



October 2018

Packery Flats Clean Up Removes Over 2,000 Pounds of Trash!

by Kathryn Tunnell

Packery Flats Coastal Habitat received a much needed deep cleaning earlier this month from volunteers who removed over 2,000 pounds of trash and harmful debris from intertidal and marsh areas, as well as along 2 miles of Highway 361. The recreational hot spot on the backside of Mustang Island adjacent to Packery Channel has lots to offer in terms of public access to our bay and estuarine habitats, but the 1,000 acre protected area had seen cleaner days.



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The Packery Flats Clean Up was hosted by the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (CBBEP) and the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation (CBBF) in celebration of National Estuaries Week, a nationwide celebration of our bays and estuaries and the many benefits they provide to local communities. The event attracted over 70 volunteers who contributed 210 hours of time to remove approximately 2,180 pounds of trash... That's literally a TON of trash!

"The trash and debris that is being collected can really cause problems for the fish and wildlife that utilize the protected area, everything from ingesting it to entanglement" said Jake Herring, Director of Land Conservation and Stewardship at the CBBEP. "The efforts of these volunteers will go a long way in making sure these critical habitats remain healthy for not only the fish and wildlife, but for everyone to enjoy."

If you've never visited Packery Flats Coastal Habitat, you've got to check it out! You will get a taste of almost every coastal barrier island habitat type, from uplands and high marsh, down through the *Spartina alterniflora* marsh, and into



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the tidal flats and submerged seagrass meadows. These areas are used extensively by a variety of shorebirds, wading birds, and other species, as well as their prey, and the productivity has not gone unnoticed. In 1996 the area was originally preserved in honor of the late Mollie Beattie, the first woman director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and in 2001 it was included in the area federally designated by USFWS as critical habitat for the Piping Plover.

Packery Flats Coastal Habitat is managed by the General Land Office with the assistance of several other agencies and non-profit groups, including the CBBEP and the CBBF, USFWS, and Texas Parks and Wildlife. You can join the effort to preserve the Packery Flats Coastal Habitat by leaving only footprints and respecting the surrounding habitat and wildlife. Thanks to the Packery Flats Clean Up, a cleaner, safer Packery Flats is waiting for you!



Students from Banquete ISD committed to making a difference!

Funding for this event was made possible by a grant from the CITGO Caring for our Coast initiative. To learn more about the efforts of the CBBEP visit www.cbbep.org.

The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring bays and estuaries in the 12-county region of the Texas Coastal Bend. For more information about the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, contact Kathryn Tunnell at (361)336-0311 or ktunnell@cbbep.org. This report published in October 2018.

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