

2024 ADVENT CHALLENGE



Complete our daily litter-themed challenges to be in with the chance of winning a prize!

We challenge you to brave the cold weather and get outside this December. Whether it's for five minutes or an hour, along your local beach or the path to work, look out for litter along the way and make a small difference every day.

Find the litter we've highlighted for the first 24 days in December and put it in the bin, improving your local space for nature and people alike, one small scrap at a time.

Take a photo each day to show us what you found! Share your findings in the comments on our Social Media pages or send us an email at info@seabird.org





DAY 1. 1X PLASTIC BAG

This can be any kind of plastic bag, from sandwich bags to bulk bags.

DID YOU KNOW? After much campaigning, a charge for single-use plastic bags was introduced in Scotland in late 2014, with an average of 800 million previously being issued each year. Since then, the Marine Conservation Society has reported a reduction of ~80% of these bags found on UK beaches!

DAY 2. 2X CREEL SHEATHS

**Not on the beach?
Find 2x cable ties!**

Creels (or fishing pots) are used to catch things like crabs or lobsters. Their metal bottoms are coated in plastic, which perishes and falls off over time and can look a lot like seaweed or a stick. See out 'Litter Lookalikes' guide for more info.



DAY 3. 3X BOTTLE TOPS

**These can be metal or plastic
(we'll also accept cork or foil).**

Small items like bottle tops are easily ingested by animals and can cause blockages or internal harm. It's easy to lose a bottle top, which is why you may have noticed that plastic bottles now have the lids permanently attached!

DAY 4. 4X METAL CANS

**Can't find entire cans? You can count
fragments!**

DID YOU KNOW? Many metal cans have plastic linings to prevent the metal from being corroded by its contents. The Marine Conservation Society's 2023 'Beachwatch' results revealed that metal drinks cans were found on 66% of UK beaches surveyed last year.



DAY 5. 5X CRISP PACKETS

Can you identify the different brands?

Plastic food packets can remain in the environment for a long time. Last winter, storms released historic litter from East Lothian's sand dunes. Some of this had been trapped there for decades!

For example, in North Berwick a crisp packet was found dating back to 1968!





DAY 6. 6X PLASTIC BOTTLES

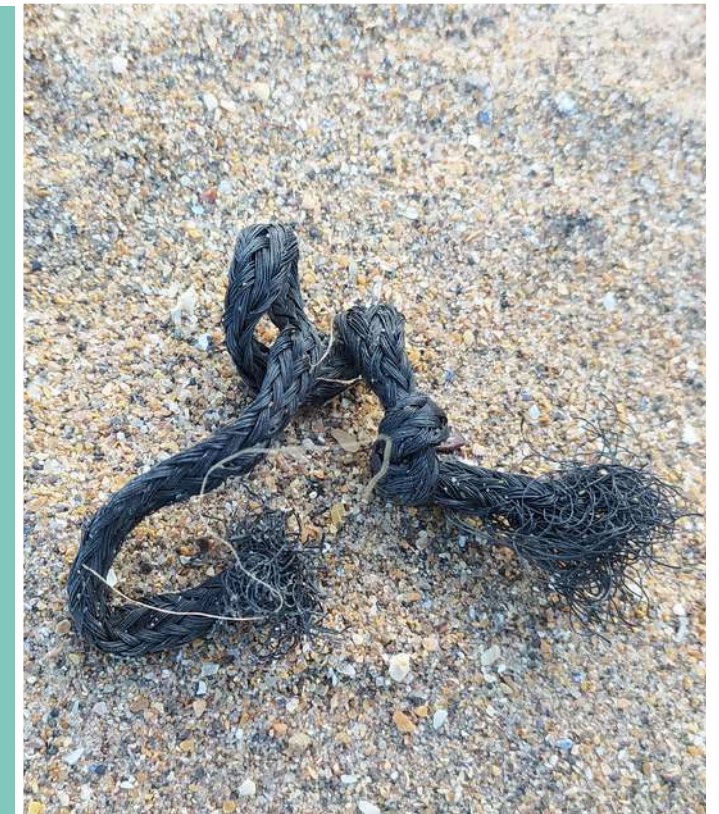
They can be big or small. We'll also accept plastic containers.

You can help reduce your plastic bottle waste by filling up a reusable bottle before you go out. That way you won't have to buy a drink whilst you're away from home - and it saves you a bit of money, too!

DAY 7. 7X FISHING TWINE

Not on the beach? Search for disposable cutlery instead!

Loose fishing rope/twine/line can seriously harm anything that eats it or becomes entangled in it. Why not make something from the fishing twine you find? It comes in a beautiful array of colours and can be used for making jewellery!



DAY 8. 8X WET WIPES

Not on the beach or can't find any? Look for tissues/cardboard instead.

Over 21,000 wet wipes were recorded on beaches in 2023. Wet wipes used to contain plastic, meaning they won't fully break down, but this year the UK Government announced legislation banning wet wipes containing plastic.

Yet another successful litter campaign! **Well done!**

DAY 9. 9X COTTON BUD STICKS

Not on the beach? Search for takeaway cups instead!

Is it a straw or a cotton bud stick? Cottonbud sticks have small ridges on either end where the cotton would be attached. Remember, please don't flush your cotton buds down the loo! Lots of them escape into the sea from sewers.



DAY 10. 10X CIGARETTE BUTTS

Did you know that cigarette's contain plastic? The filters are made from plastic. As the filters are the part that is thrown away after use, this causes a big environmental problem when not disposed of properly. Cigarette butts are considered to be the most littered item of single-use plastic in the world!





DAY 11. 11X PLASTIC PIECES

If not removed quickly, large items of litter break down into ever smaller pieces. These are very difficult to remove and can stay in the environment for decades—even hundreds of years! Fortunately, by removing the big pieces before they break down, we can significantly reduce the amount of microplastics.

Beach cleans really do make a difference!

DAY 12. 12X NURDLES

Not on the beach? Find litter with a date on it!

Nurdles are at the beginning of the plastic production chain, used to create most everyday plastics. The charity Fidra encourage people to participate in their global campaign to monitor and record nurdle pollution, gathering evidence to stop this pollution at its source.

Find out more about how to take action [HERE](#).



DAY 13. AN ITEM OF CLOTHING

Before you pick it up, please make sure it hasn't been laid down by someone nearby who needs it!

Any scrap of fabric or garment will do, even if it isn't entire. It could be a sock, some sunglasses, a shoelace... In East Lothian, we regularly find old leather soles from shoes washed up. We're still wondering where they've come from!

DAY 14. RUBBER OR ELASTIC

Bonus points if it's a lobster band! →

Lobster bands are small, chunky elastic bands used to secure the pincers of crabs or lobsters. Car tyres are a big source of rubber pollution and - surprisingly - something that we regularly find on beach cleans, whether they're from bikes, cars or even tractors!



DAY 15. POLYSTYRENE OR STYRO- FOAM

How many pieces can you find?

Polystyrene fragments easily into tiny pieces, is incredibly light and will be carried long distances by wind or waves. This makes it very difficult to remove! It has a variety of sources, from the packaging in your parcels to buoys and gigantic pontoons!



DAY 16. SMALLEST & LARGEST

Marine pollution comes in all shapes and sizes. The ocean can powerfully throw up items weighing many tonnes. On the other hand, tiny fragments of litter are so light that there are few places they haven't been carried to.

**Please don't remove anything too large and heavy!
Contact your local council or ranger service.**

DAY 17. SWEET WRAPPERS

For increased difficulty, how many different types/brands can you identify out of what you pick up? Are they all plastic? Or are some made of foil? Are they full wrappers, or fragments?



DAY 18. LITTER LOOKALIKE

Find something natural that looks like plastic...

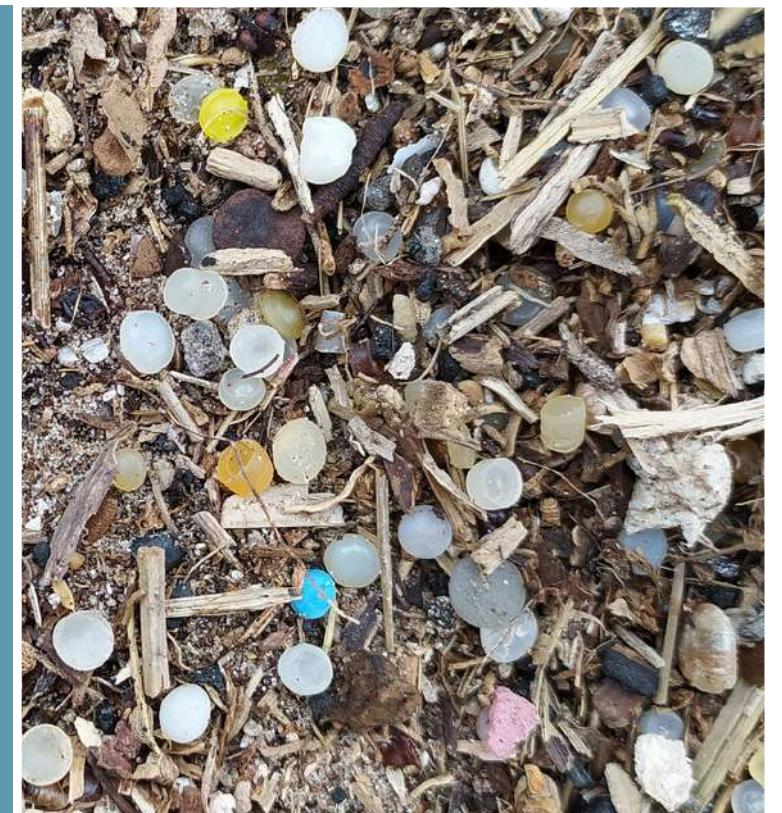
Have a closer look at some of the items you are picking up. Seaweed, for example, does an exceptional job of looking like litter. For help, check out our **Litter Lookalikes** guide.

We don't need to bin natural items like seaweed, leaves, feathers, bones & shells, which will break down and release precious nutrients back into the environment. It's all part of the natural cycle that life needs to thrive.

DAY 19. NATURAL... BUT NOT!

Find something man-made that looks natural...

When you look closely amongst sticks & seaweed, you might be surprised by how much plastic you can find.
e.g. the creel sheaths from an earlier challenge look a lot like sticks. See our **Litter Lookalikes** guide for help.



DAY 20. ALL THE COLOURS!

How many different colours of litter can you find?

The helpful thing about plastic is that it's often brightly coloured, making it easy to spot amongst the muted, natural tones of the ground. What's the most common colour? Are you noticing a pattern?





DAY 21. WEIRDEST FIND WINS!

This is a fun one! There's no limit to the weird and wonderful things that can wash up on the beach or along a riverbank. For example, when the Scottish Coastal Cleanup were on a remote beach on Ulva earlier this year they found a kick-boxing mask, a few hard-hats and a children's push-car!

DAY 22. FAST-FOOD

Something 'fast-food' related.

Foil, a takeaway box or cutlery for example. Bonus points if you can find multiple items, each made of a different material! Are they branded?



DAY 23. LITTER WITH LIFE

It could be a bottle coated with barnacles, a mossy shoe... or this ball of polystyrene with heather growing through it, which the Scottish Coastal Cleanup found on the isle of Skye earlier this year!

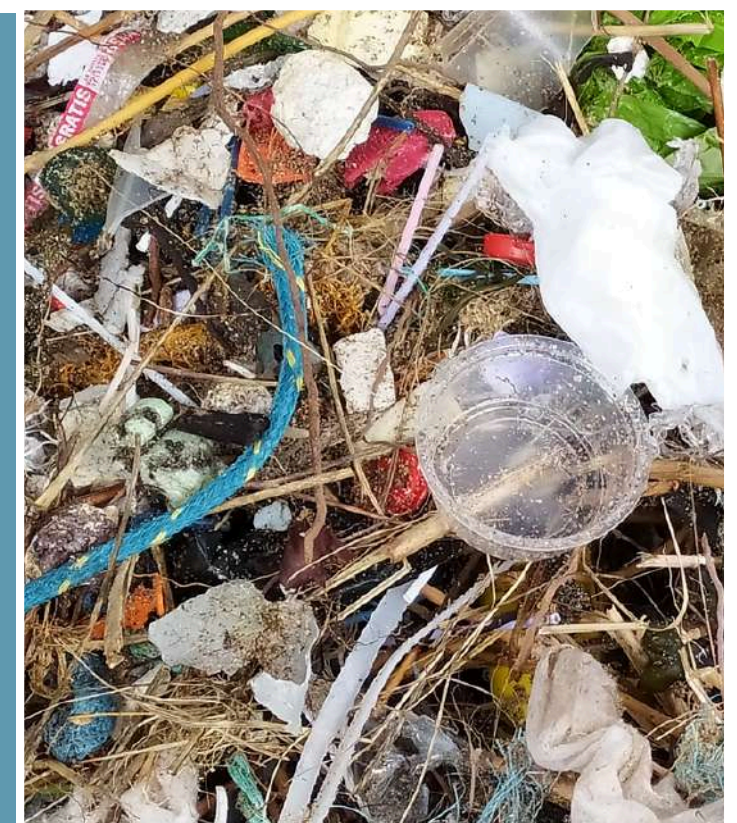
In cases like these, should we remove the litter or leave it (and the living organism) where it is?

Let us know your thoughts!

DAY 24. QUICK BLITZ!

Remove as much litter as you can in 5 - 10 minutes!

You don't need to be out for hours to make a difference - it's amazing what you can do in a matter of minutes! Share how much you find—and weigh it, too, if you want to go the extra mile and really impress us!



WELL DONE CHALLENGE COMPLETED!

If you haven't already done so, please let us know how you got on (with photos of your daily finds) if you would like to be entered into our prize draw.

Good luck!

