

The SUP Garbage Man

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH

Since 2019, Joe Wright, the self-described “SUP Garbage Man,” has gone out on a trash mission three to five times a week on his paddleboard, collecting trash on the Potomac and in Dyke Marsh. SUP stands for stand-up paddleboard.

He’s found a motorcycle seat, a pregnancy test, a stop sign, IV bags, a drone and a vial of blood, for example. “As for my territory, my efforts have no boundaries,” he says. “I’ve cleaned waterways between Washington, D.C., and the Florida Keys. My mission isn’t tied to any river or area in particular. Instead, it’s all waterways. I primarily clean this area only because I happen to live a couple miles from the Potomac and it happens to have a lot of trash. Locally, I mostly go anywhere between Mount Vernon and Roosevelt Island.”

Joe created a non-profit and social media campaign to highlight the volume and nature of trash in waterways and opts not to participate in or host clean-up events. He’s a one-man cleanup crew. His purpose? “To highlight what just one person can do over time, much like the old adage about eating an elephant one bite at a time. One person, acting alone, has the ability to make an impact.” He says he does not object to cleanup events, but he wants “to inspire and motivate people to make changes within their own capabilities and interests.”

Check out his website, <https://supgarbageman.org/>, including his trashy videos.



SUP Garbage Man out in Dyke Marsh. Photo by Joe Wright



Trash -- the Top 10

Clean Virginia Waterways lists the following as the top ten trash items from their fall, 2021 International Coastal Cleanup:

- Cigarette butts
- Beverage bottles (plastic)
- Grocery bags (plastic)
- Food wrappers (candy, chips, etc.)
- Beverage cans
- Other plastic bags
- Bottle caps (plastic)
- Cups and plates (plastic and foam)
- Beverage bottles (glass)
- Straws, stirrers

Sunday Morning Bird Walks

Bird walks are held Sunday mornings, all seasons. Meet at 8 a.m. in the south parking lot of the Belle Haven picnic area. Walks are led by experienced birders and all are welcome to join us.