

How does plastic impact aquatic wildlife and human health?

By Alicia Vu - 7.71 - 2020



What is 'Plastic Pollution'?

- Plastic Pollution is increasing every day. For example plastic bottles, bags, straws, etc.
- Plastic Pollution is when we throw out our plastics in the bin not recycling them or reusing them.
- The plastic then goes to a landfill or the ocean where it can affect ocean wildlife, wildlife habitats and humans.
- Plastic Pollution is a global catastrophe. Every year the amount of plastic that washes up on our beaches and that is in the ocean is increasing.



Humans use plastic
in their everyday
lives.



That plastic then goes
in the bin or flies
away



It then goes into the
ocean or landfill

What impact does plastic have on aquatic wildlife?

- Plastic Pollution destroys animal habitats, not just in the ocean but also on land.
- Every year aquatic wildlife dies due to plastic. They can mistake plastic for food or get tangled in it and most likely die.
- All animals get affected by plastic and some of them include seals, turtles, seagulls and marine mammals.



This is a seal eating a plastic bottle



This is a turtle eating a plastic bag



This is a whale about to eat a plastic bag



This is a turtle getting stuck in a fishing net

Where does the plastic that affects the aquatic wildlife come from?

- **Throwing plastic in the bin rather than recycling it.**

When rubbish is transported to a landfill, plastic can blow away and end up in drains, rivers and beaches. Instead, we should put plastic into the recycling bin or reuse it

- **Littering**

When we litter it can also blow away into drains, rivers and beaches.

- **Plastic that goes down the drain**

Plastic that goes down the drain usually ends up in the ocean or rivers.



How much of an impact on wildlife are we really talking about?

- Plastic can impact all animals no matter the species or size
- More than 700 marine species have been infected or have died due to plastic. They either get tangled in it or eat it and are unable to digest it. Every year 100 million marine animals die because of plastic.
- Turtles - More than 50% of sea turtles mistake plastic for food. 50-80% of turtles have died due to plastic.
- Marine mammals - 54% of whales, dolphins and seals are impacted by plastic. Approximately 100 000 marine mammals are killed by plastic every year.



This is a turtle eating a plastic bag



This is a dolphin eating a plastic bag

When plastics affect aquatic wildlife, there can be a follow-on effect for humans. What does this involve?

- When we pollute the ocean with plastic, animals can eat it. For example microplastics. Fish mistaken microplastics for food. Humans then catch the fish and we end up eating not only the fish but also microplastics.
- Scientists have found microplastics 114 aquatic species and more than 50% of those species, we end up eating



This is where humans throw out plastic and fish eat the plastic or microplastic. We then catch the fish and eat it. Therefore we not only eat the fish but also the plastic.

Include some examples of the impact plastics have on aquatic life

- Scientists believe that there's going to be more plastic in the ocean more than fish.
- 50-80% of sea turtles have been found dead due to undigested plastic.
- Seabirds have been feeding their chicks plastic. One study found that 98% of the chicks sampled had ingested plastic.
- Many whale species have been found dead due to plastic. In 2002 there was a Minke Whale found dead with 800 kg of plastic bags in its stomach.



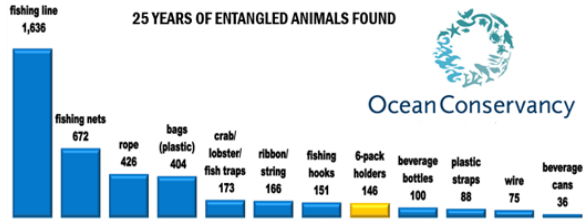
This is a turtle eating a plastic coffee cup



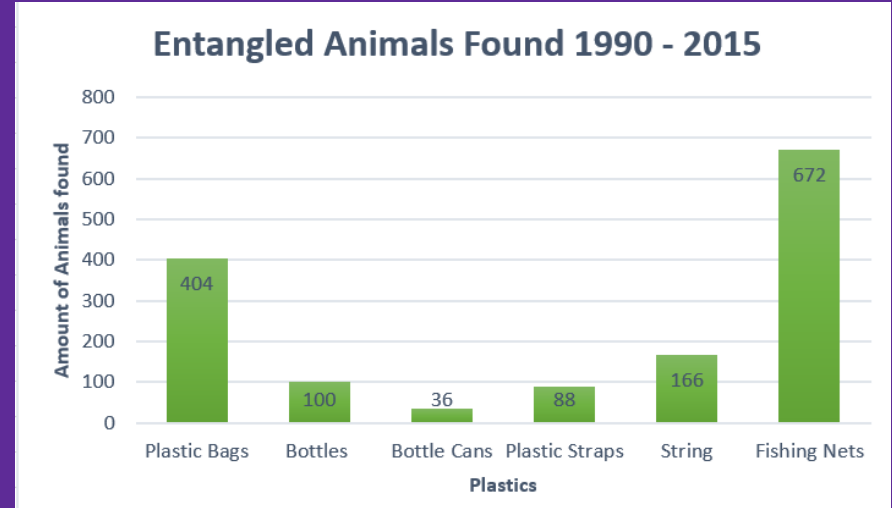
This is a seagull eating a plastic chip bag

Analyse a graph on the effects of plastic on aquatic wildlife

- My graph is based on the graph below.



- The reason why the graph that I have created is half of the one above is that the graph that I created has only plastic that has entangled animals.
- I got the graph that is above from Google. Type - graph of how many aquatic animals have died from plastic. And search for that. Then go to images and you should find it.



On a personal level, what can you do about the plastics that continue to impact aquatic wildlife and human health?

I can save aquatic animals and their habitats from plastic by not....

- Littering and not just plastic but also all rubbish.
- Recycling as much plastic as possible.
- Reusing plastic bags, plastic bottles, containers and straws instead of throwing them out.
- Don't use too much plastic or use the reusable ones.

I can use these good habits to save aquatic wildlife and humans from plastic. Other people can use these too. The more people that use these habits the more aquatic animal lives can be saved.

We can save these aquatic animal's life and many more!



Bibliography

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Pictures - Google

Questions - Still

Thanks for Watching!