

Nurdle Patrol Citizen Science Project

Quarterly Report

Reporting Period: January 1, 2026 – March 31, 2026

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Executive Summary

During this quarter, the Nurdle Patrol Citizen Science Project continued to expand its reach and strengthen its infrastructure through awareness campaigns, educational outreach, and partnership development. Efforts focused on revamping the K-12 Teacher Nurdle Patrol Curriculum, purchasing supplies for kits, quality control of submitted data, national promotion through conferences and presentations, and strategic planning hosting the Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium in Galveston on March 25, 2026.

Key Accomplishments

1. Nurdle Patrol Coordination

- Hired Tracy Weatherall as the Nurdle Patrol Program Specialist on June 2, 2025.
- Brooke Bolinger was a summer intern to support Nurdle Patrol initiatives on June 2, 2025 to July 31, 2025.
- During this reporting period we added 15 new partners and shipped 386 Teacher Kits to support our outreach and education efforts.
- Twenty-six virtual/in-person presentations were given to partnering organizations to expand participation.
- Scheduled a summer intern for 2026, Madisyn Hamby, to start in June 2026.

2. Educational and Promotional Outreach

- Hosted the first-ever International Plastic Pellet Count on May 3, 2025, engaging over 1,000 participants across 14 countries in partnership with multiple NGOs worldwide.

- Strategic planning for the second International Plastic Pellet Count to be held on May 2, 2026, with the entire month of May 2026 being eligible for nurdle survey input into a final report of worldwide findings.
- Partnered with the Guy Harvey Foundation to provide marine science and ocean conservation educational resources—including Nurdle Patrol materials—by distributing 200 teacher kits in August 2025 to Florida educators participating in Conservation Education Program trainings in October 2025.
- Distributed 200 teacher kits to Teachers on the Estuaries (TOTE) workshop at the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve which was held on July 28, 2025.
- The following presentations were conducted to raise awareness and encourage participation in the Nurdle Patrol initiative among various organizations and the general public:
 - 05/12/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol the Coastal Bend Beaches presentation for the Port Aransas ISD in Port Aransas, Texas.
 - 05/13/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol training on San Jose Island with the Aquilla High School Aquatic Class on San Jose Island, Aransas County, Texas.
 - 05/16/2025 – Beachcombing the Gulf of Mexico and Nurdle Patrol presentation for the Corpus Christi Chapter of the daughters of the American Revolution at the First Christian Church of Santa Fe in Santa Fe, Texas.
 - 05/20/2025 – Science Communication and Engagement presentation for the CCME Paul Montagna Group at the Harte Research Institute in Corpus Christi, Texas.
 - 05/22/2025 – Nurdle Patrol Zoom presentation for the Master Naturalist Sabine Chapter.
 - 05/31/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol training for the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation at Newport Pass in Corpus Christi, Texas.
 - 06/03/2025 – Plastic Pellet Research presentation via Zoom at the NOAA Plastic Pellet Spill Conference.
 - 06/06/2025 – Invited speaker at the James Museum of Western and Wildlife Art in St. Petersburg, Florida to give a presentation on Nurdle Patrol.
 - 06/09/2025 – Nurdle Patrol and Beachcombing presentation at a teacher workshop located at Flour Bluff High School in Corpus Christi, Texas.
 - 06/09/2025 – Floating Habitats and Nurdle Patrol presentation for the UTMSI Summer Science program at UTMSI in Port Aransas, Texas.

- 06/15/2025 – Nurdle Patrol presentation for the I-20 Wildlife Preserve Tour at HRI in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 06/20/2025 – Nurdle Patrol presentation for the Gulf Youth Ambassador Tour at HRI in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 06/23/2025 – Floating Habitats and Nurdle Patrol presentation for 5th and 6th grade campers attending the Summer Science Program at UTMSI in Port Aransas, Texas.
- 06/23/2025 – Floating Habitats and Nurdle Patrol presentation for 7th and 8th grade campers attending the Summer Science Program at UTMSI in Port Aransas, Texas.
- 06/26/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at the Owen R. Hopkins Public Library in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 07/01/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol booth at the Hurricane Alley Waterpark in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 07/02/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol radio presentation for the Blake’s Morning Show in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 07/15/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation for Flour Bluff High School at the Harte Library in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 08/01/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation and training for the Texas Surf Camp at Bob Hall Pier in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 08/13/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol talk for the Logan On-Air Podcast at the Hometown Seafood restaurant in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 08/18/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol Zoom presentation for the Shellphone Podcast.
- 08/25/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation for the Surfrider Foundation at TAMU-CC NRC building in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 08/26/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol talk for the Breakaway Tackle Podcast studio in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 09/11/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation for the Neighbor League of Corpus Christi at the Omni Hotel in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 09/20/2025 – Marine Debris presentation and training for the Surfrider Foundation Marine Debris and Adopt a Beach Cleanup at Bob Hall Pier in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 09/26/2025 – Microplastics and Nurdle Patrol presentation for Dallas College in Dallas, Texas.
- 10/03/2025 – Nurdle Patrol presentation at UTMSI in Port Aransas, Texas.
- 10/20/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation for Islander CCA at TAMUCC in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 10/22/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation for the Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce in Port Aransas, Texas.

- 10/23/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol booth for TAMUCC President’s Circle at HRI in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 10/24/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at Kaffie Middle School in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 10/26/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at the Port Aransas Farmers market in Port Aransas, Texas.
- 10/28/2025 – Nurdle Patrol virtual presentation to the Universidad Autónoma de La Paz, Mexico.
- 10/30/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol booth at Baker Middle School in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 11/01/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol booth at the Friends of Padre Fall Fiesta at the Briscoe Pavillion on North Padre in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 11/11/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at Veteran’s Memorial High School in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 11/14/2025 – Nurdle Patrol Citizen Science Project virtual presentation to the Austin School.
- 11/20/2025 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation for the Island Moon Live Radio Show in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 11/21/2025 – Nurdle Patrol presentation for Marvin Middle School students at the Conrad Blucher Institute at TAMUCC in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 12/03/26 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol training for MANERR at San Jose Island, Aransas County, Texas.
- 12/15/2025 – Beachcombing and Plastic Pollution presentation to Verteran’s Memorial High School in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 01/12/2026 – Texas Marine Debris Projects Zoom presentation to the Gulf of America Alliance.
- 01/20/2026 – Science at the Beach presentation to Flour Bluff High School – Environmental Marine Systems class in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 01/23/2026 – Nurdle Patrol booth for STREAM Night at School of Science and Technology Corpus Christ Elementary, Copus Christi, Texas.
- 01/29/2026 – Marine Science Careers – Plastic Pollution to Flour Bluff High School in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 02/03/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation to the Nueces County Historical Society at the First Presbyterian Church in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 02/05/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at the South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center in South Padre, Texas.
- 02/07/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at Sam Houston Elementary in Corpus Christi, Texas.

- 02/12/2026 – Railroad Plastic Pollution Zoom presentation to FIDRA UK.
- 02/15/2026 – Science at the Beach presentation to Tuloso Midway Middle School in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 02/18/2026 – Nurdle Patrol Inspiring Change presentation at Gregory-Portland Middle School in Portland, Texas.

- 02/20/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation for the Whooping Crane Festival at the UTMSI Patton Center in Port Aransas, Texas.
- 02/21/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at the Flour Bluff Harte Library in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 02/26/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at Flour Bluff Primary School in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 02/26/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at Ellis Memorial Library in Port Aransas, Texas.
- 03/02/2026 – Hurdles with Nurdles presentation at Leon Taylor Junior High School in Ingleside, Texas.
- 03/04/2026 - Hurdles with Nurdles presentation at Leon Taylor Junior High School in Ingleside, Texas.
- 03/09/2026 – Nurdle Patrol Citizen Science Project Zoom presentation for the Sierra Club.
- 03/13/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation for the Country Club Women’s Association at the Corpus Christi Country Club in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 03/16/2026 – Science Communication – plastic pollution presentation for the TAMUCC – Science communication class at TAMUCC in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 03/20/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation and training at NAS Corpus Christi in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 03/20/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol Booth at the TAMUCC STEM Showcase at TAMUCC in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 03/24/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at Windsor Park Elementary in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 03/25/2026 – Panel discussion about pre-production plastic at the Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium at TAMUG in Galveston, Texas.
- 03/30/2026 – Beachcombing and Nurdle Patrol presentation at Fulton Elementary School in Rockport, Texas.

- Updated educational content for classroom use and community outreach.
- Initiated the redesign of training videos; scripting and filming continued this quarter.

- Purchased all camera equipment needed to begin creating Nurdle Patrol videos.
- Ordered new promotional materials, including pouches, USBs, stickers, postcards, glass jars and Nurdle Patrol information business cards.

3. App and Website Maintenance

- Launched a new NurdlePatrol.org website in June 2025 that includes updated features, data access, and a new look.
- Conducted quality assurance reviews on 626 user-submitted surveys during this quarter from 1,562 volunteers.
- Continued the development of the new Nurdle Patrol mobile app for both iOS and Android devices by incorporating new technologies and updated design alongside enhanced capabilities to drive greater user engagement. During the 3rd quarter the team focused on continued development of various pages, Spanish translations and ongoing TestFlight testing across iOS and Android platforms.
 - Added mailing address, email address and linked Facebook.
 - Added Instructions for users on how to submit a survey and troubleshooting guidance for errors or bugs.
 - Added a search bar for improved navigation and a legend for better data interpretation. Survey points are now interactive, allowing users to tap them to view detailed survey information.
 - Added the new curriculum, a PowerPoint presentation and additional logo download options.
 - Resolved crashes in Safari on iOS devices.
 - Added the ability to click on survey points to view data.
 - Fixed the “Auto-Pan Mode” functionality on the map to work correctly for all options (Recenter, Navigation, Compass).
 - Repaired the "Show Location" feature on the map not functioning correctly.
 - Post-Survey Navigation Bug: Fixed bottom menu bar becoming hidden after submitting a survey.

- Google Play Console: Fixed issues on the Google Play Console in preparation for the app release.
- iOS 26 Compatibility: Updated the SDK version to ensure compatibility with iOS 26.
- Implemented form validation for required fields on the Nurdle Report Page to ensure data accuracy.

4. Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium

- The 8th Annual Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium was a huge success this year! Held on March 25, 2026, at the Texas A&M University at Galveston, the symposium brought together 300 environmental professionals, researchers, students and community members dedicated to addressing the growing challenge of plastic pollution in Texas and beyond. This year the symposium had two concurrent sessions because there were 23 oral presentations and 13 poster presentations, covering a wide range of topics from microplastic research and marine debris mitigation to policy strategies and community-driven solutions. Student presentations awards were given again this year, sponsored by the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program. They gave \$300 for oral presentations (\$150 1st place, \$100 2nd place, \$50 3rd place) and \$200 for poster presentations (\$100 1st place, \$75 2nd place, \$25 3rd place).
- Check-in opened at 7:30 AM, and the symposium officially commenced at 8:30 AM with welcome and opening remarks from Bob Brown, Galveston’s District 3 City Councilman. A Galveston native and retired architect from the University of Texas Medical Branch, he has long been active in civic service, including leadership roles with the Galveston Historical Foundation and the city’s Landmark Commission.
- Following Councilman Brown’s opening remarks, Dr. Michelle Johnson, Superintendent of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary and a marine biologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, delivered an inspiring keynote presentation on plastic intrusion in the Flower Garden Banks. She emphasized that the purpose of the symposium extended beyond documenting the problem, noting, “The theme of this symposium isn’t just to catalogue the damage...we all want to be agents of change.”
- Another highlight of the day was the keynote panel sessions: Panel I, *Plastic Pathways in the Gulf – Science, Society, and Seafood*, and Panel II, *Pre-production Plastic Pollution – Advocating for Change at the State Level*.
 - Panel I featured Dr. David Hala, Associate Professor of Marine Biology at Texas A&M University at Galveston (TAMUG), whose research focuses on the impacts and fate of legacy and emerging pollutants on aquatic organisms. He was joined

by Dr. Antonietta Quigg, Regents Professor in TAMUG’s Department of Marine Biology, whose work examines how pollutants—including plastics, PFAS, oil, and pathogens—affect marine food webs. Also on the panel was Dr. Karl Kaiser, a TAMUG professor and leading researcher on nano- and microplastic pollution, whose work tracks how plastics move from rivers to the ocean using chemical fingerprinting and modeling to help protect marine resources and coastal communities. Rounding out the panel was Dr. Kim De Wolff, Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of North Texas, whose research explores the intersections of plastic, culture, and water, including the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

- Panel II brought together Luke Metzger, Executive Director of Environment Texas, where he leads efforts to protect clean air and water, parks, wildlife, and a livable climate. He was joined by Jonie Steinhaus, Ocean Program Director for the Turtle Island Restoration Network, who has spent the past 13 years working to raise awareness among the public, businesses, and policymakers about the impacts of single-use and pre-production plastics on human health, wildlife, and the environment. Evgenia Spears, Water Program Coordinator at the Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter, also participated in leading policy and advocacy efforts to protect Texas water resources, with a focus on issues ranging from plastic pollution to desalination. The panel also included Neil McQueen of the Surfrider Foundation’s Texas Coastal Bend Chapter, who works on initiatives addressing plastic pollution, water quality, and coastal access through advocacy, community engagement, and hands-on conservation efforts.

5. Travel and Networking

- Traveled to St. Petersburg, Florida in June 2025 to meet with organizations interested in launching their own Nurdle Patrol program.
- Traveled to Dallas, Texas in September 2025 to give a Microplastics and Nurdle Patrol presentation for Dallas College.
- Traveled to Galveston, Texas in March 2026 for the 8th Annual Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium at Texas A&M University – Galveston.

Deliverables Completed Since May 1, 2025

- Starter Kits distributed: **39**
- Teacher Kits distributed: **968**
- New or updated training videos completed: **3**

- Presentations given: **65**
- Training and Workshops given: **6**
- Website/App updates completed: **1**

Environmental Impact

- A total of 662 Nurdle Patrol surveys were conducted, resulting in the removal of 29,648 nurdles from the environment.
- Key findings of the International **Plastic Pellet Count 2025 Report**:
 - 49,256 nurdles collected
 - 229 sites surveyed
 - 14 countries participated
 - 29 U.S. states and Washington, D.C.
 - 1,101 volunteers participated.

Highlights

Brooke Bolinger, who is a Sophomore at the University of Texas at Austin studying Biology with a Concentration in Marine Science, was our summer intern this year. She helped Nurdle Patrol put teacher kits together, wrote articles for the website, conducted nurdle surveys, and helped to promote the program.

Upcoming Activities (Next Quarter)

- Continue Nurdle Patrol outreach.
- International Plastic Pellet Count on Saturday, May 2nd, 2026.
- Continue shipping partner and teacher kits in the United States and around the world.
- Continue preparing ready-to-go teacher kits for summer professional development sessions for teachers.
- Complete filming and editing of updated training videos.
- Mobile app release: The Nurdle Patrol team will be releasing the new mobile app in April 2026.
- Continued refinements: Continue addressing feedback and making improvements to the app ahead of the release.

- Continue national outreach and conduct workshops in new locations.
- Continue updating the Nurdle Patrol classroom curriculum to align with current standards.

Challenges and Solutions

Challenge	Action Taken / Solution
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No challenges to date.	
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Conclusion

Nurdle Patrol continues to grow its national presence and empower citizen scientists to track and report nurdle pollution. This quarter we continued to lay strong groundwork for delivering on major project goals and expanding the program’s footprint across new regions.