



The Cayman Eco is a non-profit publication whose mission is to educate and motivate people of all ages to become more environmentally conscious. Please help save our beautiful islands!



Earth Day 101

Celebrating 40 years!

1970		The first Earth Day is celebrated internationally.	1990		The first known World Wide Web page is written.
1974		The UPC label is used for the first time to ring up purchases at a supermarket.	1992		The first World Ocean Day is celebrated.
1976		The Animal Rights Law is enacted in the Cayman Islands .	1996		Leaded fuel is banned for use in on-road vehicles.
1980		The plastic carrier bag is invented.	1997		The Kyoto Protocol , a United Nations agreement, aimed at fighting global warming is penned (and entered into force by 2005).
1984		The harmful pesticide DDT is banned in the United Kingdom (it was banned in the US in 1972).	2003		Proclaimed the ' Year of the Blue Dragon ,' the National Trust, National Gallery, and DART Foundation place giant Blue Iguana sculptures in public places across Grand Cayman to raise awareness of this endemic, endangered animal .
1987		The law to establish the National Trust for the Cayman Islands was enacted.	2009		The Kyoto Protocol (see 1997 above) is signed and ratified by 187 states .
1989		Twelve European Community nations agree to ban the production of all chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by the end of the century.	The FUTURE... is in our hands.		

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quotablequote

*The most difficult
matter is not so much
to change the world
as yourself.*

- Nelson Mandela

Celebrate Earth Day's 40th anniversary!

Earth Day is 40 years old this year. By coincidence, it is this editor's 40th anniversary on the planet too. As I researched this issue of the Cayman Eco, I found myself reflecting on how far we have come since 1970. What struck me is the fact that Earth Day was founded way before plastic carrier bags were invented. It gave me hope that Earth Day will outlive plastic bags, just as it has outlived DDT, leaded fuel, and CFCs. With a little effort, we can curb our appetite for plastics, clean up our oceans, waterways and streets and make harmful products a thing of our past. Life is a learning curve and sometimes the changes we need to make throughout our personal lives and throughout history are so obvious, once we make them we cannot believe we ever did things any other way.

Tammy Kelderman,
Managing Editor and Researcher
Cayman Eco



GREEN OSCARS The Best 'Eco' Films of 2010



With its 2010 Oscar win for best documentary, *The Cove* has reignited the debate over annual dolphin hunts in Taiji, Japan. The movie follows an international team of photographers, divers, and activists on their mission to document the **dolphin hunt**, facing opposition from Taiji town officials, police, and fishermen.



A Manhattan-based family vows to make zero environmental impact for one year. This movie sends a message of the need for reduced consumption, and shows how difficult this task can be. Entertaining and funny, it shows both sides of reducing one's environmental impact by paring down non-essentials.



This film is a drama- documentary- animation hybrid, which stars Pete Postlethwaite as a man living alone in the devastated world of 2055, watching archive footage from the mid-to-late 2000s and asking "Why didn't we stop climate change when we had the chance?"

**SOME OF THESE AND OTHER
"ECO" FILMS CAN BE SEEN ON THE
INTERNET FOR FREE.
CHECK WWW.YOUTUBE.COM**



The Great Pacific Garbage Patch

Lovely name, isn't it? However, it is **an area in the Pacific Ocean the size of Texas** filled with all kinds of nastiness. Most noticeable in this "patch" is one of humankind's greatest inventions: **plastic**. Researchers recently found a similar area in "our" **Atlantic ocean**. And all this plastic comes with a few issues:

1. **ENTANGLEMENT** - Birds, fish or turtles **get trapped** in what used to be your **six-pack holder** or **shower curtain**.
2. **INGESTION** - All plastic that lands in the ocean doesn't disappear, but breaks down in ever-smaller particles. These now **outnumber plankton (=food) 6 to 1**.
3. **SPONGE** - This is the dark side of plastics. They **behave like a sponge for all kinds of poisons** (DDT, PCB's and other oily toxics).

Now for the good news...**this is something WE can fix!** All it takes is a bit of thinking: **say NO to shopping bags, refill your water bottles** and generally **use as little plastic as possible**.



The Story of Bottled Water

Wondering about the impacts of drinking bottled water? Watch this informative, entertaining clip: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Se12y9hSOM0J.



Are Plastic Bags Sacking the Environment?



Plastic bag FAQ:

- The first plastic bags were **invented 30 years** ago and every plastic bag produced worldwide since then is **still on this earth**.
- Each year, an estimated **500 billion to 1 trillion** single-use plastic bags are **consumed worldwide**. That translates to over **one million plastic bags per minute**.
- Currently, 97% of these bags end up in either a **landfill** or **littering our planet's fragile ecosystems**.
- **The problem is global**. In the United States, for example, consumers use 100 billion plastic bags annually, which is the energy equivalent of **12 million barrels of oil**.



Is reusing plastic grocery bags the answer?

- **This can help**, but while some people reuse their bags for cleaning up dog waste and as trashcan liners, the **overwhelming majority of people do not**.

Is recycling plastic bags the answer?

- **No**. Plastic grocery bags are rarely recycled – even in the US **only 1% of the plastic bags are recycled**.
- Recycling plastic bags also **uses a lot of energy** – in fact, it takes more energy to recycle a plastic bag than it does to produce one.
- In any case, the **option to recycle plastic bags in the Cayman Islands** currently **does not exist**.



Is using paper grocery bags the answer?

- **No**. The best choice is to always use a reusable bag. During manufacturing, both paper and plastic bags, which are **usually only used once** before disposal, emit global warming gases, create water pollution and **use a considerable amount of natural resources** through **raw materials** and **energy**.
- Although most people are aware that paper bags are recyclable, only about **20%** of them are actually **recycled**.



What about biodegradable plastic bags?

- Fosters, Hurley's and Kirk supermarkets are all **phasing in biodegradable plastic bags** to replace their current stock of plastic carrier bags.
- These bags contain TDPA, an additive that allows the plastic to degrade through the action of sunlight, heat and microorganisms and does not require anaerobic conditions. According to the manufacturer, these bags should **decompose within 18 months**.
- Although this option is better than non-biodegradable bags, it still means that the bags are present in the environment for a prolonged period before they degrade, and **could easily enter the marine environment** during this time. As they degrade, the **plastic components also leach** into the environment.



What are the benefits to reusable bags?

- Reusable bags are **more environmentally responsible** – you can use them over and over again for years.
- On average, reusable bags will **hold around 3 plastic bags worth of groceries** – so think how many plastic bags you can save every time you use just one reusable!
- This also makes reusable bags more convenient – you have to **carry far fewer bags**.
- Reusable bags are also **strong, sturdy** and **more comfortable** to use.



Where can I get reusable bags?

- All the **major supermarkets on island** sell great reusable grocery bags – and have had the foresight to do so for quite some time.
- You can also purchase reusable bags from **other shops on island**, and will be surprised at the range available. Even some off-licenses have started offering **reusable wine bottle carrier bags**.

What can I do to help?

- **Pledge** today to **"Bring Your Own Bag."**
- Open your eyes – **count how many plastic bags you use in a week**.
- Remember your bags - try keeping some reusable bags in your car so that you will always have some handy, or look out for compact versions that can be carried in your purse, jacket, backpack, or car glove compartment.
- **Say no** – if you don't need a plastic bag, don't accept one.
- **Spread the word!** Many find **reusable bags are more convenient and comfortable** for shopping – if you agree, why not tell others too?



Cayman BECOME

Did you know that in **Grand Cayman** we use over **ONE MILLION** single use plastic bags every month just in our supermarkets alone?

The "Corporate Green Team Network" (**CGTN**), a group of corporate representatives and public sector agencies brought together through a partnership between the Department of Environment (DOE) and Deloitte Cayman, have joined forces to **promote environmental responsibility** through the **reduction of plastic bag use** in Grand Cayman.



These bags have a **negative impact on our environment locally**, especially on **our valuable marine resources and wildlife**. The issue is so important that the **major supermarkets** in Grand Cayman - Fosters Food Fair, Hurley's & Kirk Supermarket – **have agreed to work with CGTN** to help **reduce** this type of waste. The non-degradable plastic carrier bags currently supplied will be replaced by **bio-degradable** plastic bags. As of **Wednesday, June 9th**, a charge will be introduced for these biodegradable bags of 5 cents per bag. Reusable bags will continue to be sold in the supermarket stores. Through the **Cayman BECOME** education and media campaign, running from mid-March to July 2010, **the community will be encouraged** to bring their own **reusable bags** when they shop. For more information on the campaign, see the **Cayman BECOME** website at www.CaymanBECOME.ky.

CGTN Members:



National Trust Earth Month Calendar of Events

April 17

- 7am-11am Earth Week 2010 Roadside Clean-up
Contact Kennedy Powery at Chamber of Commerce
Kennedy.Powery@caymanchamber.ky
for more information.

April 19-23

- 10am-2pm Taking Care of the Environment
Contact Tania Johnson at the Department of Environmental Health on 743-5952 or email
Tania.Johnson@gov.ky.

April 23

- 2.30pm-4.30pm "Living Green" Earth Week Expo
Students & School Groups
- 5pm-7pm "Living Green" Earth Week Expo
Open to the Public
Contact Sophie Halford at the Department of Environment on 244-5932 or email
Sophie.Halford@gov.ky for more information.

April 24

- 1pm-5pm Underwater & Reef Clean Up
Contact Divetech on 946-5668 for more information.

Where contact details not listed, please contact the National Trust at 949-0121.

CONTRIBUTORS

Tammy Kelderman,
Managing Editor & Researcher

Kate Lanham,
Researcher & Web Designer

Peter Berende,
Researcher

EDITORS: Michelle Stanley, Copy Editor

DESIGNED BY: mc2

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