

A new book calls for cleaning up our act: namely on beaches worldwide.

Wädenswil/Vienna, 22 November 2018. Our oceans and beaches are increasingly mutating into waste dumps. Austrian marine biologist Dr. Michael Stachowitsch has tackled this pressing environmental issue in his new book "The Beachcomber's Guide to Marine Debris" – and done it with an astounding measure of humour.

"Collecting shells is so yesterday", says Stachowitsch, who teaches at the University of Vienna. Those who stroll along our shorelines today are much more likely to encounter non-biological items ranging from eyesores to the unsavoury and downright hazardous.

During the last decades the author has photographed and analysed beach pollution around the globe. He has created a practical guide on how to become a beach litter expert or "beach detective" at what might aptly be called "crime scene beach". This ultimate beach read treats plastic, metal, glass, wood, tires, paper, oil, cigarette butts and other everyday objects: their origin, their break-down stages, waste avoidance strategies, beach cleaning tips, alternative products, as well as recycling and upcycling ideas.

This "field guide" compiles about 600 telling photographs showing the full range of items you can expect to find along our shores and in our oceans. Beach litter is not only unsightly, but also poses a severe threat to marine wildlife and whole coastal ecosystems, a health hazard to vacationers, boaters and fishers, and a serious economic burden to coastal communities worldwide.

The preface to the book was written by Sigrid Lüber, president of the marine conservation organization OceanCare, which carries out initiatives around the world to combat the ongoing littering of our seas and waterways. "An impressive read that gives travelling to the seashore a whole new meaning. It can actually be fun to become a beach detective and help restore the natural beauty of our beaches, lakeshores and riverbanks," says Lüber, OceanCare.

Further information on the book:

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Interview with Dr. Stachowitsch on his new book: https://youtu.be/w_4kj8gRCIU

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About the author: Dr. Michael Stachowitsch

Michael Stachowitsch received his B.Sc. degree at the Univ. of Pittsburgh and his Ph.D. at the Univ. of Vienna. He has successfully managed to maintain a career as a marine biologist in a landlocked country, conducting research in the Adriatic and Red Seas and teaching numerous university courses. He is the long-term Austrian coordinator of a Mediterranean Sea turtle conservation project in Turkey



and represents Austria at the International Whaling Commission. Michael's many activities as a scientist, author, translator and editor have taken him to beaches around the globe. And while the fauna and flora differ from shore to shore, the beach litter is astoundingly uniform – and abundant.

About OceanCare

OceanCare is a Swiss non-profit organisation. It was founded in 1989 and has a strong commitment to realistic and cooperative initiatives. The organisation works at national and international level in the areas of marine pollution, environmental changes, fisheries, whaling, sealing, captivity of marine mammals and public education. OceanCare holds Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) and is partner of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), and the UNEP/CMS Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS). OceanCare has also been accredited as a Major Group to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), which is the governing body of UNEP and is a part of the UNEP Global Partnership on Marine Litter.