

THIS WEEK IN "LITTERLAND"

litterpreventionprogram.com

MAY 26, 2019

Ex-PM Theresa May's legacy

UK's soon-to-be-former Prime Minister Theresa May is owed a nod from this publication for advancing the litter issue domestically and on the world stage. She spearheaded an international partnership to attack marine litter and shepherded national policy changes including a [ban](#) across England on the sale of plastic straws, drink stirrers and cotton buds with plastic stems as of April 2020. Criticized as far too modest, at least May put some measures in place. She was a front line advocate for action on littering. May announced her resignation May 24.

Whose responsible? Consumers!

In a YouGov survey in the UK, 68% of those polled say the main responsibility for takeaway packaging disposal rests with individual consumers over corporations (9%), retailers (8%) or local councils (5%). Waste management corporation FCC commissioned the poll.

Paradise littered, paradise lost

Authors of a study of the remote Cocos Keeling Islands off the coast of Australia say there is more plastic in the oceans than stars in the Milky Way. Results were released this week, an analysis of data collected from a survey in 2017, by researchers from the University of Tasmania and Victoria University. The islands housed 414 million pieces of plastic weighing 238 metric tons, the approximate weight of a blue whale, said their report, [published Thursday in Scientific Reports](#) journal. Twenty-five of the chain of 27 islands are uninhabited.

Canada will be taking back its garbage

Canada says it will dispatch a ship to the Philippines in late June to finally cart away the contaminated trash it sent there for recycling six years ago claiming it was plastic. The languishing, tainted trash may arrive in Canada ahead of schedule. A Filipino presidential spokesperson said June's too late and they'll be returning 69 of the containers to Canada this week or next.

DID YOU KNOW?

The tainted loads of Canadian trash that are returning from the Philippines are destined for incineration at a Metro Vancouver waste-to-energy facility in Burnaby, BC.



'Sand graffiti' ruining ancient dunes

Formed over a period of thousands of years, renowned sand dunes along 16 km of coast in Tottori, Japan are being ruined by overseas visitors writing oversized messages in the sand. Authorities there are fed up with what they call 'sand graffiti', which was officially banned a decade ago. More than 200 instances were recorded in 2018 and 3,300 in the last decade. High volume tourism has its price, littering being part of it, to such a degree that a law against eating or drinking while walking is being touted in Kamakura, Japan's ancient capital city.

HEADLINE LITTER GRABBERS (MAY 19-26)

Some of what made our News Reel this week

#GlitterIsLitter trending with Class of 2019 (5/19)

Florida Gulf State University Sustainability Office and others use theme Glitter Is Litter on social media to dissuade students from using glitter and confetti in graduation celebrations. Use flower petals or hole-punched leaves instead, one tweet suggested.

The latest from UN's Basel Convention (5/20)

Moves were taken at the UN Basel Convention in Geneva recently to reduce and control non-recyclable and difficult-to-recycle plastic.

Obviously back to school for these youths (5/21)

A weekend high school party left a huge mess in a wooded area of Torbay. A volunteer stuffed and hauled away six big bags and said it hardly made a dent.

City turns its cigarette butts into benches (5/23)

Ocean City has launched an innovative program to collect cigarette butts and have them made into public benches. Maryland Coastal Bays Program offers free, 1,000-butt capacity ash receptacles ("butt huts") to any organization or group that commits to recycling butts. The idea is to capture those nasty, plastic filter tips before they hit the ground and pollute. Then the butts go to TerraCycle, a company that converts them into plastic construction materials and products.