Beach debris & cleanup evidence

A big haul tells one story. A repeat survey tells another.



Dattle reference diagram; labels summarize the cited source. Not an event photograph or measured time series. Credit: Dattle; original graphic from the cited reference.

Historical evidence. Better questions. Useful records.

National monitoring, a local cleanup year and a remote-island mission show how to keep counts, weights and survey effort interpretable.

Prepared November 12, 2026 | A collection by Dattle

What the records reveal

SCOPE AND METHOD

Historical cleanup results and monitoring methods are deliberately separated. Pounds remain pounds; reported tons are not silently converted to metric tonnes. Cleanup totals are not pollution-density estimates.

A COMPARISON WORTH MAKING

A larger cleanup total can reflect more effort, a different area or different debris - not necessarily a worsening trend. Repeated monitoring needs a consistent sampling design.

IMAGES AND UNCERTAINTY

Photographs and satellite views carry their original credits. Quantitative charts use cited values; conceptual diagrams are explicitly labeled and contain no invented measurements. AI assisted research and drafting; references were checked and limitations retained. A picture shows a place and moment; it does not prove an entire event boundary, impact or cause. This is a historical reference, not a live warning service.

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A national baseline: 620 shoreline sites

Program launched 2024; NOAA update 19 August 2026 | Ten U.S. shoreline regions



Dattle reference diagram; labels summarize the cited source. Not an event photograph or measured time series. Credit: Dattle; original graphic from the cited reference.

Planned monitoring sites **620**	Regions **10**
Purpose **A national shoreline baseline**	Status in source **Fieldwork underway**

WHAT HAPPENED

NOAA described a national shoreline survey designed around 620 sites across ten regions. A structured sampling design supports comparisons that opportunistic cleanup totals cannot.

WHAT THE DATA REVEALS

Record site selection and sampling method before comparing debris counts. The design is part of the evidence.

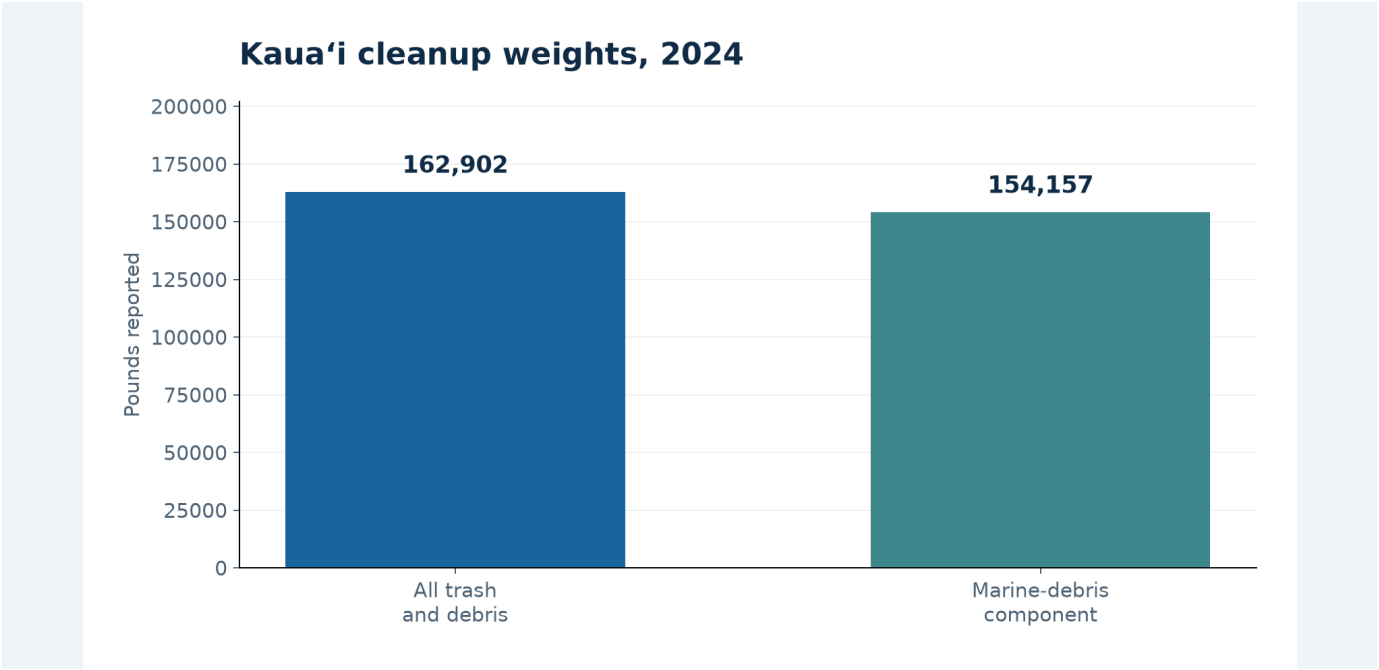
READ WITH CARE

The program description is not a set of completed national results. No debris totals are inferred from the number of sites.

Source 1 > **Visual / data >**

Kaua‘i 2024: keep the categories intact

Calendar year 2024; report 7 March 2025 | Kaua‘i, Hawai‘i



Surfrider Kaua‘i report, March 2025. Marine debris is included within the total; do not sum these bars. Credit: Dattle; original graphic from the cited reference.

Total trash and debris
162,902 lb

Marine-debris component
154,157 lb

Reporting organization
Surfrider Foundation Kaua‘i

Comparison type
Component within total

WHAT HAPPENED

Surfrider Kaua‘i reported 162,902 lb of trash and debris collected during 2024, including 154,157 lb classified as marine debris.

WHAT THE DATA REVEALS

The marine-debris figure is included in the total. Adding the two would double-count the same material.

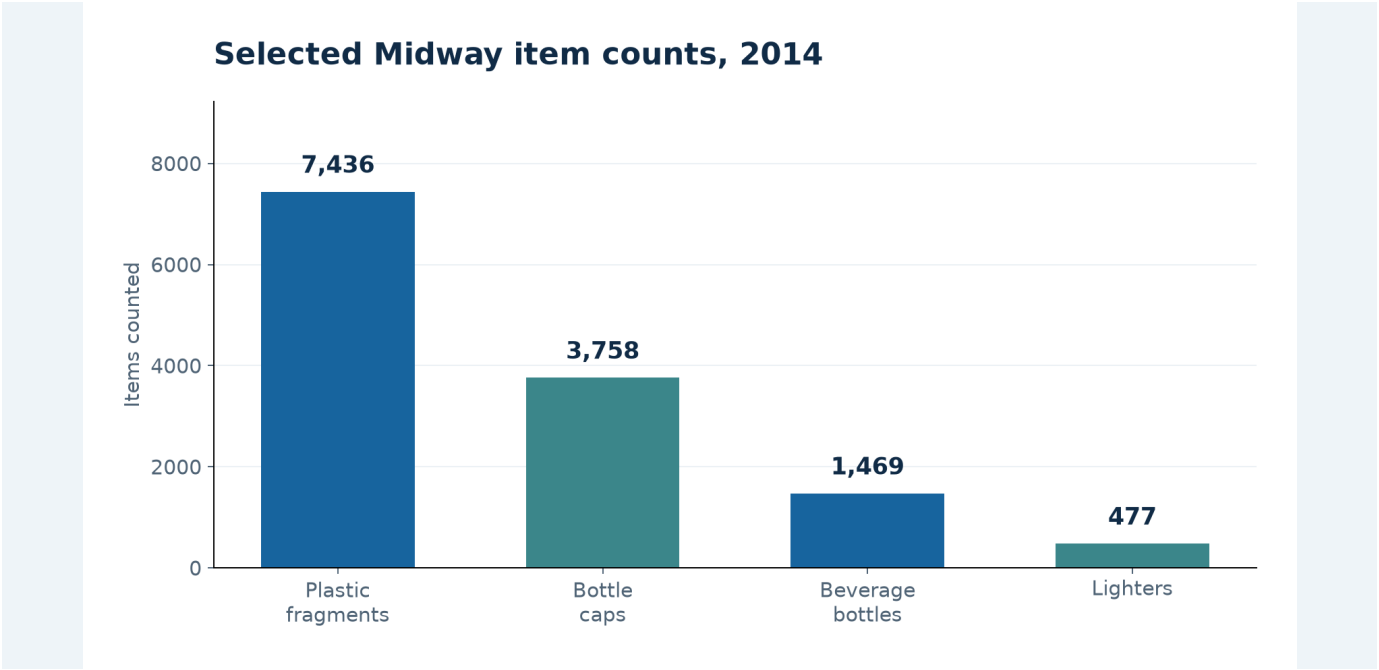
READ WITH CARE

These are organization-reported cleanup weights, not beach pollution density. Effort and coverage are needed before comparing years.

Source 1 > **Visual / data >**

Midway 2014: counting what was removed

33-day mission reported 28 October 2014 | Papahānaumokuākea; item counts from Midway Atoll



Selected categories from NOAA's October 2014 mission report; not the full debris inventory. Credit: Dattle; original graphic from the cited reference.

Hard plastic fragments **7,436**	Bottle caps **3,758**
Plastic beverage bottles **1,469**	Lighters **477**

WHAT HAPPENED

NOAA's mission removed about 57 tons of debris across the monument. The Midway shoreline work also counted selected plastic categories, preserving detail that a single weight cannot show.

WHAT THE DATA REVEALS

Keep the geographic scope of the item counts separate from the mission-wide weight. Item counts can reveal composition while mass captures a different dimension.

READ WITH CARE

The bars show selected categories, not all collected objects. The source's reported tons are left unconverted because the unit convention is not explicit.

Source 1 > **Visual / data >**

MDMAP: repeat the method, not just the visit

Monitoring method; checked 12 November 2026 | A defined shoreline monitoring site



Dattle reference diagram; labels summarize the cited source. Not an event photograph or measured time series. Credit: Dattle; original graphic from the cited reference.

Program
NOAA MDMAP

Focus
Repeated shoreline observations

Record
Site, categories and effort

Keep separate
Monitoring and cleanup results

WHAT HAPPENED

NOAA’s Marine Debris Monitoring and Assessment Project supports shoreline monitoring with standardized methods and data.

WHAT THE DATA REVEALS

Keep the protocol version, site boundary and sampling effort with each visit. Changes in what is counted can otherwise look like changes in pollution.

READ WITH CARE

This Dattle is a companion log, not an official MDMAP submission. Use the project’s current protocol and do not alter or disturb hazards to collect data.

Source 1 >

Visual / data >

From examples to observations

A USEFUL RECORD KEEPS ITS EVIDENCE

Keep the time, place, measurement method, unit, source and uncertainty with every observation. Separate what you saw from an estimate or interpretation. Repeat observations consistently, and retain the original evidence when updating a record.

SUGGESTED DATTLE FIELDS

- Site boundary and observation date
- Survey or cleanup; protocol version
- Surveyed area/length and effort
- Item counts by category
- Weight, units and weighing method
- Photo credit, disposal record and source

AI AS AN ACCELERATOR

Use this prompt to draft a collection structure, then review it. AI can organize the questions and fields; it cannot supply missing observations or replace source verification.

> Create a Dattle for beach debris & cleanup evidence. Include Site boundary and observation date, Survey or cleanup; protocol version, Surveyed area/length and effort, Item counts by category, Weight, units and weighing method, Photo credit, disposal record and source. Start with an empty collection. Separate observations, estimates and interpretations. Do not invent measurements, dates, locations or sources. Retain units, uncertainty and source links; flag missing information for review.

Explore Dattle at dattle.com. Availability, features and plan limits are described on the website.

Sources and image credits

Primary references checked November 12, 2026. Records and estimates can be revised. Every case page links to its evidence; full addresses are retained here for reuse.

01. A national baseline: 620 shoreline sites - primary reference
https://blog.marinedebris.noaa.gov/surveying-debris-our-shores

02. Kaua‘i 2024: keep the categories intact - primary reference
https://kauai.surfrider.org/news/2024-marine-debris-data

03. Midway 2014: counting what was removed - primary reference
https://www.noaa.gov/media-release/noaa-removes-57-tons-of-marine-debris-from-northwestern-hawaiian-islands

04. MDMAP: repeat the method, not just the visit - primary reference
https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/our-work/monitoring/marine-debris-monitoring-and-assessment-project