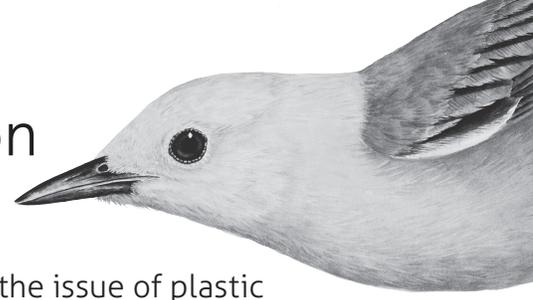


ACTIVITY 2 Explore Plastic Pollution



Overview

Host a plastic cleanup event to introduce your visitors or community to the issue of plastic pollution and how it can harm wildlife. During your WMBD event, create a mock site that is polluted by plastics to help participants understand the challenges of plastic pollution and to discuss its impacts on birds and other wildlife. It's a great way to examine this topic in a safe environment! Refer to page 6 for details about some of the plastic items that are most commonly found as litter.

Upon completion of this activity, ask participants to make a written pledge to reduce their plastic use. (see page 17)

Setup

Select a site where you can place a large container to hold plastics.

Pick an area where it will be easy to clean up both during and after the activity — this can be messy! Please choose used plastics for this activity (**don't purchase more plastics**) and clean them before use.

Next, choose a substrate or material, such as sand, soil, or water, in which the plastics will be hidden. Fill your container with it and thoroughly mix in your plastic examples, leaving some items below the surface and placing others above.

Get Started

Depending on the type of event you are hosting, you will need to either start all participants at the same time or be prepared to work with individuals as they arrive at your education station. Regardless, be sure that all participants understand the activity before they begin. One simple way to provide instructions is to create stations around your container, placing the "tools" for extracting plastics at each station.

Questions and Discussion

It is important to initiate discussion about this topic and to provide participants with solutions to reducing their use of plastics. Consider the following discussion questions as well as some of the potential solutions that we list on page 6:

1. How many plastic items did you find that you use at home?
2. How can these plastics harm birds and other wildlife? And you?
3. What types of plastic items did you find?
4. What are microplastics?
5. What can you do to reduce your plastic use?

OBJECTIVES

- **To clean** a polluted area.
- **To raise awareness** of the impacts of plastics on birds.
- **To motivate behavioral changes** by encouraging participants to reduce their plastic use.
- **To contribute** information about plastics by submitting your data to:
www.environmentamericas.org/events

TIME

15 minutes +

AGES

All children should be accompanied by an adult unless the cleanup engages a youth group with sufficient supervision.

MATERIALS

- A kiddie pool, tub or other large container
- A variety of plastic items of different sizes
- Old t-shirts to prevent soiling clothes
- Microplastic alternatives, such as millet or rice
- Tongs to remove plastics
- Sieve/colander to sift out small pieces
- Data forms
- Pens or pencils

Please do not purchase any new plastics for this activity!