

The IMPACT of LITTERING on our ENVIRONMENT

If we don't put our rubbish in the bins provided, it can end up in our waterways and harm the animals living there. Please use the bins and help save our wildlife.

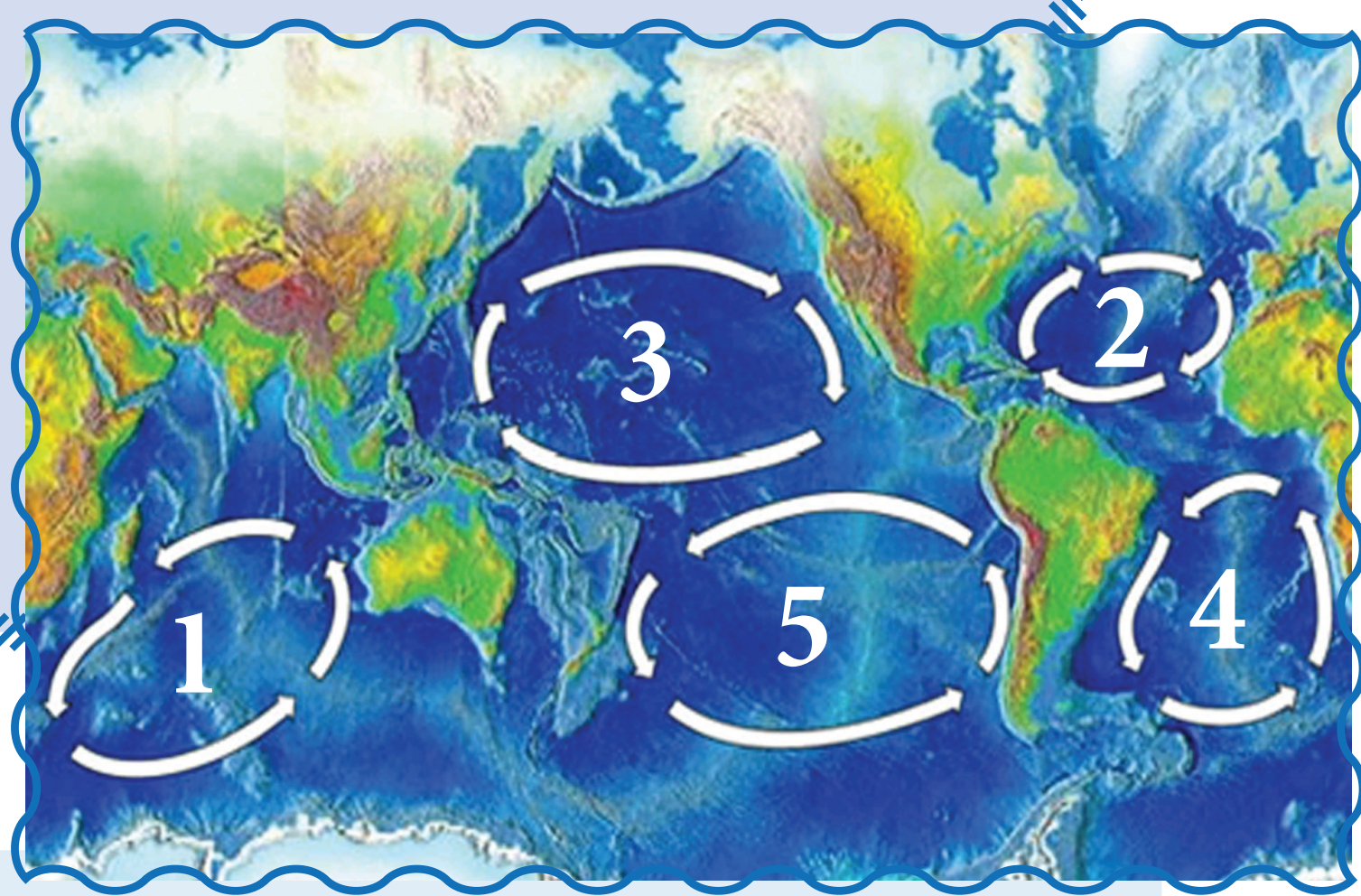


"Where does all the litter go?"

A large amount of litter is washed down storm water drains, into our waterways and eventually in to the ocean.

Once in the ocean it is swept up by ocean currents called Gyres. A gyre is a large system of rotating ocean currents that circulates between continents associated with large wind movements. There are Five Major Gyres:

1. Indian Ocean Gyre
2. North Atlantic Gyre
3. North Pacific Gyre
4. South Atlantic Gyre
5. South Pacific Gyre

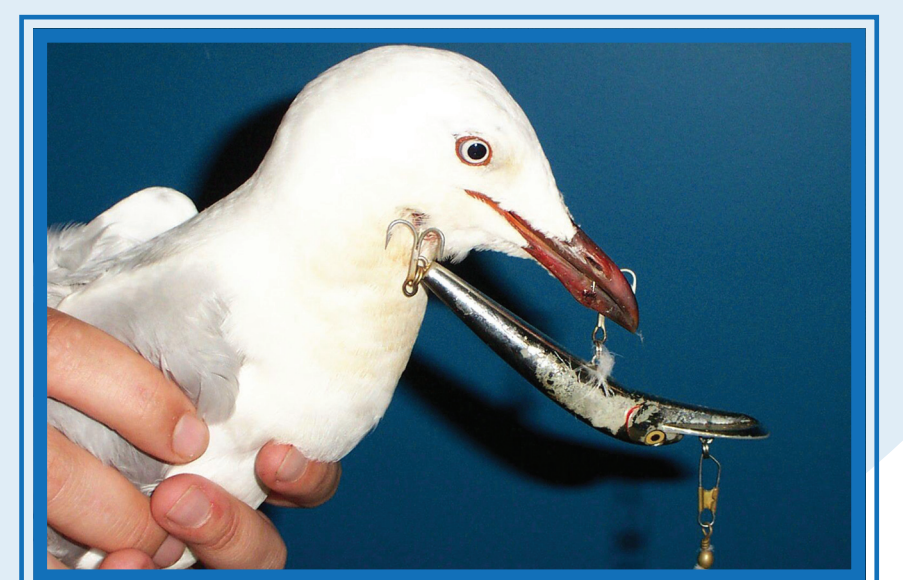


When litter meets the ocean

When litter washes into waterways, it eventually becomes marine pollution. This marine pollution can be gathered up by ocean currents and gyres. These rotate and draw in waste and debris from across the ocean. Large islands of marine debris pollution are also known as Ocean Garbage Patches. The size is unknown because most of the debris is under the water and hard to see.

What's in the these Ocean Garbage Patches?

These 'waste islands' are made up of mostly plastic debris. These plastics breakdown in sunlight and release toxic chemicals. These can be eaten by marine animals.



Effects on wildlife

Large pieces of plastic can end up in the stomachs of animals such as sea turtles as well as sea birds like albatross. Smaller particles can be eaten by jellyfish which are then eaten by larger fish and many of these larger fish may be eaten by humans.



For more information visit: www.aaeewa.org.au

www.rowa.org.au/pr_ttrs_pollution.php

www.environment.gov.au/coasts/pollution/marine-debris/index.html