

Volunteers Clean Up Permuda Island Reserve



Volunteers paddle around Permuda Island Reserve collecting trash

Reserve staff recently teamed up with Keep Onslow Beautiful to clean up marine debris around Permuda Island Reserve, one of 10 sites within the North Carolina Coastal Reserve and National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Over 25 kayakers, paddle boarders, and canoers gathered bright and early on Saturday morning to participate in the “Paddle Trash Fishing Tournament” event. After a quick safety debrief provided by the island’s Site Manager, Paula Gillikin, volunteers put their paddles to the water and headed to the site to “fish” for trash.

Permuda Island Reserve is a small, narrow 63-acre island located in Stump Sound, between Topsail Island and the mainland. It is approximately 1.5 miles in length and runs parallel to the Intracoastal Waterway. The island is dominated by maritime forest, and the presence of thick vegetation makes the island difficult to access by visitors. During the cleanup volunteers stayed in their kayaks and collected debris scattered along the shoreline.

Empty soda bottles, broken glass, pieces of styrofoam, and lighters were some of the most common items discovered. Reserve staff boated around to collect full trash bags and larger items, like derelict crab pots and pieces of wood. Altogether, over 260 pounds of debris was removed from the island. Following the cleanup, volunteers made their way back to the Onslow Beach Access to receive prizes for the most trash collected and the most unique find – a bag of cat food.



Debris was collected by Reserve staff and taken to the Onslow County Landfill



Lisa Rider, Assistant Director of the Onslow County Solid Waste Department

The tournament was organized by Lisa Rider, Assistant Director of the Onslow County Solid Waste Department and member of Keep Onslow Beautiful. It is designed to bring awareness coastal communities about the negative impacts of marine debris on the environment. “Cleanups such as this one are a long standing tradition in Onslow County and our coastal region,” says Lisa. “As a proud native of eastern North Carolina, I believe that with pride also comes the responsibility to protect and preserve our local ecosystems both now and for future generations, so they too can enjoy the benefits of a natural coastal environment.”

Thanks to Keep Onslow Beautiful, Plastic Ocean Project, On Shore Surf Shop, and all of the dedicated volunteers for contributing time and energy toward keeping Permuda Island Reserve and our waterways pristine. Learn more about the cleanup in [this story by WWAY News Channel 3](#).

For more information about how you can coordinate your own waterway or beach cleanup, please email KeepOnslowBeautiful@onslowcountync.gov or call 910.937.1442.

If you want to learn about additional efforts being made to reduce marine debris along our coast, consider registering for the upcoming N.C Marine Debris Symposium September 12 -14, 2016. More information can be found here: www.ncmarinedebrisymposium.com