

OCPA Bulletin May 2025



Who we are ?

The Okinawa Coastal Protection Alliance aims to be a central presence for people who seek to coexist with nature and preserve the Okinawan coastal environment for generations to come.

We work every day with the goal of bringing like-minded individuals together and consistently addressing various environmental challenges.

Our main actions include:

- Protection of endangered sea turtles (the Churamura Project)
- Underwater cleanups (Ghost Net Busters)
- Regular Beach cleanups (YBCN)
- Promote protection of the central Okinawan coastal environment through monitoring and engagement with local stakeholders.

In 2024, thanks to around 50 community volunteers, 30 km of beaches were patrolled daily, helping to protect 24 nests and see off more than 2,000 baby turtles safely into the ocean. We advocate to governments and businesses to prove that sustainable economic activities can coexist with environmental protection.

Our goal: to make Okinawa a center of ecotourism in Japan, while avoiding the destruction caused by overtourism.

We organize over 30 seminars per year to raise awareness among children, students, and companies about the importance of marine conservation.

Our vision:

That the baby turtles born today can return in 20-30 years to lay their eggs on their native beach, feeling like they've "come home."

We work to pass on to future generations the beauty of Okinawa's beaches and oceans, symbolized by sea turtles.



☀️ Featured This Month

Education

This month, we had the joy of connecting with the students of a local elementary school here in Okinawa! We shared sea turtle facts and discussed the importance of ocean conservation in a fun and engaging session.

At OCPA, educating future generations is at the heart of our mission — because real, lasting change begins with awareness and inspiration at every age.



In March, we hosted our very first annual 5km Fun Run for the Ocean, in shellabration of our 5th anniversary uniting the community to raise awareness and funds for marine conservation.

Over 100 participants came out to support and have a good time, many winning great prizes courtesy of our many sponsors



Want to support?

Our Sea Turtle Nest Adoption Program is now open!

Sponsor a nest and follow our mission to protect the eggs and babies as they incubate and hatch

Want to Donate?

Our operations cost money and we couldn't do our job without the help of concerned citizens. Your gift will go into our general fund to purchase needed equipment and support volunteers



OCPA GHOST NET BUSTERS

Since 2021, OCPA has lead the movement- a special operation we call Ghost Net Busters, aimed at locating and eradicating harmful ghost nets from the waters around Okinawa., On May 26th, we sent a team of volunteers and interns out into the inner reef lagoon of Yomitan Village to map out the remaining abandoned fishing nets that pose a serious threat to the marine ecosystem.

Our team spread out over 500sqm and identified several dozen such threats of entangled debris hidden among the rocks and coral heads that were recorded by GPS estimated total weight about 1 ton.

These invisible killers trap sea creatures, damage coral, and pollute the ocean for years. Thanks to this mission over the years, we have successfully removed several large sections of netting weighing several tons and raised awareness about the long-lasting dangers of marine debris. This is just one more step in our commitment to cleaner, safer oceans.

Next month we hope to report on the extraction operation with the help of Yomitan Fisheries Union



Global Ghost Gear Initiative based out of Canada have chosen us to represent their ocean cleaning and ghostnet upcycling efforts in Japan. Please give them a LIKE for their important work!



this program kindly supported by



Okinawa Sea Turtle Conservation Project

Churamura's Activities



On April 18th, we discovered our first sea turtle nest of the year, and we're now up to a record 16 confirmed nests. We are confident that more than one of the newly identified nests belong to the critically endangered Hawksbill sea turtle, based on the crawl and the size of the eggs. We were able to observe the eggs closely because the nest had to be relocated, due to harmful pesticides applied to the coastal vegetation at the site. If confirmed, this would be an exceptional discovery, as Hawksbill turtles nests are incredibly rare in this region. We're keeping a close watch and will share updates as the nesting season progresses !



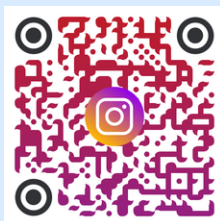
Did you know?

A single sea turtle nest can contain up to 150 eggs, but only 1 in several thousand hatchlings will survive to adulthood.

That's why protecting each nest is so important — every egg counts!

Sadly, we also received news from a diver that discovered a hawksbill turtle that had drowned from becoming entangled in discarded fishing lines under the cliffs near Manza Resort. We called our colleagues at the Churaumi Aquarium so they could gather data for their important long term study on the stomach contents of hawksbills. They arrived on the scene and performed a necropsy to collect the organs for this research. When it was all done, we gave the poor turtle a respectful burial.

(GRAPHIC CONTENT WARNING You can watch the video shared by [Moana](#) [here](#)). A reminder of the urgent need to protect marine life from ghost nets.



follow our adventures here



Coastal clean-up activities



Dori

#85



In May we collected:

5 buoys

47.5 kg of rope

63.4 kg of burnable waste

41 kg of metal and glass

A large drum of chemicals

2 large fence pieces and more...

Every item removed is a step toward restoring the natural beauty of our coastline and protecting marine life from harmful pollution. A huge thank you to everyone who joined us – your energy and commitment make all the difference!

That's 85 opportunities to protect marine life, raise awareness, and unite our community around a shared commitment to the environment. Each cleanup reflects the dedication and growing impact of our initiative, and we're incredibly proud of the momentum we've built.

During our most recent event, 60 amazing volunteers joined us and helped collect over 200 kilograms of trash from the shoreline.

From plastic bottles and fishing nets to microplastics hidden in the sand, every piece removed makes a difference. We're deeply grateful to all the participants who gave their time and energy—proof that when individuals come together, real change is possible. These cleanups not only improve the health of our beaches but also inspire others to take action, making sustainability a collective effort rather than a solitary goal.

this program kindly supported by

GS
GLAMDAY STYLE
HOTEL & RESORT
OKINAWA YOMITAN
www.glamdaystyle.jp/



follow us for future events

♥ Supporter Spotlight

Rotary

東大阪東ロータリークラブ



Rotary

東大阪東フューチャーズ
ロータリー衛星クラブ



Rotary

小田原中ロータリークラブ



This month, we are honored to shine a light on three incredible Rotary Clubs — Higashi Osaka, Odawara Naka, and Osaka Futures — for their generous support of our CHURAMURA sea turtle Stranding and Rescue Response Team for 2025.

Thanks to a donation of ¥250,000, we were able to provide necessary training for volunteers, purchase much needed equipment, allowing us to quickly and effectively manage the frequent strandings here in Okinawa, strengthening our impact on local conservation efforts.

Special thanks to Kido-san, their representative based in Osaka, for helping build this connection. We are deeply grateful for their support and partnership in protecting marine life.



Strategic Alliance

We are glad to be recognized and offered a collaborative partnership with **Waste Free Oceans** based out of Belgium for promoting actionable solutions in reducing marine pollution for the West Pacific Region.



dates we celebrated in May

World Endangered Species Day	16th
World Turtle Day	23rd
International Day of Biodiversity	22nd

upcoming dates in June

World Environment Day	5th
World Ocean Day	8th
World Sea Turtle Week	16th



thank you !!



to two local artists who collaborated to make this spectacular art piece to donate to our HQ office. Ms Yuuka Arakaki (BINGATA style professional) and Ms Yuki Yamaguchi of Oki Coast Ocean Art (RESIN & OCEAN TRASH SPECIALIST). Please drop into see this breathtaking piece come to life on our wall. (not for sale)

Announcement!

Dates and location for the 2026 International Sea Turtle Society (ISTS) annual symposium has been announced for February next year in Hawaii!!

We would love everyone's help in raising funds so we can send a few of our star volunteers to represent Okinawa in the world of Sea Turtle Conservation & Research



**OCPA BULLETIN MAY EDITION EDITORS,
INTERNS: GASPARD AUBERT & MARTIN ADAM**

RESCUE #32

PHOTO TAKEN DURING A LIVE RESCUE OF A JUVENILE GREEN TURTLE THAT WAS SUFFERING FROM PNEUMOTHORAX, WHERE AIR WAS ESCAPING FROM A RUPTURED LUNG INTO THE ABDOMINAL CAVITY, PREVENTING IT FROM DIVING TO FORAGE CAUSING "BUBBLE-BUTT" SYNDROME.

IT WAS TRANSPORTED TO THE CHURAUMI AQUARIUM WHERE IT IS BEING TREATED. THE FORECAST IS POSITIVE AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO PARTICIPATING IN IT'S RELEASE SOON.