



STORM RESPONSE

STORM SURGES

Increasingly, storms and the damage they cause are being highlighted in the national news. Along the coast, much of this damage results from **storm surges**, which occur when strong winds push water (and powerful waves) high up the shore.



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With storms expected to become more **common** and **intense** as the climate changes, it is expected that we will also see more damaging impacts on marine environments and wildlife.



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STORM RESPONSE

RECORDING EVIDENCE

Storms can impact marine wildlife and habitats in many ways. **Evidence** of these impacts can be seen along the coast following rough weather in the form of...



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POLLUTION

Such as litter, nurdles and sewage.



© Violet Fraser

BEACHED FISHING GEAR

Like creels (crab and lobster pots), rope and nets.



© Emily Burton

INJURED, STRANDED OR DEAD WILD ANIMALS

Including seabirds, seals, whales & dolphins.



© Dora Roden

EROSION

...of dunes, cliffs, and other coastal features.

WHY SHOULD WE RECORD THE EVIDENCE?

By tracking the evidence, we can provide conservationists and scientists with the data needed to **inform the public**, to **prompt government action** and to **aid conservation efforts** to protect our vital marine species and habitats against such events in the future.





STORM RESPONSE

WHAT YOU CAN DO



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Climate change is a big issue and can feel overwhelming. In 2022, it was found that around three in every four adults were worried about climate change, but taking action can help you feel better about it. **No action for nature is too small or insignificant.** Every effort makes a difference!

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Whether you're walking the dog, going for a hike with your friends or simply curious about what's washed up following stormy weather, you could be helping take action for nature by making a few simple observations.

Have a look through this handy guide to find out what you should be looking out for along the coast after storms, who to report it to and how you can do even more to protect our stunning coasts!





WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND...

INJURED, BEACHED OR DEAD WILD ANIMALS



The Scottish Seabird Centre is not an animal rescue or rehabilitation facility. We do not have the infrastructure or expertise to assist with the practical rescue, relocation, or care of injured wild animals. This page and the following links contain some general information and advice, signposting the organisations that might be able to help if you come across injured, beached or dead wild animals along the coast.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING WHO TO CONTACT TO REPORT THESE INCIDENTS, FOLLOW THESE LINKS TO THE 'WILDLIFE FAQS' ON OUR WEBSITE...



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INJURED MARINE MAMMALS INC. BEACHED/STRANDED



www.seabird.org/wildlife/injured-or-stranded-marine-mammals



© Greg MacVean

INJURED SEABIRDS



www.seabird.org/wildlife/injured-seabirds



© Carrie Bevan

DEAD SEABIRDS AND MARINE MAMMALS INC. RINGED BIRDS



www.seabird.org/wildlife/dead-seabirds-and-marine-mammals

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND...

RINGED OR TAGGED BIRDS

Sometimes, you might find **injured or dead seabirds** with one or more small rings around their legs. These lightweight, sometimes coloured rings will have **numbers and/or letters** on them.

Harmless to the bird but invaluable for research, rings can help us gather **important data on species populations** to inform conservation. By notifying researchers of ringed birds, we can help them build a picture of **survival rates**.

WHAT DO RINGS LOOK LIKE?

- **Small.**
- Located on **one or both legs**.
- Can be **coloured** (e.g. yellow, blue or green), **white** or **silver**.
- Display a series of **letters and/or numbers**.

WHAT TO RECORD?

- **Photograph** the ring(s), clearly showing the **code** (letters/numbers).
- Write down the code.

PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH BIRD CARCASSES OR INJURED SEABIRDS! ALWAYS MAKE YOUR OBSERVATIONS FROM A SAFE DISTANCE.

WHERE TO RECORD IT?

The **British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)** have an online portal called **Euring**, which you can use to report your finds:
https://www.bto.org/how-you-can-help/report-something#ringed_birds





WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND...

LITTER

SURVEYS

Litter surveys are vital in the battle for cleaner oceans. Removing litter does not put an end to the problem, as the next high tide will only replace it with more. By collecting evidence of pollution via surveys, organisations can take it to governing bodies and corporations to campaign for cleaner oceans and **stop litter at its source**.

HOW DO I JOIN A SURVEY?

Various charities collect information from litter surveys. These include:

- **The Marine Conservation Society** - "Beachwatch"
- **Keep Scotland Beautiful**
- **Fidra** - "The Great Nurdle Hunt"



Go to their websites and social media pages to locate a beach clean and survey in your area, or to find out how you can organise one yourself at a time and place that suits you.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND...

LITTER

BORROW BEACH CLEAN KIT

You can borrow beach-clean kit from the Scottish Seabird Centre any day between 10 AM and 4 PM.

Volunteering your time to contribute to local datasets and clean-up the coastline is a great way to help improve marine habitats and protect wildlife.

WHAT'S IN THE KIT?

- A litter picker
- A bag for the litter you find
- Gloves

WHAT TO BRING?

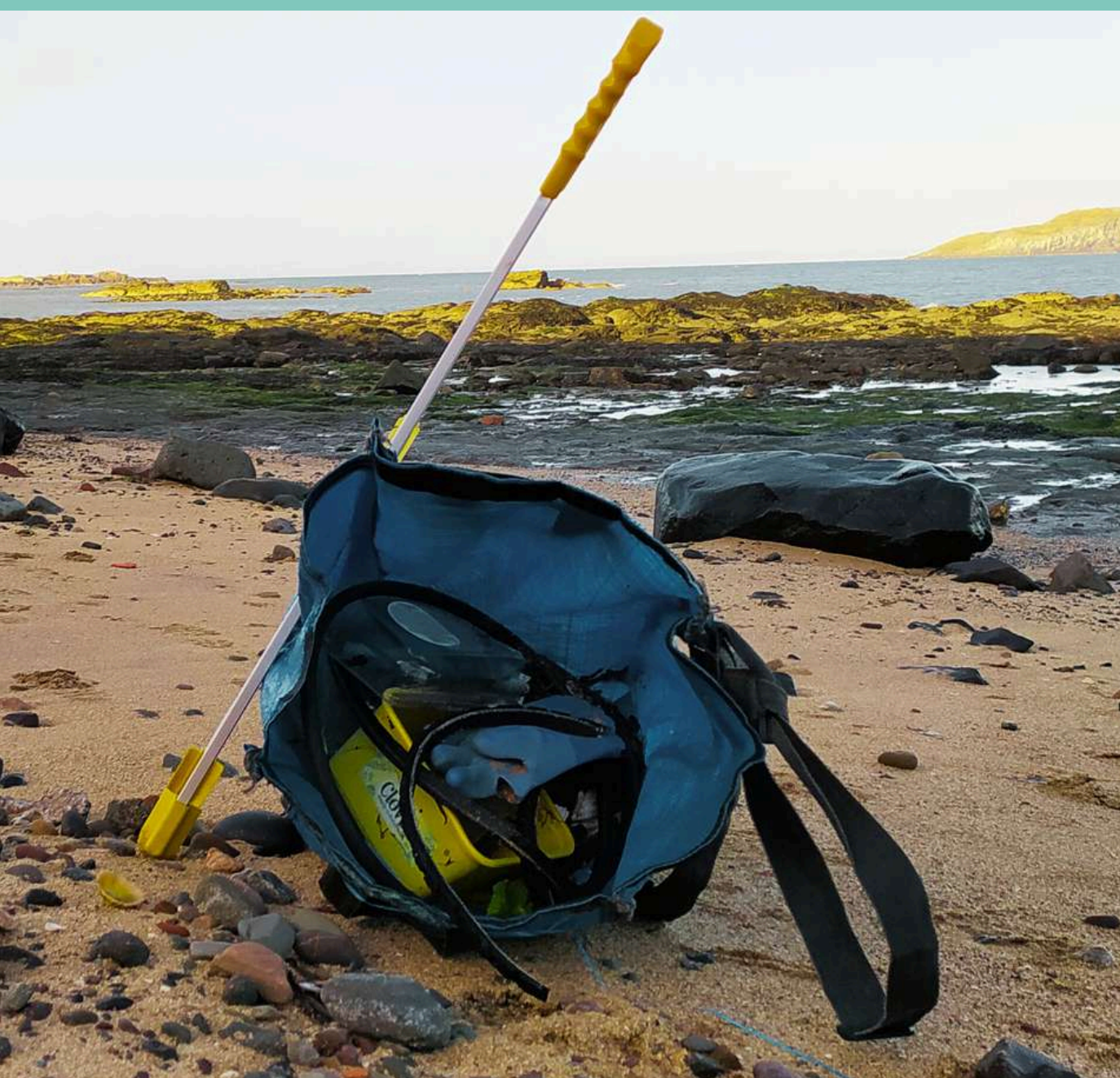
Appropriate clothing and footwear for the weather outside.

WHO TO ASK?

Arrange to collect kit for yourself or your group at a time that suits you:
conservationprojects@seabird.org

Please bear in mind that we have limited equipment which will be distributed on a first-come-first-served basis.

If you are cleaning a beach outwith North Berwick, you will need to arrange for litter disposal with East Lothian Council.





WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND...

SEWAGE

WHY IS IT THERE?

To prevent the backup of sewage into homes, excess rainwater from storms is released into rivers and the sea through overflow sites. This also releases sewage.



HOW IS IT HARMFUL?

Human or animal waste can contain potentially **harmful bacteria**, such as *E.coli*. This can cause **sickness** in humans and wildlife. Other ways this bacteria can enter the sea is through unbagged **dog faeces** and **litter**.

WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR?

Along the coast, signs of sewage might include...

- Toilet paper, wet wipes and other sanitary products on the shore.
- Brown or grey, milky water - often pungent and sometimes foamy (not to be mistaken for foamy brown blooms of marine algae!).



WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND...

SEWAGE

WHAT SHOULD I RECORD?

- Take **photos** of what you see.
- **Describe** what you see - make a note. What does it look/smell like? How extensive is it? Is it in the water, or on the beach?
- The **date, time** and **place** you saw it. A precise location is extremely helpful. Google maps can give you a grid reference, or try using What Three Words.



WHO DO I REPORT IT TO?

Contact the environmental regulators directly through their **incident hotlines** - 0800 80 70 60 (or 0300 065 3000 for Wales).

You can also:

- **Write** to your local MP.
- Email your evidence to **Surfers Against Sewage** (safeseasservice@sas.org.uk), an environmental charity who use the information to highlight pollution incidents to the public and campaign for cleaner, safer seas.



RESOURCES

USEFUL APPS

If you own a smartphone, apps are a handy tool to help you document your findings whilst out and about. They are designed to be **simple and easy to use**, and the information you submit through them will go straight to the people who need it.



SAFER SEAS & RIVERS SERVICE

An app by Surfers Against Sewage. Can be used to **alert your local MP and water company** to sewage incidents and to **report sewage-related illness**.

EYSEA

Submit images locating and identifying instances of **ocean and coastal pollution** (worldwide).



© Violet Fraser



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BEACH TRACK

An app by SMASS & SMEEF. Can be used to log sightings of **dead marine mammals and litter** during walks along the coast.

BEACHWATCH

An app by the Marine Conservation Society. Use it to **organise a beach clean** or **find your nearest event** to join in, then **submit your findings**.



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