

# FAQ – Marine Debris



## 1. Where is the rubbish from?

The rubbish is primarily fishing-related debris from extensive fishing activity in the Arafura Sea, and, floating domestic debris from Southeast Asia. Under the influence of winds and currents, debris enters the Gulf of Carpentaria, then when the wind changes with the onset of the 'dry season', the debris is washed up on the shores of East Arnhem. We used to see more Ghost Nets; we are now seeing more domestic waste. Cape Arnhem is a 'hot spot'- recording some of the highest levels of ocean debris in Australia. But we do need to stop and really look hard at our own plastic use – this is everyone's issue.

## 2. Is anyone doing anything about it?

Yes, we are. Dhimurru have been monitoring and removing marine debris (particularly Ghost Nets) since the late 1990s. However, the 10 Rangers have many ranger responsibilities, including beach clean ups. To help us monitor and remove debris we continue to work closely with key partners and supporters, like Tangaroa Blue, Sea Shepherd, and university researchers.

Tackling marine debris is everyone's responsibility. We really appreciate the help that you can provide.

## 3. Why do I have to complete a data form?

The ocean debris in 2022 is unprecedented. Dhimurru are working with marine scientists to build a story, to help inform international efforts – particularly to STOP using single use plastic. Without the data, we simply don't have the story. A simple to use data form has been created, online. If you want a paper version, just ask. We want to record all the on marine debris from every beach, not only the Cape.

## 4. Any dangers in picking up rubbish?

- Sun exposure would be your biggest danger.
- Liquids - It's important to note that *some* bottles do contain urine, carefully pour this out.
- Needles and syringes - please carefully place in a thick plastic bottle. Bring the sharp container to the syringe, not the other way.
- Lures have many hooks, for catching squid, be careful of them.

## 5. I'll just take the rubbish to the tip, is that ok?

No – we LOVE marine debris. Not really, but we do want ALL of it. We look at it, weigh it, and photograph significant items. Please either:

- Fill a thick rubbish bag (we can supply material ones)
- Leave in a clear spot, for Dhimurru to collect (near our signs, near bollards)
- Drop off to us here in Nhulunbuy, 11 Arnhem Road. 9.30-1pm M-F

## 6. Do I need to do anything special?

Pick up all rubbish, any size, any shape.

Shake off/pour out the sand.

Pour out the liquids, being careful.

Animals eat the plastic; the small pieces are very dangerous to our marine animals.

Make sure you bring us (or take a photograph) of any wildlife (ie. fish, turtle, etc.) impacted by ocean debris, eg. entanglements.

### 7. Why can't I pick up from this area, at Cape Arnhem?

Dhimurru has been conducting an annual marine debris survey of Wanuwuy (Cape Arnhem) since early 2000. This survey is the longest running continuous marine debris survey in Australia.



### 8. I'm keen to get involved more, who do I contact?

Jessica Puntoriero is the Project Facilitator (Sea Country) at Dhimurru; [fac01@dhimurru.com.au](mailto:fac01@dhimurru.com.au)

Join the Face Book group to keep up with what's happening locally; Arnhem Coast Clean Up  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/623487657996953/?ref=share>

Please post your photos on our FB group, use the link to record your data story and email if you want more information.