

THIS WEEK IN "LITTERLAND"

www.litterpreventionprogram.com

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Above, one of the photos included in the Bergmann study. Fishing line can serve as a devastating trap for sea birds.

Troubled Arctic waters

A study by an international research team headed by Dr. Melanie Bergmann warns that the Arctic marine environment is tainted with plastic and suggests the deep seafloor "may be the ultimate sink for litter" and the beginnings of a garbage patch in the remote Barents Sea. Alfred Wegener Institute, Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research (AWI) and Belgium's Laboratory for Polar Ecology teamed up to support the study, which was published online last week in the scientific journal, *Polar Biology*. Litter on the deep Arctic sea floor of Fram Strait appeared in concentrations 10 to 100 times higher than at the sea's surface, the authors reported. Though the item count was small, they say more study is warranted into what appears to be the formation of the world's sixth garbage patch, where litter amasses in a gyre like ingredients in a soup. Marine litter is known to kill and maim wildlife through ensnaring, entanglement, starvation due to ingestion, hooking and suffocation.



Left, art: Heather Itzla

A nod to the noteworthy

California mom Heather Itzla is at the vanguard of litter prevention using a camera and Facebook. She routinely bagged litter on her daily walks. But then she started photographing each haul, first arranging the trash bits into fetching designs. Six hundred images later, beyond conversation pieces, she sees her Facebook photos reshaping attitudes and behaviours among her following, not using balloons, disposable coffee cups or plastic straws, for example.

Oceans away in Charlottetown, PEI, police officer Bill Almon is known by his cop mates as "the litter-fighting cop." He routinely patrols problem areas to catch the litter-prone in the act so that he can fine them - a cat and mouse game, he says. The fine in Charlottetown is a minimum of \$200 with a \$75 surcharge.

DID YOU KNOW ?

A new Keep America Beautiful offering is an appetizing addition to any cleanup menu: a food service industry guide to fighting litter, a three-way partnership with KAB, the National Restaurant Association and the Foodservice Packaging Institute. "Being a Good Neighbor: A Guide to Reducing and Managing Litter" is a free download. Find it at <http://conserve.restaurant.org/solutions>.

HEADLINE LITTER GRABBERS (OCT 25 - NOV 1)

Some of what made our News Reel this week

Protected turtle downed: Death by litter (10/27)

Hong Kong recorded its first case of a sea turtle dying from eating a fatal quantity of litter. The garbage tore the endangered Green Turtle's digestive tract and blocked its intake of real food.

Clean Across Nova Scotia (10/28)

This past weekend Nova Scotians rolled up their sleeves during Clean Across Nova Scotia. NS is the only province in Canada dedicated to the *Let's Do It! World* global cleanup movement.

Litter a grave problem during holiday (10/27)

Cemetery litter is a huge issue during All Souls customs in Manila. Called the Undas, millions flock to graveyards to honour the dead. Every year Eco Waste Coalition reminds folks not to leave trash behind or en route. A new twist this year, organized with help from a local pastor, the "Basu Run", is a race where participants pick up trash while going around cemeteries.

See-through bin a clear message (10/30)

A transparent bin installed three months ago at The Spit on the Gold Coast illustrates a marine litter problem. Filled with plastic fishing line, netting and other foul finds, the clear bin is an awareness tool, capped by the poster image of a trapped dead turtle.