

# Trash-a-thon Citizen Science Data Collection

## Why participate in Data Collection?

Citizen science is a very important part of Coastal Programs at the NEC. Our Coastal Program's staff and volunteers track marine and neighborhood debris to find local waste patterns (what kind of trash is being found and where) so we can advocate for waste reduction solutions in our community.

## Trash-a-thon Data Collection Methods:

### 1. NOAA Marine Debris Tracker App

- a. This app can be used by anyone with a smartphone or GPS capable tablet.
- b. For a tutorial on how to use the app please view this [Infographic](#) or [How To Video](#)
  - We recommend downloading the app ahead of time to familiarize yourself with how it works.
  - If you find something important you'd like to note about a specific item (such as a brand name), please refer to [page 11 of the infographic](#).
- c. **IMPORTANT:** After you have entered your data into the app be sure to take note (on your phone or on a piece of paper) of how many items you picked up before you submit your data. Once your data has been uploaded it will be difficult to recover that information.
  - If you do need to recover data from a submitted cleanup, [visit this page](#). Choose "Northcoast Environmental Center" from the list, type in your app login info, click "update map," and your data collection should appear on the map.

### 2. Paper Data Collection Cards

- a. If you do not have access to a smart phone or would prefer to use paper for data collection please download and print the [Paper Data Collection Cards](#)
  - If you do not have access to a printer please email [casey@ournec.org](mailto:casey@ournec.org) and we will get a data card to you.
- b. Once you have collected your data
  - Take a photo or scan the data card and email it to [casey@ournec.org](mailto:casey@ournec.org)
  - Or drop your data card off at the NEC office through the mail slot

## Trash-a-thon Data Collection Reporting:

1. Once you have completed your cleanup, it is very important that you keep track of and report your trash collection numbers. There are two ways to do this:
  - a. Login to your RallyUp account and go to “my account.” Click on the Trashathon 2020 campaign and select “**Enter Activity Results.**”
  - b. Alternatively, you can email your numbers to [chelsea@ournec.org](mailto:chelsea@ournec.org) and we will update RallyUp on your behalf.

## Plastic Pollution Resources

- If you would like to take a deeper dive into the data you’ve collected, check out the [National Geographic Plastic Pollution Action Journal](#)
- If you’re homeschooling your child or you’re a teacher, check out the [Toolkit for classroom monitoring project](#) to incorporate data collection into your classroom.
- If you would like to learn more about plastic pollution check out these [story of stuff videos](#)
- If you would like to learn more about microplastics watch this [video by 5gyres](#)

## Need Help?

If you need assistance on anything related to Trash-a-thon please contact [chelsea@ournec.org](mailto:chelsea@ournec.org) and [casey@ournec.org](mailto:casey@ournec.org).