



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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CLEAR YOUR GEAR FACT SHEET: MISSION AND IMPORTANCE

The Initiative

- Clear Your Gear is a collaborative educational and informational campaign created by seven Sanibel-Captiva conservation entities designed to increase awareness of the impact discarded fishing gear, such as monofilament and fishing hooks, can have on wildlife and the environment.

Mission Statement

- To reduce the harmful impacts of monofilament and other fishing gear on wildlife and the marine environment.

What is monofilament?

- As its name implies, monofilament fishing line — or "mono" for short — is a single, continuous strand of synthetic fiber. Most fishing line that you can buy today is made of monofilament — a single-strand, strong, flexible plastic that is clear or tinted blue, pink or green.

Why is monofilament a problem in the environment?

- Most monofilament is non-biodegradable and can last hundreds of years depending on environmental conditions. Because it is thin and often clear, it is very difficult for birds and animals to see and they can easily brush up against it and become entangled. Once entangled, they may become injured, may drown, may become strangled, or may starve to death. Many animals also ingest fishing line.

How does monofilament end up in the environment?

- Much of the discarded fishing line in the water gets there when someone's hook gets snagged on something underwater and the line breaks when pulled. Sometimes the line will rub against a sharp shell (like an oyster shell) and will break. Large fish can pull hard enough to break lines. Sometimes fishing lines get caught in trees and break off. Even fishing line that is thrown in the garbage can end up in the environment — either by blowing out of the garbage can or landfill, or by being taken out by birds or animals.