



About 80 learners and some parents join Nature Connect's beach trash bash efforts on International Coastal Clean-up Day. PHOTOS: NATURE CONNECT



Learners from various schools are taught how to record the "dirty dozen" – the most commonly found items of litter.

SUNRISE BEACH

Bashing trash for a brighter sunrise

Learners from Harmony Primary School in Steenberg, Strandfontein Primary School, Silukhanyo Primary School in Strand as well as the Village Heights Eco Buddies from Lavender Hill took part in a trash-bashing day of fun to tackle litter.

On Saturday 18 September, the Nature Connect team – formerly known as the Cape Town Environmental Education Trust (Cteet) – rounded up the troops and set out on a mission to rid the beach of litter and plastic waste. As part of their International Coastal Clean-up Day efforts, they picked up the litter from Sunrise Beach to Muizenberg.

International Coastal Clean-up Day has been running since 1986. On this day, organisations and the public volunteer across the globe to clean up beaches, waterways and even the ocean surfaces.

According to Nature Connect, a total of 80 learners and about 20 parents from the participating schools joined the big clean-up, along with their ambassador Captain Fanplastic.

He ran a programme with learners, which began with a story about turning trash into treasure. The story then led to a treasure hunt to collect and record the types of plastics they found on the beach.

In groups of five, learners collected a staggering 44 kg of litter from the beach and over 500 items of plastic. The two groups who collected the most trash each won books from Captain Fanplastic.

Nature Connect's school coordinator Melissa Zackon says learners were well looked after by their sponsors.

"Pick n Pay donated hotdogs for the learners and Krispy Kreme donated doughnuts. Plastics SA and Petco donated water, juice, bags and three gift cards from Pick n Pay, each worth R300. We plan to use the vouchers to buy materials for the schools to be used in their environmental manage-

ment, as part of the Nature Connect Sustainable Schools Programme these schools subscribe to. We also received water, refuse bags to collect in as well as eco-friendly stationery kits for each learner," she explains.

According to Leah Mulenga, another school coordinator at Nature Connect, every event of this sort is an exciting one.

"The sheer willingness and excitement in learners to do their part in cleaning our local beaches is really inspiring.

"We even had a group of Grade Rs join us this time around. A big thank you to all the schools and partners that helped make the day a success."