

Beach clean on Cramond Beach this Saturday

Give Cramond a litter free start to spring. Public urged to help clean up a jewel in Edinburgh's coast

The Marine Conservation Society (MCS) is organising a beach clean and litter survey to help de-clutter Cramond beach to make sure it's a pleasure to visit for walkers and visitors as the weather (hopefully) becomes a bit more settled.

MCS staff and members of the public clean up Cramond four times a year as part of the Society's ongoing Beachwatch project. It's the charity's 'adopted' beach in Scotland as its Scottish office is based in the city's Canning Street. MCS's beachclean projects are supported by players of Edinburgh-based People's Postcode Lottery.

The clean-up will be led by MCS' Scotland Conservation Officer, Catherine Gemmell, **on Saturday 6 April at 10.00am.**



Catherine Gemmell says the tide of litter washing up on our shores is not just unpleasant to look at, it can harm and even kill some of our best-loved marine wildlife: “Over 170 species including seabirds, turtles and whales have mistaken marine

litter for food and actually eaten it, which in many cases has resulted in starvation, poisoning and ultimately a slow, painful death. Plastic packaging and discarded fishing nets injure, entangle and drown some of Scotland's favourite marine animals, including seals and dolphins.

"In January, MCS volunteer beach cleaners picked up 367 items of litter from a 100m stretch of Cramond beach, but previous April cleans have resulted in over 4,500 items being picked up by volunteers in just 100 metres. Last April's clean and litter survey saw over 800 wet wipes picked up along with over 1,400 pieces of plastic, including a set of false teeth!

"It's a great family day out and the number of people that turn up to clean Cramond has been steadily rising over the last few years as awareness of plastic pollution in our seas is now high on the public's agenda," says Catherine Gemmell.

In Scotland, the Government has committed to a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) where the public pay a deposit on single use drinks bottles and cans and get their money back when they return them to reverse vending machines. MCS wants a scheme run by a not-for-profit operator that will cover drinks bottles and cans of all materials and sizes.

"On Scottish beaches, bottles and cans are always among the top finds," says Catherine Gemmell. "Since 2014, over 10,000 plastic and glass drinks bottles and metal drinks cans have been found during our annual Great British Beach Clean event held every September. We are confident a DRS will see a huge reduction in the number we pick up, just as the number of carrier bags we collected dropped after the introduction of the 5p carrier bag charge was introduced."

Anyone wanting to take part in the clean-up at Cramond can find out more by emailing: catherine.gemmell@mcsuk.org or phoning: 0131 633 4000 , or visit www.mcsuk.org and clicking on the get involved tab.