

“Without the sea we are lost. When we are able to fully reconnect with the sea as our life source, a deeper change takes place. One by one, we make a difference.”

– Dana Richardson
danamermaid.com

health

taking the waters
becoming raw



Ocean Commotion

Plastic pollution is becoming a hazard for humans, as well as the growing numbers of fish, sea birds, turtles and whales that are mistaking it for food

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susanknightstudios.com

Our oceans are the source of life on Earth. But unless we save our seas from the ever-increasing mounds of discarded pop bottles and plastic bags, there won't be much living ocean left. Marine life is also at risk: Fish, turtles, whales, dolphins and sea birds all regularly mistake plastic for their favorite foods, and ingesting it can be fatal.

Twenty billion pounds of plastic finds its way into our oceans every year, where it accumulates in slowly rotating expanding whirlpools, driven by wind and currents,

called gyres. One of the most famous, the North Pacific Gyre, stretches more than 276,000 square miles off the coast of California, and it's now bigger than the state of Texas. In her new documentary film, *Mission of Mermaids: A Love Letter to the Ocean*, director Susan Rockefeller focuses on our deep connection with the world's oceans, our destruction of marine wildlife and ecosystems, and what real-life “mermaids” (artists, activists, underwater photographers, free divers—and you!) can do to clean it up. →

Bye-Bye Plastic!

Small, discarded plastic items on beaches and in oceans add up to a big problem for turtles, sea birds, fish and marine mammals. Here are a few easy alternatives that will help you get your numbers down.



PHOTO CREDIT: JEFF HUNTER

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

"From saying no to plastic bags at the grocery store to declining a plastic straw with your beverage, there are easy ways we can protect our world's oceans."
- Susan Rockefeller, Director, Mission of Mermaids, missionofmermaids.com

"Cut 6-pack rings before discarding or recycling them, to help keep marine life from becoming entangled."
- Susan Knight, underwater photographer; susanknightstudios.com

"Everyone can help by reducing the use of plastics and encouraging reuse and recycling."
- Stephen Kress, VP for Bird Conservation, National Audubon Society, audubon.org

"Our oceans are littered with grocery bags, drink lids, water bottles and candy wrappers. If we want healthy sea life, we need to keep garbage out of our oceans. We can make it happen, but it's got to become a national priority."
- Emily Jeffers, Attorney, Center for Biological Diversity, biologicaldiversity.org

"Approximately 90 percent of floating trash in the oceans is plastic. There is no question that we cannot continue to create massive floating islands of trash without impacting our precious natural heritage."
- Leda Huta, Executive Director, Endangered Species Coalition, stopextinction.org

Reusable Bamboo

Utensils Fork? Check. Knife? Check. Spoon? Check. Chopsticks? Yup! Keep plastic utensils out of the mouths of hungry seabirds with the To Go Ware bamboo utensil set. Comes with a holster in stylish colors with a handy carabiner clip. \$12.95; to-goware.com.



Net Ditty Sack

A handy solution for carrying small produce and other items within larger bags, these reusable sacks make great 'just-in-case' bags for purchases other than groceries. Stock up with Ecobags' the-more-you-buy, the-more-you-save pricing system. \$2.29-\$2.99; ecobags.com.



Compostable Straws

Parties and events generate the second-largest amount of waste in the U.S., just behind the construction industry! Susty straws, made from renewably harvested plant material, are non-toxic and fully compostable. Susty offers a great selection of earth-friendly plates and bowls, too. \$6.99 pack of 50; sustyparty.com.



Tall Glass Bottles

These dishwasher-safe Giara glass bottles are perfect for storing homemade gourmet salad dressings, flavored oils and vinegars, and home-brewed teas and herbal medicines. The airtight hermetic clamp closure keeps contents fresh. \$8.99 each; containerstore.com



Biodegradable Toothbrush

Each year in the U.S., we throw more than 450 million plastic toothbrushes into landfills. Bogobrush's bristles are made of bio/plastic nylon (polyamide 4), which degrades within a few months of proper composting. \$10 each; bogobrush.com.



On-the-Go Grocery Bag

This bag folds up into a tiny pouch, so no excuses! Keep one in your glove compartment or backpack. Machine washable, available in a wide variety of colors, and holds 2 to 3 times as much as standard plastic grocery bag without straining. \$10; baggu.com.



Gourmet Lunch Tote

Made from neoprene (wetsuit material), this reusable bag insulates for up to four hours. Great for road trips, flights, or any time you want to keep healthy food handy. Machine washable, with zero vinyl or PVC. \$24.99; builtny.com.



Stainless Canteen

The cap is crafted from a single piece of stainless steel and finished with sustainably harvested bamboo. Also available: high-performance, double-walled, vacuum-insulated bottles that function like a thermos. \$32.95; kleankanteen.com.

