Total		30,558	382

Table: Data received from WABCU Clean-ups on Primary and Secondary Microplastics.

Top 10 Materials

Plastic was the most common material, comprising 82% of the items, followed by Paper and Cardboard packaging at 5%, Metal at 4%, and Foam at 3%. All other material types (Glass & Ceramic, Rubber, Fibre & Cloth, Wood & Other) accounted for less than 2% each of the total.



***Other is a broad category where items are made of mixed materials or don't fit into the other material categories.**

This includes sanitary items (tissues, nappies, condoms, cotton buds), food scraps, building and trades materials, organic materials, oil globules and tar balls, boat parts, wreckage & remnants, shoe parts (leather and fabric), electronics (appliances and batteries), personal effects (wallets, money, keys, jewellery), soap, dry lubricant & glue, pet handling & care items, weather balloon parts, wax (surf wax, candles, paraffin and similar), unspecified non-plastic items and unidentified substances.

NRM Summary

This report presents an overview of marine debris removal efforts across seven Natural Resource Management (NRM) regions in Western Australia.

The data shows broad regional differences in marine debris density and types of debris, and recognises the contributions of volunteers across different regions.



The South-West region recorded the highest weight of debris (3,147.9 kg), largely due to the presence of large rope balls, and a significant number of items collected (19,452). The Perth Region had the greatest number of total items collected (21,475), plus a significant primary production feedstock load with over 30,000 found in one small hotspot (Minim Cove). South Coast NRM had the highest density at 9.19 items per m² with relatively few clean-ups (Blossoms Beach and Wharton Beach), cumulatively removing large numbers of plastic remnants (4,500+).

Pictured: Above: Moses Rock Margaret River National Park Rangers Clean-up. Below: Debris at Ammo Jetty.

Table: Key Metrics per NRM.

Region	No. of Events	Volunteer No.	Weight (kg)	Total Items	Debris Density (per m ²)	LSSI % Local: Offshore
Indian Ocean Territories	2	63	323	524	0.32	Land 29.2% Sea 70.8 %
Rangelands	10	143	601	4,790	1.37	Land 76.9% Sea 23.1 %
Northern Agricultural	2	89	33	1,648	0.05	Land 13.9% Sea 84.1 %
Perth	36	738	650	21,475	0.02	Land 70.7% Sea 26.3%
Peel-Harvey	2	272	486	7,261	0.08	Land 95.8% Sea 4.2%
South West	29	235	3,148	19,452	5.16	Land 29.2% Sea 70.8 %
South Coast	11	39	63	6,914	9.19	Land 11.0% Sea 89.0%

Top 10 Marine Debris Items

Per NRM				
	Perth	Peel-Harvey	South West	South Coast
1	Hard plastic remnants	Cigarette butts & filters	Hard plastic remnants	Hard plastic remnants
2	Soft plastic film remnants	Hard plastic remnants	Soft plastic film remnants	Foam insulation & packaging (whole and remnants)
3	Cigarette butts & filters	Plastic food packaging (wrappers, packets, containers)	Synthetic rope & net scraps remnants less than 1 metre	Synthetic rope & net scraps remnants less than 1 metre
4	Plastic food packaging (wrappers, packets, containers)	Soft plastic film remnants	Plastic lids and bottle caps, pump spray, flow restrictor & similar	Plastic lids and bottle caps, pump spray, flow restrictor & similar
5	Miscellaneous paper, labels & tickets	Plastic bags (supermarket, garbage, dog poo & ice)	Plastic food packaging (wrappers, packets, containers)	Strapping band whole and scraps
6	Synthetic rope & net scraps remnants less than 1 metre	Miscellaneous paper, labels & tickets	Paper & cardboard packaging	Plastic food packaging (wrappers, packets, containers)
7	Foam insulation & packaging (whole and remnants)	Paper & cardboard packaging	Commercial fishing remnants (float, pot, crate bits)	Sanitary (tissues, nappies, condoms, cotton buds)
8	Plastic lids and bottle caps, pump spray, flow restrictor & similar	Metal bottle caps, lids & pull tabs	Glass or ceramic broken	Paper & cardboard packaging
9	Paper & cardboard packaging	Plastic drink bottles (water, juice, milk, soft drink)	Foam insulation & packaging (whole and remnants)	Soft plastic film remnants
10	Glass or ceramic (broken)	Fishing line (recreational)	Cigarette butts and filters	Cigarette butts & filters

Top 10 Marine Debris Items

Per NRM			
	Indian Ocean Territories	Rangelands	Northern Agricultural
1	Rubber footwear & thongs	Metal fishing items (sinkers, lures, hooks, traps, pots)	Hard plastic remnants
2	Hard plastic remnants	Cigarette butts & filters	Synthetic rope & net scraps remnants less than 1 metre
3	Plastic food packaging (wrappers, packets, containers)	Miscellaneous paper, labels & tickets	Plastic lids and bottle caps, pump spray, flow restrictor & similar
4	Personal care & pharmaceutical packaging	Soft plastic film remnants	Soft plastic film remnants
5	Plastic drink bottles (water, juice, milk, soft drink)	Aluminium cans	Commercial fishing remnants (float, pot, crate bits)
6	Plastic straws, confection sticks, cups, plates & cutlery	Glass or ceramic broken	Foam insulation & packaging (whole and remnants)
7	Plastic lids and bottle caps, pump spray, flow restrictor & similar	Plastic drink bottles (water, juice, milk, soft drink)	Foam buoys (whole and parts)
8	Rubber sheeting	Recreational fishing items (lures, floats, rods, reels, spool)	Synthetic rope over 1m
9	Synthetic rope & net scraps remnants less than 1 metre	Hard plastic remnants	Plastic drink bottles (water, juice, milk, soft drink)
10	Foam insulation & packaging (whole and remnants)	Plastic straws, confection sticks, cups, plates & cutlery	Strapping band whole and scraps

Note: These tables represent recorded macro debris items only. Microplastics are not included in the table above due to irregular reporting - while likely present at each site, not all groups collected or recorded data on this item.



A big thank you to WABCU volunteers

The WA Beach Clean-up provides an opportunity for the community to come together and tackle marine debris and plastic pollution in their priority areas. We hope this report showcases the amazing community support, collaboration, and effort put in by hundreds of volunteers across Western Australia. A full list of supporting community organisations and clean-up locations is available at the end of this report.

A special thanks to the University of Western Australia (UWA) Student Guild Micro-Volunteering program group, who enthusiastically prepared the volunteer clean-up kits, and who have extended their services again for 2026!

Pictured: Top left: Margaret River Future Council event. Top right: Hamelin Bay, Friends of the Cape to Cape Track. Bottom row (from left): Yeagarup Beach - Pemberton Discovery Tours, Secret Harbour Coastal Crew event, UWA Student Guild Micro-Volunteering program.



Community Champion

Department of Communities
Cadets WA - River Rangers

4,437 Marine debris items removed

In response to feedback within the Department of Communities Cadets WA program, the River Rangers River Rescue day was held in Taylor Reserve and McCallum Park (administered by the City of South Perth and Town of Victoria Park, respectively).

This was an opportunity for school groups to catch up, clean-up, learn, and connect with experts. Event leader Marnie from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (Nearer to Nature program) assembled a massive support team to pull it all together.

In just one hour of collecting, the school kids picked up 4,437 pieces of marine debris. They then selected one item of debris each to place inside a sculpture representing Akuna, one of the resident Swan River dolphins. The event and superstar River Ranger Cadets received news coverage on Channels 9 and 10.

Pictured: The River Rangers event at Taylor Reserve

The day encompassed seven different discovery activities, including a one-hour river debris clean-up involving 300 cadets, leaders and volunteers from eight schools:

- Rossmoyne River Rangers
- John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School
- West Morley Primary School
- Alinjarra Primary School
- Coolbinia Primary School
- Manning Primary School
- Anzac Terrace Primary School, and
- Mundaring Christian College.

Fifteen small businesses, local and state government organisations and non-profits providing goods, services and in-kind support, including:

- Keep Australia Beautiful WA
- Department for Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions
- Tangaroa Blue Foundation; and
- Welcome To Country from Elder Joshua McGuire.



Community Champion

Roslyn Hanlon

443 AMDI Clean-ups since 2018

Concerned about the negative impact ocean debris is having on her local beaches around Busselton, Roslyn is an AMDI superstar, having contributed data from over 443 clean-up events to AMDI from 2018 through the end of 2025.

Roslyn not only dedicates multiple hours per week to clean-ups in her local area (and beaches when she travels further afield), but also transforms her findings into creative artwork. You can see Roslyn's powerful ocean-inspired creations at @beachcleaningbusselton on Instagram, where she provides background on each clean-up, commentary on the items found, and the impact on local wildlife. We're so grateful to have Roslyn as part of the citizen science community.

Pictured: Roslyn and debris from Geographe Foreshore.



Community Champion

Carol Curran

124 AMDI Clean-ups in 2025

Carol is a familiar face around Rockingham beaches. Having lived a fascinating and busy life prior to planting roots in Rockingham, she got bitten by the beach clean-up bug after retirement.

She now contributes several marine debris collections to AMDI each week, having submitted 124 during 2025. Carol is a passionate member of the community group Rockingham Beach Cleans, a dedicated beach walker, and a proud mum who cares deeply for the environment and also enjoys the social camaraderie of the local beach-cleaning community. She says: ***"I am giving back just a little in return for how much I have received in quality of life from the ocean and surroundings in Australia, my adopted home"***.

Pictured: Carol and one of her recent clean-up collections.



Case Study

Indian Ocean Territories

Pulu Gangsa, Cocos Keeling

Sites: 1

250.3



28

Volunteers

28

Volunteer hours



As part of WABCU 2025, a clean-up was conducted at Pulu Gangsa Beach on Home Island in the remote Cocos (Keeling) Islands. Pulu Gangsa beach is a local hotspot for marine debris, and is a challenge to clean-up; with a huge amount of hard plastics, plastic bottles and single-use items like water cups, straws and cutlery.

Every year, the Junior Rangers come to the Cocos Keeling Islands from Christmas Island for a 4-day camp. This is a partnership between Parks Australia, coordinated by Junior Ranger Program leader Lin Gaff, and Christmas Island District High School (CIDHS).

This year, 23 Year 8 students from CIDHS signed up to help with WABCU, joined by Tangaroa Blue Coordinator Emma. Together, the group braved the rain to collect 40 full bags of debris (250.3 kg). Among the debris, they also found lots of large floats, big tubs and even a plastic chair. It was a great effort. Big thanks to a very positive and fun crew!

Due to the immense amount of debris collected, a sample of 10% was sorted and logged in the AMDI Database.

Pictured: Pulu Gangsa Cocos Keeling, Project Coordinator Emma Washer and volunteers.

Top Ten Items Found

1	Plastic food packaging (wrappers, packets, containers)	6	Synthetic rope & net scraps remnants less than 1 metre
2	Personal care & pharmaceutical packaging	7	Shoes leather & fabric
3	Rubber footwear & thongs	8	Plastic bottles, drums, jerrycans & buckets over 4 litres
4	Plastic containers non-food (oil, sealant, chemical) under 4 litres	9	Cigarette lighters
5	Plastic drink bottles (water, juice, milk, soft drink)	10	Plastic bleach & cleaner bottles and containers



Case Study

Rangelands

Steep Point, Underwater Clean-up

Sites: 1

350



15

Volunteers

150

Volunteer hours



Steep Point is the most westerly point on mainland Australia, lying within the remote Edel National Park and part of the Shark Bay UNESCO World Heritage Site. Shark Bay is unique because it meets all four UNESCO natural criteria: unique ecosystems; ongoing geological and evolutionary processes; exceptional natural beauty; and its role as a vital wildlife refuge.

The crew from Shark Bay Eco Tours and Perfect Nature Cruises, led by clean-up coordinator Liam and project coordinator Ed, selected the site based on proximity to a popular rock-fishing spot. They highlighted the presence of excessive debris and expressed concern for the well-being of the various species that inhabit and frequent the area, including dolphins, corals, manta rays, turtles, whales, and sharks. As one of the team said:

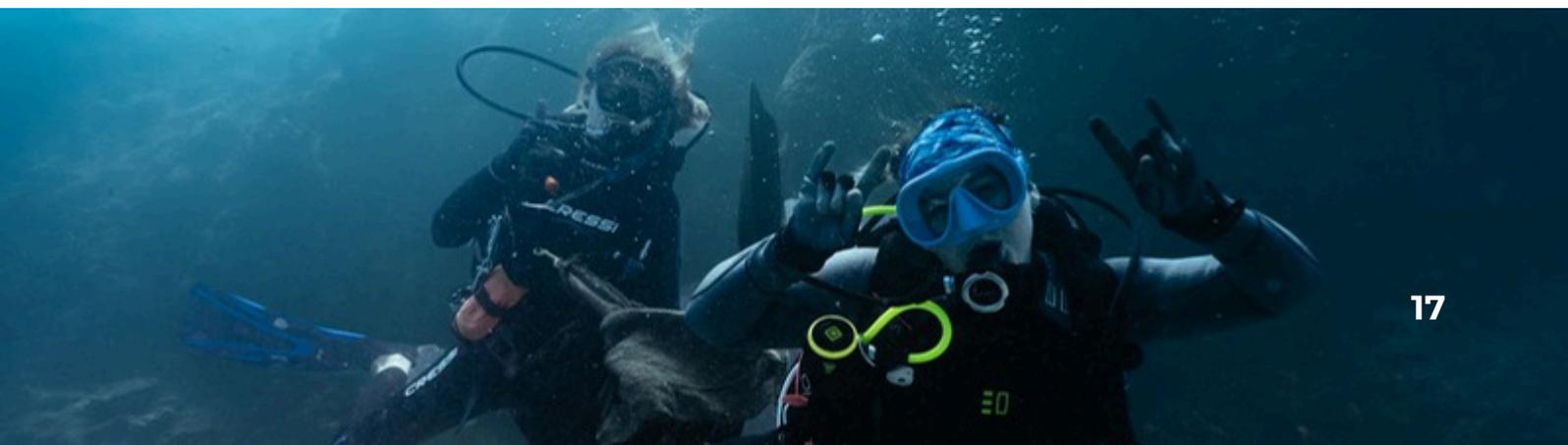
“Just disheartening to see how much litter is in the ocean, let alone the rest that isn't visible to us or from the surface, we need to work harder to keep our oceans cleaner and expand clean-up initiatives to reduce the impact on environment, so much can be achieved when we are all working to the same goal - cleaner oceans”.

*Pictured: Steep Point, WA
(Credit: Jake Mason Diving)*

This year's event was undertaken as a trial of logistics and costs to ascertain whether a successful operation could remove a significant amount of marine debris and to assess upscaling if additional resources could be secured (personnel, financial, equipment, and community support). Based on the photos and data submitted for WABCU, their expedition has been a huge success.

All in all, a team of 9 divers, three Malgana Rangers, and three vessel crew worked in water depths of 18-20m. The area cleaned was estimated at 900 m², with 150 volunteer hours spent on and under the water. 70kg of lead sinkers, 300+ lures and fishing hooks, beer bottles, boating equipment, camping chairs, and enormous amounts of fishing line were removed. 27 dive tanks were used, and many more volunteer hours contributed to planning and logistics, with a focus on strict diving safety practices.

The team is now exploring ways to return to the site to remove more debris. This event was launched through public donations, with Shark Bay Eco Tours providing in-kind support by donating a vessel for the day, dive tanks, and food. Due to the high costs of marine activities, the group is keen to secure additional funding for further clean-ups.



Case Study

Northern Agricultural Wedge Island

Sites: 1

23



14
Volunteers

45.5

Volunteer
hours



Wedge Island is a 400-metre-long, wedge-shaped island that sits within the Jurien Bay Marine Park (established in 2003 and home to vast seagrass meadows that serve as vital nursery habitats). The park supports an incredible diversity of marine life, including migrating humpback whales that can be spotted passing close to shore.

The first beach shacks were built at Wedge in the 1940s, and by the 50s it had become a getaway for families and adventurers. Before the Indian Ocean Road opened in 2010, access was only via 4WD or good old Aussie determination — a part of Wedge’s rugged charm that long-timers still remember fondly. The settlement remains truly unique today: a community made up of simple beach shacks, deeply connected to the landscape and coastline.

The Wedge Island Protection Association (WIPA) and the broader community (including returning visitors) take immense pride in caring for this stretch of coastline. Environmental stewardship here isn’t a once-a-year activity; it’s part of the lifestyle. Community members pick up debris every time they’re on the beach, with many saying, “Every day is WABCU for us!” Most of what’s collected is washed in from offshore rather than local litter, and the community has long embraced the idea of giving these materials a second life.

Washed-up debris is transformed into rope mats, baskets, and coastal art, which can be seen throughout the settlement. Several Wedge community members craft these items year-round, with many pieces donated to WIPA fundraisers to support ongoing community projects.

Image credit: Wedge Island Protection Association

Top Ten Items Found

1	Synthetic rope & net scraps remnants less than 1 metre	6	Plastic bleach & cleaner bottles and containers
2	Foam insulation & packaging (whole and remnants)	7	Chemical light sticks
3	Rubber remnants	8	Fluorescent light tubes & bulbs
4	Plastic drink bottles (water, juice, milk, soft drink)	9	Rubber footwear & thongs
5	Strapping band whole and scraps	10	Glass jars & sauce bottles

Case Study

Perth
Minim Cove

Sites: 1

36



12

Volunteers

12

Volunteer hours



One of Perth's most affluent suburbs, Mosman Park appears pristine, the grass well-groomed and lush. But each year, a reed-covered section of the Swan River, Minim Cove, accumulates tens of thousands more nurdles - microplastic resin pellets (feedstock for the plastics industry). They are released into the environment during manufacturing and transport when spills aren't cleaned up, and are washed into the stormwater system, ultimately reaching the ocean.

WABCU Coordinator Claire, a small-business owner and Swan River champion, returns to this site every year for WABCU with a hardy and committed group of friends and family. ***"In the past here, we've seen spiders with their egg sacks coated in microplastic, crabs with resin pellets stuck under their carapace. It's pretty terrible"***.

Pictured: Minim Cove Clean-up

After long (years-long) consideration and discussion, due to potential harm to the various small critters living in the reeds, a careful experiment was undertaken with a shop vac to try and remove as many nurdles as possible. This was in addition to volunteers using the usual range of tools, including dustpans, sieves, and hand-picking. On balance, Claire noted that the shop vac didn't do any better than the more manual methods, while increasing the risk of harm, so it will not be used again next year.

Extracted from Minim Cove was 36kg of debris, including burnt plastic remnants, foam insulation remnants, starting gun wadding, and hard plastic remnants. The overwhelming majority of items were nurdles - approximately 30,000 of them - collected over just one hour. Based on an estimation of volume and weight of nurdles, we gave an Operation Clean Sweep Rating of 5 (Highly Significant Pollution).

Top Ten Items Found

1	Hard plastic remnants	6	Synthetic rope & net scraps remnants less than 1 metre
2	Soft plastic film remnants	7	Foam insulation & packaging (whole and remnants)
3	Cigarette butts and filters	8	Plastic lids and bottle caps, pump spray, flow restrictor and similar
4	Plastic food packaging (wrappers, packets, containers)	9	Paper & cardboard packaging
5	Miscellaneous paper, labels and tickets	10	Glass or ceramic broken

Case Study

Peel-Harvey
Coodanup Foreshore

Sites: 1

96



42

Volunteers

63

Volunteer hours



This year's Wonders of Our Wetlands Festival was held at Coodanup Foreshore Reserve, part of the Peel-Yalgorup Wetlands. The area is a large and diverse system of estuaries, coastal saline lakes and freshwater marshes and is recognised as a RAMSAR wetland site of international importance. The event honours the return of migratory shorebirds to feed over summer before they fly back to the northern hemisphere.

As part of the larger festival organised by Peel-Harvey Catchment Council (PHCC), Coastal Waste Warriors (CWW), a non-profit, joined forces with volunteers for the "Pave the Way" clean-up. Together, they collected 96kg of marine debris from the estuary shoreline. The foreshore was also buzzing with market stalls, music and nature-based activities - a fun-filled gathering of community and care for the environment.

Image Credit: PHCC

"Thank you to everyone who rolled up their sleeves to make a difference. A huge thanks to PHCC for hosting this beautiful celebration. We love being part of this annual event that brings together local groups, families and nature lovers to honour the Wonders of our Wetlands." CWW Treasurer Danny.

CWW was formed in 2018 in memory of Amber Dawn Field and has grown from a small community group into a larger, volunteer-led and staffed movement dedicated to cleaning local waterways. Operating in the Mandurah area, it is active from February through November each year. Secretary Jelette noted that they're excited to be expanding operations into public education sessions with local schools in 2026. CWW is always happy to welcome new volunteers and also offers "Clean Up in a Box," which allows members of the public to borrow clean-up equipment.

Top Ten Items Found

1	Cigarette butts & filters	6	Soft plastic film remnants
2	Hard plastic remnants	7	Plastic packaging non-food (bubble wrap, packets, sleeves etc)
3	Plastic bags (supermarket, garbage, dog poo & ice)	8	Cable ties & plastic fasteners
4	Plastic food packaging (wrappers, packets, containers)	9	Aluminium cans
5	Paper & cardboard packaging	10	Metal bottle caps, lids & pull tabs

Case Study

South West
Scott River East

Sites: 2

2,700



4

Volunteers

120

Volunteer
hours



Some time around 2018, a large tangle of rope washed up on the beach in Scott River East. Its arrival and persistence at this one location gave rise to an informal name for the point where it came to rest: Rope Corner. Each year, winter storms buried it deeper under the sand. A few hardy volunteers chipped away at it when they could, but the bulk of it remained - difficult to get at, but a problem too big to ignore.

Ghost gear like this poses a risk of entanglement to marine life and sheds microplastics as it starts to break up.

Fast forward to the WABCU weekend, October 2025. Another large rope ball washed up on the shore approximately 4km away. Long-time Tangaroa Blue volunteer Boyd sprang into action. With support from local landowners Jasper and Colleen, who allowed access through their property and the use of their farm tractor, the new rope ball was removed before it could be washed away or disappear under the sand, as its predecessor did.

Pictured: The rope extraction at Scott River East.

A week later, Boyd and Tangaroa Blue Project Coordinator Shannon tackled the original rope ball. Over four grueling days, they dug, cut, hauled, levered their way through the mass. The final section was so deeply buried and heavy that it needed a coordinated pull from one tractor and two 4WDs. It was then cut into two further pieces so it could be dragged from the beach.

At last, after years of sitting stubbornly on the beach, the rope ball was fully removed.

Today, both rope balls are temporarily parked near Jasper and Colleen's barn — thanks to their ongoing support and their longstanding commitment to environmental stewardship, these two enormous masses can no longer harm the marine environment.

The next step is to untangle the massive rope bundles and distribute the material to community groups and local artists for creative reuse.



Case Study

South Coast

Sites: 3

11



2

Volunteers

9.4

Volunteer hours



Tina and Barry are long-standing beach cleaners. Their beach clean-ups are primarily opportunistic - they walk a lot when at home and when travelling, and they always carry a debris collection bag with them just in case! This year, Barry and Tina completed seven across three beaches as part of WABCU whilst visiting the South Coast: Blossoms Beach (1x); Wharton Beach (4x); Duke of Orleans Bay (2x). When asked why they chose those beaches, Tina's answer was that Barry was working down on the south coast, she had accompanied him on the trip, "and the beaches were there!".

Their motivation for beach clean-ups stems from environmental interest. Tina says, **"We're concerned about the plastic on the beach. We pick up anything we find around the place and have been [doing that] for a long time"**.

In addition, their daughter Renee has a background in marine biology and has worked for Tangaroa Blue for a number of years, so they hear a lot about marine debris! While Barry picks up the larger items, Tina gets stuck into the really small debris items. 80 Mile Beach is their next target as they head north for the winter.

They remarked that there were lots of tiny polystyrene foam items, nurdles, and hard plastic remnants on this year's chosen beaches. How do you count so many tiny items? Well... the most efficient way is to enlist your daughter! Renee was gifted all seven clean-up collections to audit once Barry and Tina had returned to home base in the Augusta-Margaret River Region, and she painstakingly counted each of the 5,045 items and entered them into AMDI in her free time. That's in addition to her own three WABCU collections!

Pictured: Barry and Tina Mouritz and debris from their clean-ups.

Top Ten Items Found

1	Hard plastic remnants	6	Packaging accessories (handles, seals, reels, tags, labels)
2	Foam insulation & packaging (whole and remnants)	7	Plastic food packaging (wrappers, packets, containers)
3	Synthetic rope & net scraps remnants less than 1 metre	8	Soft plastic film remnants
4	Plastic lids and bottle caps, pump spray, flow restrictor & similar	9	Plastic straws, confection sticks, cups, plates & cutlery
5	Strapping band whole and scraps	10	Plastic toys, party poppers, ribbons, clips & similar

Data Impacts

Australian Marine Debris Initiative



Pictured: Volunteers sorting debris for the AMDI Database at the Sip n' Sort event.

AMDI Data Collection

The **Australian Marine Debris Initiative (AMDI)** has been collating and cataloguing marine debris data since 2004, providing a free platform for citizen scientists and researchers to contribute data using standardised AMDI methodology. As the largest marine debris database in the Southern Hemisphere, with over 30 million items, this collaborative effort builds and documents evidence used to drive change, stop debris at the source, and inform government legislation and policy.

Is Legislation working in WA?

The WA Beach Clean-up data can provide a high-level indicator of whether legislation is working in WA, based on community effort, distance, time, and the number of volunteers.

Key Legislative Change: Container Deposit Scheme

Containers for Change WA (WARRRL) launched the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) in WA in 2020 and offers a 10-cent refund for each eligible beverage container recycled, encouraging more residents to participate in reducing waste.

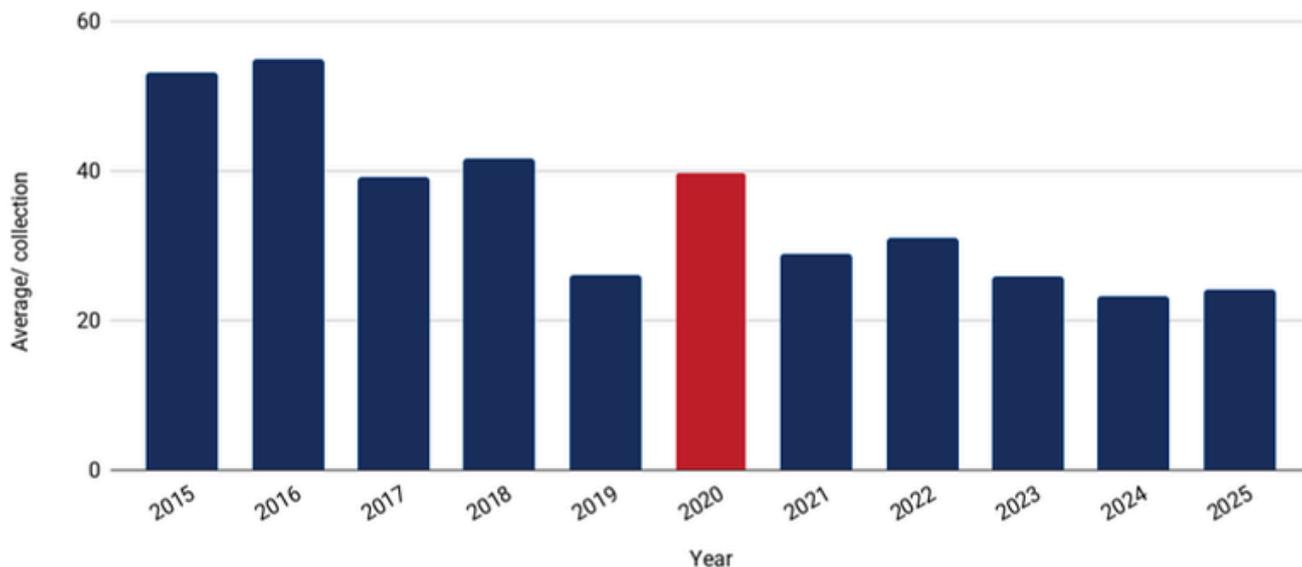
In 2024, Containers for Change became a sponsor of the WABCU, recognising our shared goal of preventing and removing litter from our environment. Since WABCU began, the number of CDS-related items per clean-up event has decreased (from 28 per event in 2014 to 15 in 2020).

Since the CDS launch in 2020, this number has reduced further, with an average of 10 items per event collected in 2025. The AMDI Database helps track the scheme's impact on litter reduction, demonstrating the program's role in creating a cleaner environment in WA.



Pictured: Collecting eligible containers at the South City Beach WABCU event to return to Containers for Change WARRRL

CDS items: Plastic Drink Bottles, Glass Beverage Bottles, Tetra packs, and Aluminium Cans.



Graph: Average items per clean-up event. Plastic Drink Bottles, Glass Beverage Bottles, Tetra packs, and Aluminium Cans.

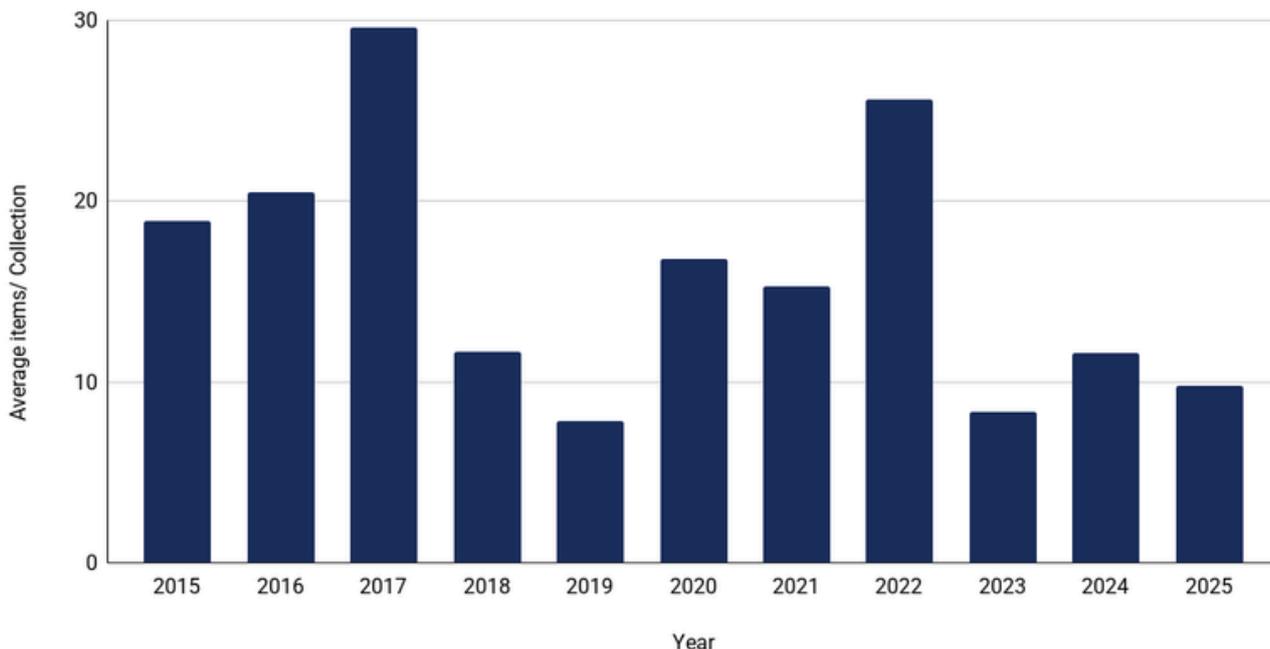
The graph shows the average number of CDS items collected from the AMDI Database per clean-up event in Western Australia from 2015 to 2025. A key trend observed is a decline in CDS items following the implementation of WA's CDS program in 2020.

Clear correlation between trends for a number of other single-use items and legislation is more complicated due to a number of factors. These include: a phased introduction of plastic bans in WA, notable exclusions, and how data is categorised within AMDI. Using information from [Banned Items | WA Plastics Ban](#), and data extracted for successive years from AMDI, a breakdown is given on the next page.

Pictured: Weighing eligible Containers for Change cans and bottles at Singleton Beach, with Singleton Coastcare.



Single-use Plastic (SUP) items | Plastic Cups, Straws, Lids, Utensils



Graph: Average items per clean-up event. Single-use Plastic (SUP) items | Plastic Cups, Straws, Lids, Utensils

While a single grouped category in AMDI with selectable subcategories, plastic cups, straws and utensils were subject to phased bans in WA. Overall, there has been a decreasing trend in the number of items recorded in collections over the last decade.

Plastic Cups and Lids

Staggered bans have included: 2022 - plastic beverage cups for cold drinks and non-compostable disposable cups; 2023 - expanded polystyrene cups; 2024 disposable plastic cups used for hot drinks and non-compostable disposable plastic-lined paper/fibre cups.

Straws and Utensils

Bans include: 2022 - disposable plastic straws, plastic stirrers and swizzle sticks, plastic forks, spoons, knives, sporks, chopsticks, and food picks.

Pictured: Above: Sorting debris for the AMDI Database at the Wedge Island Clean-up.

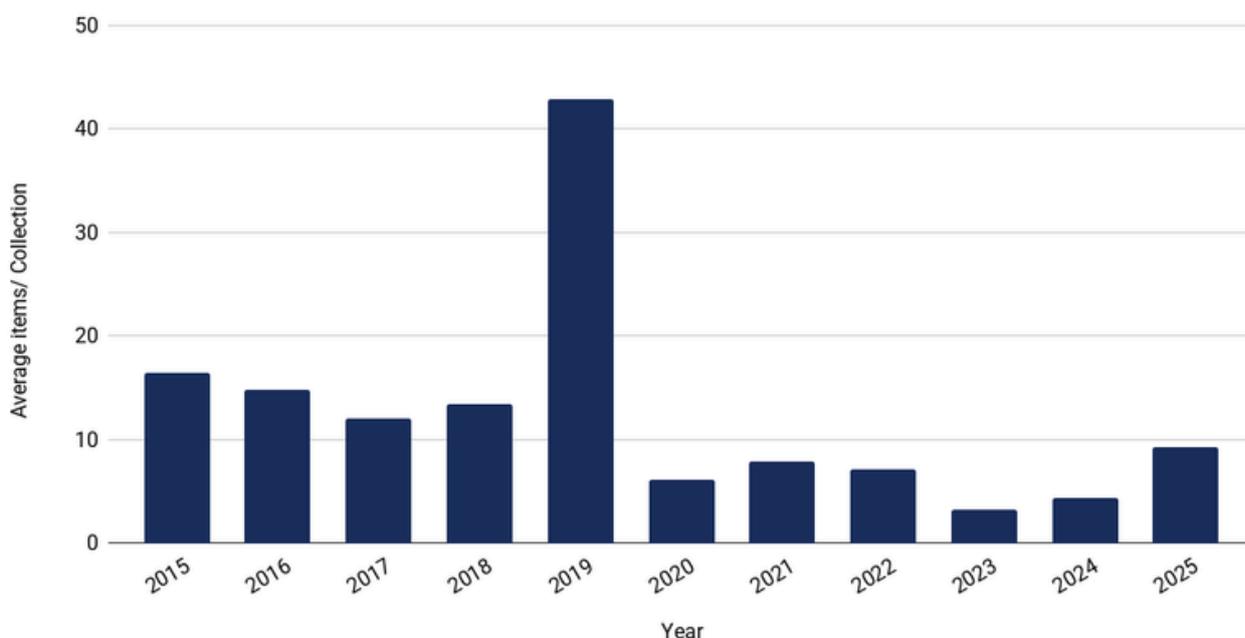


Other Subcategories

Of the subcategories, there are some notable exclusions, which include, among others:

- pre-packaged plastic beverage containers;
- expanded polystyrene cups that are part of a pre-packaged product, such as a noodle pack;
- utensils used for food preparation or serving ware (e.g. tongs, cake servers);
- items that arrive to store in pre-packaged food and beverage products (e.g. a fork in a pre-packaged and sealed salad, a straw attached to a juice box);
- exempted uses, such as food service on an aircraft.

Key Legislative Change: Single-use Plastic (SUP) Plastic Bags (Supermarket, Garbage, Dog Poo & Ice)



Graph: Average items per clean-up event. Single-use Plastic (SUP) items | Plastic bags (supermarket, garbage, dog poo & ice)

Again, while a single grouped category in AMDI with selectable subcategories, plastic bags have been and will be subject to further phased bans in WA. While there are year-to-year fluctuations, overall, there is a decreasing trend of items recorded in collections in the last decade, and the true impact will likely be seen in years to come as the number of banned items expands.

The 2019 data was anomalous due to a single collection at one site, with a large number of plastic bags recorded. The lowest numbers were seen in 2020 to 2024; however, there appears to be a slight upward trend, which may be due to excess stock being moved, but at present cannot be accounted for with certainty.

Shopping Bags

Staggered bans have included: 2018 - Lightweight (<35 microns) plastic bags with handles; 2022 - all plastic shopping bags with handles; 2024 - non-compostable plastic produce bags supplied for loose fresh fruit and vegetables (produce bags); 2025 - non-compostable barrier bags that do not meet the required design standard, that are used for loose fruit and vegetables and loose dry nuts and confectionery products.

Other Subcategories

Of the subcategories, there are some notable exclusions, which include, among others:

- sealed packaging (e.g. bread bags);
- other bags not intended for conveying goods from a retailer (e.g. bags for waste, nappies or dog waste);
- Plastic bread bags or bags used for loose baked goods, such as pastries or cookies;
- Plastic bags or pouches used for non-food products, such as craft products;
- Bags used for goods that are pre-packaged before being placed on sale (e.g. pre-packaged chicken/prawn/grape bags, vacuum-sealed pouches);
- Bags sold on-shelf (e.g. freezer bags);
- Ziplock or resealable plastic bags;
- Compostable plastic barrier bags that comply with the Compostable Barrier Bag Design Standard.



Pictured: Above: Plastic bag dug out from under rocks at the Ellensbrook Clean-up. Below: Sorting debris for the AMDI Database

In 2023, a ban on degradable plastics came into effect, applying to degradable plastic materials designed to fragment more quickly, such as dog waste bags, dry-cleaning bags, magazine wraps, bin liners, and agricultural soft plastic products.



Key Legislative Change: Plastic Feedstock Plastic Resin Pellets (Swan River)

The Australian Government's National Plastics Plan released in 2021 addresses Plastic Resin Pellets (PRPs). However, management is largely concentrated via voluntary participation in Operation Clean Sweep (OCS) and overarching federal targets for phase out of targeted materials and an increase in recycled materials.

This is coupled with Single-Use Plastic (SUP) bans such as those above and potential enforcement by Environmental Protection Authorities (EPAs) which are primarily managed at the state or territory level.

Pollution studies conducted on the Swan and Canning River estuarine system in 2020 by Tangaroa Blue Foundation and 2021 by DBCA, respectively (Burns et al, 2020; Novak, 2023) found that primary plastic resin pellets (nurdles) were present, particularly in the lower Swan, and required further investigation.

Year	Estimated number of PRPs	OCS Rating
2025	30,000	5
2024	30,000	5
2023	40,000	5

Table: Estimates of nurdles removed from Minim Cove from 2023 through 2025 against OCS rating.

Pictured: Plastic resin pellets at Hamelin Bay.



Evidence provided by AMDI for Minim Cove, Mosman Park, from the years 2023-2025 inclusive, indicates that the problem is persistent. Based on visual examination of nurdles recovered from the site and accounts from clean-up coordinators, the pollution consists of both historical and recent deposition year to year. This indicates multiple events of loss of containment occurring in areas either adjacent to or feeding into the estuarine system.

#PRP (nurdle) estimates only include extracted materials. The site is not cleared of nurdles, rather the volunteer effort is finite. For Minim Cove, the Operation Clean Sweep Rating is 5 - Highly Significant PRP Pollution.

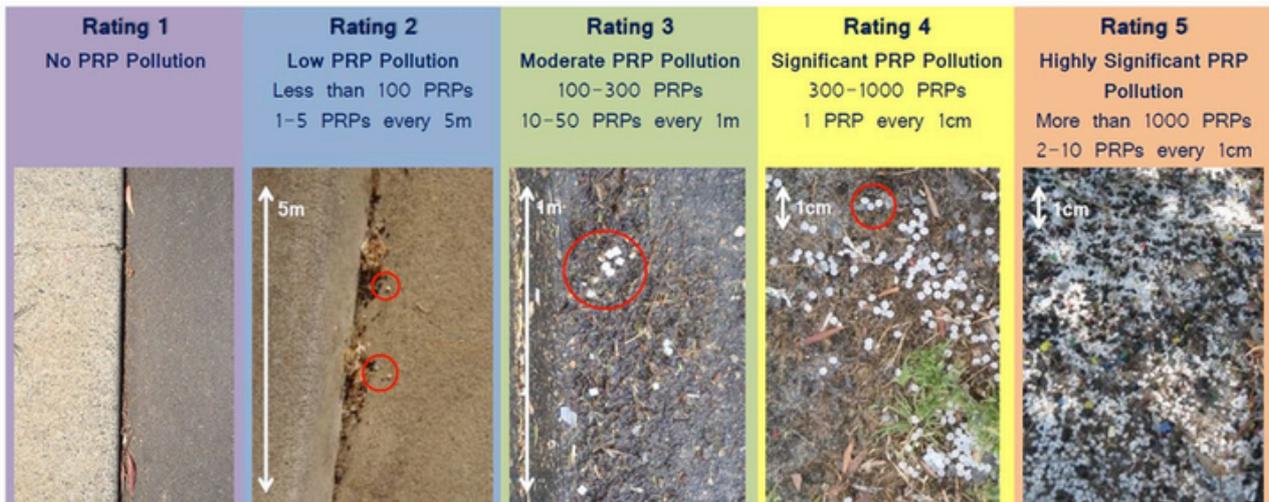
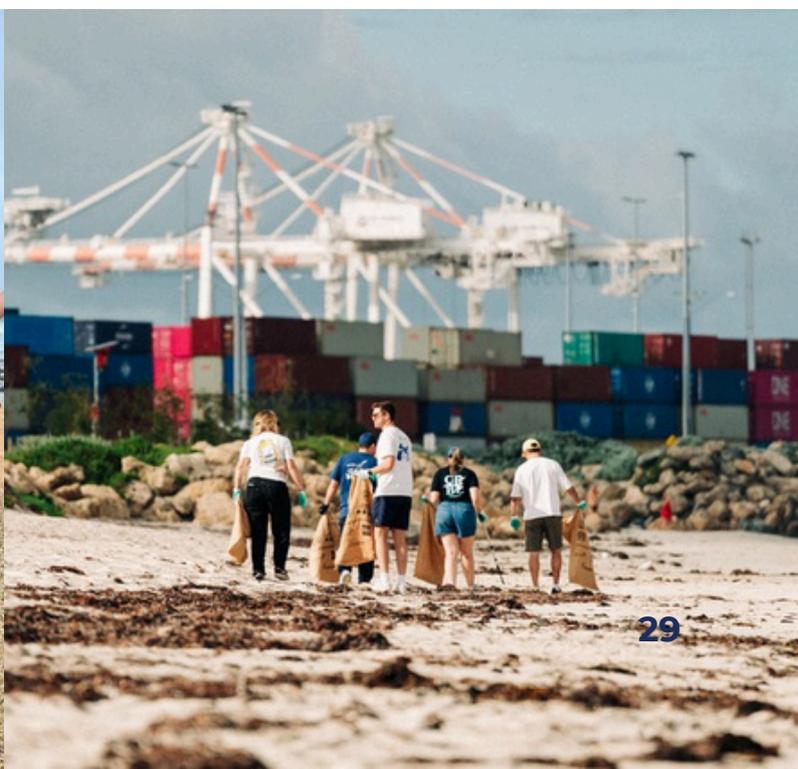


Figure: Operation Clean Sweep Pollution Ratings

*Burns, D., et al., 2020, Swan Canning Estuary Debris Project Report, Tangaroa Blue Foundation.

*Novak P. A., 2023, Swan Canning Riverpark Plastics Survey. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Perth.

Pictured: Left: Margaret River Brewhouse staff at the Ellensbrook Clean-up. Right: Gage Roads Brew Co. staff at the Port Beach clean-up.



Contributing Organisations

- Aboriginal Services Australia - Elder Joshua McGuire
- Alinjarra Primary School
- Anzac Terrace Primary School
- Augusta Community Development Association
- Beaconsfield Primary School
- Binningup Coastcare Environment Group
- Broome Bushranger Cadets
- Busselton Jetty Inc
- Cambridge Coastcare
- Care For Hedland Environmental Association Inc
- Chapman River Friends
- Chef Kel Catering
- Christmas Island District High School
- City of Joondalup
- City of South Perth
- Cleanaway
- Coastal Waste Warriors
- Cocos Islands District High School
- Containers for Change WA (WARRRL)
- Coolbinia Primary School
- Dambimangari Aboriginal Corporation
- Department Of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
- Friends of Redgate
- Friends of The Cape to Cape Track
- GHD
- Gage Roads Brew Co
- Guild Volunteering at The University of Western Australia (Micro Volunteering Program)
- Jadestone Energy
- John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School
- Keep Australia Beautiful WA
- Leaning Tree Steiner School
- Little House Republic
- Malgana Aboriginal Corporation
- Manning Primary School
- Margaret River Beer Co.
- Margaret River Future Council
- Margaret River National Park Rangers
- Mundaring Christian College
- MUEnSA – Murdoch University Environmental Science Association
- Neqtar coffee van
- Ocean Remedy
- Parents for Climate Margaret River
- Paspaley
- Pemberton Discovery Tours
- Perfect Nature Cruises
- Perth Security & Guard Services
- Pilbara Ports
- QT Hotel Perth
- Quinns Rocks Environmental Group
- Reeces Hire
- Rockingham Beach Cleans
- Roebuck Primary School
- Rossmoyne River Rangers
- RSM Australia
- Secret Harbour Coastal Crew
- Shark Bay Eco Tours
- Shire of Augusta Margaret River
- Singleton Coastcare
- Southern Ports
- South of Perth Yacht Club
- St John WA
- Tallwood Custom Built Homes
- The Sustainable Collective at Curtin
- Town of Mosman Park
- Town of Victoria Park
- Vermilion Oil & Gas Australia
- Wedge Island Protection Association
- Wesley College
- West Coast Water Safety
- West Morley Primary School
- West Pilbara Turtle Program
- Wickham Tidy Towns

Pictured (from left): Pretty Pool, Care For Hedland Environmental Association. City Beach, Vermilion Oil & Gas Australia. Gantheaume Beach, Roebuck Primary School.



Clean-up Locations

Rangelands

- 6 Mile Beach, Port Hedland
- Boat Beach, Wickham
- Town Beach, Broome
- Browse Island Nature Reserve, Kimberley
- Cemetery Beach, Port Headland
- Gantheaume Point Beach, Broome
- Hiro Bay Pearling Camp Ruins, Augustus Island
- Pretty Pool River & Beach, Port Headland
- Simpson Beach, Broome
- Steep Point, Shark Bay

South West

- Abbey Beach, Busselton
- Binningup Beach, Binningup
- Blackwood River Foreshore, Augusta
- BP Beach and Groyne, Bunbury
- Busselton Jetty Foreshore, Busselton
- Commonage Road, Quedjinup
- Conto Spring, Boranup
- Eagle Bay, Dunsborough
- Ellensbrook Beach, Yebble
- Foul Bay, Karridale
- Gas Bay, Gnarabup
- Geographe Foreshore, Busselton
- Hamelin Bay to Foul Bay, Hamelin Bay
- Jays Beach, Augusta
- Lighthouse Beach and Other Side Of The Moon, Naturaliste
- Mandalay Beach
- Margaret River Mouth, Margaret River
- Mathew Flinders Memorial Lookout to Leeuwin Lighthouse, Augusta
- Moses Rock, Wilyabrup
- Moses Rock CTC, Wilyabrup
- Redgate Beach, Redgate
- Scott River East
- South Beach, Boranup
- Vasse River Mouth, Wonnerup
- Yeagarup Beach, Northcliffe

Pictured (from left): Mile Creek Beach, Pilbara Ports. Warnbro Beach, RSM. Quinns Beach Clean-up.

Northern Agricultural

- Sunset Beach to Glenfield Beach, Geraldton
- Wedge Island, Wedge Island

Perth Region

- Applecross Foreshore, Melville
- City Beach, Cambridge
- Coogee Beach, Cockburn
- Cottesloe Beach, Cottesloe
- Fairbridge Bluff, Rottnest Island
- Floreat Beach, Cambridge
- Hardy Park, Belmont
- Leighton Beach, Fremantle
- Mettams Pool to Hammersley Pool, Stirling
- Minim Cove, Perth
- Mosman Beach, Perth
- Port Beach, Fremantle
- Quinns Beach, Waneroo
- Rosslare Park Beach, Waneroo
- Scarborough Beach, Stirling
- Secret Harbour, Rockingham
- Singleton Beach, Rockingham
- Sorrento Beach, Joondalup
- South Beach, Fremantle
- Taylor Reserve and McCallum Park, South Perth
- Waikiki Beach, Rockingham
- Warnbro Beach, Rockingham
- Woodman Point, Cockburn
- Yanchep Beach, Waneroo

Peel-Harvey

- Coodanup Foreshore, Mandurah
- Dawesville Cut Embankment, Mandurah

South Coast

- Blossoms Beach, Bremer Bay
- Conspicuous Cliffs, Nornalup
- Duke of Orleans Bay, Condingup
- Middleton Beach, Albany
- Wharton Beach, Condingup

Indian Ocean Territories:

- Gun Club, West Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Pulu Gangsa Beach, Home Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands





Thank you to our WABCU Sponsors

Tangaroa Blue Foundation acknowledges the generous funding and in-kind support of our valued sponsors — Keep Australia Beautiful WA, Tallwood Custom Built Homes, GHD, Containers for Change (WARRRL), and Southern Ports.

Their commitment to environmental stewardship and community-led action is critical to the success of the WA Beach Clean-up. Through their partnership, we are able to mobilise volunteers across the state, remove marine debris from our coastlines, and contribute essential data to inform long-term solutions.

Pictured: Top Left: Keep Australia Beautiful WA at the River Rangers event. Top Right: GHD's clean-up on Rottnest Island. Bottom Left: GHD's clean-up on Floreat Beach. Bottom Right: Volunteers at the Sip n' Sort event.



Adopt a Beach

If you're passionate about cleaning-up beaches, creating a monitoring site is one of the most powerful ways to turn that passion into lasting impact. While beach clean-ups are inspiring and immediately rewarding, establishing a monitoring site moves beyond one-off action into long-term change.

Through Tangaroa Blue's National Monitoring Project, communities, organisations, and schools contribute to a scientific program that tracks debris patterns, identifies sources, and builds local and regional datasets to guide policy, funding, and prevention strategies. Instead of just removing litter, you document why it's there and how it changes over time.

Monitoring sites bring communities together, giving volunteers hands-on experience with data collection using the AMDI app. You're not just cleaning a beach, you're building knowledge, empowering your community, and tackling marine debris at its source.

Find out more



Sign up for our newsletter

for updates, events and volunteer opportunities

tangaroablue.org



AUSTRALIAN MARINE DEBRIS INITIATIVE



The WA Beach Clean-up

2025



Pictured: Ammo Jetty Clean-up with MUEEnSA.

