

# Marine debris

## The environmental issues overwhelming the uninhabited islands

According to research conducted in 2012 by Tokyo Metropolitan Government, it was confirmed that significant amounts of marine debris had washed ashore and become scattered across the beaches of Uotsuri Island, Kitakojima Island and Minamikojima Island. Sea birds and sea turtles often mistake marine debris for food and eat it. This is a serious nature conservation issue.

Like the Yaeyama Islands, The Senkaku Islands are located in the stream of the Kuroshio Current and serve as a conduit for marine litter generated by neighboring countries. Since marine litter is not only difficult to treat but it may wash ashore in unlimited amounts, remote islands all over Japan are afflicted by this same problem. International efforts are needed to solve this issue.



Photography: Haruo Ogi

Countless numbers of fishing gear (Styrofoam or urethane buoys, fishing nets), driftwood, and other waste wash ashore.



Photography: Tokyo Metropolitan Government

A former base of business activities (former Koga Village). Marine debris is scattered across most of such flat land areas.



Photography: Yoshihiko Yamada

Large amounts of household waste, including Styrofoam and plastic containers, can be seen.



Photography: Yoshihiko Yamada

Much of the plastic waste cannot be broken down and can cause damage to beach ecosystems.



Photography: Koichi Yamamoto

The wreckages of several ships, believed to be from small boats shipwrecked on Minamikojima and Kitakojima Islands, have been found.



Photography: Yoshihiko Yamada

Various objects, exposed to strong winds and rough waves, are thrown onto the shore.