

HONG KONG WWF's COASTAL WATCH BACK TO BEAUFORT ISLAND

Yes dear members, it's now time for the Team ABC to revisit our adopted beach on Beaufort Island for our second clean up and marine survey. You may remember from previous articles in Horizons on this issue that the ABC has committed to this territory wide Beach Clean-up campaign / marine survey, in an effort to educate and engage the general public in this very worthwhile 2 year project.

Background

WWF have selected 27 sites located all around Hong Kong, ranging from beaches & estuarine environments to mangrove and rocky shorelines. Each site has been allocated to a particular group of volunteers who are responsible to clean-up the area of rubbish and waste, conduct a brief ecological survey and very importantly, monitor their allocated site throughout the 2 year period during both wet and dry seasons.

Team ABC was allocated the very picturesque beach Beaufort Island that had become to focus of a much earlier clean-up campaign as it was on that particular beach the offending container full of plastic pellets was eventually washed up in 2009.

Team ABC's First Visit October 2014

Plastic pellets were still to be found in the sand and amongst the rocks during Team ABC's visit in October last year, but thanks to an earlier WWF clean up, most of the offending plastic had been removed – along with the ruptured and partially sunk container itself. However, Hong Kong beaches do not stay clean for long and there was a huge amount of accumulated flotsam & jetsam that needed to be removed on our visit in October. Washed up rubbish that included; polystyrene fish boxes, old fishing nets, plastic bottles, plastic bags, indeed a whole plethora of Hong Kong's unwanted mess. see pictures.

Planning Team ABC's Second Visit: Proposed date 19th April 2015

And so dear members, Team ABC are about to return to Beaufort Island beach and once again to give 'our' beach another going over and looking for volunteers from our membership.

The format will be pretty much the same as before, the ABC Junk will depart ABC around 10:00 – 10:30, Sunday 19th April, for Middle Island. There activities begin with a short intro and demonstration on to methods, equipment and procedures on the marine survey aspect of the program by our WWF Team Scientists, Patrick and Maggie for those members who were not involved on the first visit. Teams will then be formed and roles of each team allocated. The Junk will then proceed to Beaufort Island and the teams will go ashore to clean up and conduct their marine survey tasks.

Low tide is around 3:40 on that day and it is hoped that we might begin the clean up around 12:00 noon and complete the marine survey by 3:40 so may have the opportunity to enjoy a late lunch/early dinner at the Po Toi Seafood Restaurant on the adjacent island if the team so wish.

Remember book your place early

I'm pleased to say on the last occasion, the enthusiasm from ABC members was outstanding and that we had a very full junk on the day. Sadly there were a few members who were a little late in applying to join and had to be turned away but hopefully they will get the opportunity this time around.

Finally, I have taken the liberty to add an extract from the WWF's Coastal Watch website to list the Beach Clean-up Project Objectives. Please visit the web site for more in depth information on the Beach clean-up campaign.

<http://coastalwatch.hk/about-coastal-watch/>

The ultimate objectives of WWF-Hong Kong's Coastal Watch Project are to develop a long-term solution to the marine litter problem, educate a broad segment of the Hong Kong public about our marine environment and then inspire and mobilize these people to take positive action to shape its future.

The project activities will span two years and will consist of the following:

1. Removing marine litter from a number of sites across Hong Kong's various coastal environments;
2. Surveying the marine litter collected to determine its composition and contributing to the effort to trace its source(s);
3. Filling in the gaps present in current ecological data by constructing species checklists;
4. Engaging with the local fishing community to locate and remove marine litter in Hong Kong waters; and
5. Training "citizen scientist" volunteers who will assist with and promote the project.

Teams of volunteers led by Team Scientists and assembled by WWF-Hong Kong and our strategic partners – including green groups, local schools, the fishing community, diving enthusiasts and other stakeholders – will "adopt" a specific coastline site and commit to conducting cleaning and survey operations at that site twice a year.

Wayne Robinson