



# THE NASTY BITS

5 GYRES LEADS THE FIGHT TO PREVENT  
**PLASTIC MICROBEADS** FROM POLLUTING OUR WATERS

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**WHITE FRIGHT** - Dentists are now reporting finding plastic beads lodged in the gums.



**SKIN DEEP** - Your glow is temporary with this microbeads cleanser, the plastic in this product lives on forever.



**SIMPLY WHITE** and no microbeads. Tom's Toothpaste leaves nothing but a clean, fresh feeling, from Tom's.



**IT'S THE PITS** - Burt's Bees use peach and willow bark as natural exfoliants - the way nature intended.

# THE OFFENDERS

MicroBeads are villains of the sea. They are tiny salt sized specks that are in many personal care products. They are not biodegradable, and cannot be removed easily by wastewater treatment plants. They are meant to be used in the shower, where they wash down the drain, eventually flowing out to sea. The plastic acts as a tiny sponge that absorbs toxins such as motor oil and pesticides. Fish unwittingly ingest them and they enter the food chain. They have become a plague to clean oceans and river waters.



**JUST TO BE CLEAR:** An average tube contains over a third of a million beads.



**NO GLOW:** Do you really want to scrub your body with polypropylene?

# THE HEROES

These are alternatives to the use of plastic microbeads as these companies have discovered.

In June of 2013, the ocean conservation group 5 GYRES orchestrated a massive social media effort to get PROCTER & GAMBLE, JOHNSON & JOHNSON and L'OREAL to phase out the use of these microbeads. All three eventually agreed, but have not committed to a timeline, so the beads remain in circulation.

How big a threat are these microbeads? The scale of the problem is significant. The estimate for California is 38 tons a year being flushed down our drains. These are approximately 350,000 beads in each package of products.



**POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME** - Lush cosmetics sugar scrubs are far more effective than microbeads so you have to exfoliate less often.



**SEA THE DIFFERENCE** - Acure Organics uses sea kelp and chlorella to gently scrub your skin. See a difference in your skin... and the ocean.

# OCEAN HEROES

The earth has 5 major ocean gyres, but only one organization named 5 Gyres dedicated to removing plastic from our waterways.

A "gyre" according to Websters Dictionary, is a ringlike system of ocean currents rotating clockwise in the northern hemisphere and counter clockwise in the southern. If 5 Gyres has their way, we will some day have clean oceans, freed of plastic trash that is now an all too common sight. For now, their latest target has been plastic microbeads found in countless products.

"We conduct science in the sea to support policy on land."

-Anna Cummins, co-founder of 5 Gyres

"Microbeads are just bad design" say Anna Cummins. She and her scientist husband Marcus Eriksen founded 5gyres.org - a non profit organization to raise awareness on the scourge of plastic in our seas, and to leverage their scientific findings to drive land based solutions.

There is a good chance your child has been to an assembly at school Marcus or Anna have led on the subject. They have addressed Point Dume Elementary school, MUSE Elementary, New Roads School and the Boys & Girls Club through the years. They tell of their journeys on a raft made of plastic bottles, or their expeditions in which they have now covered over 40,000 miles of the world's oceans.



Eriksen and Cummins have dedicated much of their adult lives to studying the ecological impacts of marine plastic pollution. Since 2009, the 5 Gyres crew, made up of scientists, artists, filmmakers, journalists, teachers, policy makers and business owners have conducted 15 expeditions across all 5 oceanic "garbage patches" to study the global impact of plastic. It was on these expeditions that the team documented the dark reality that plastics are ubiquitous in the world's oceans - across the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Ocean.

"You have to get out on the ocean to see the seriousness of the problem."

Genevieve Abedon, 5 Gyres volunteer



Marcus Eriksen and Anna Cummins, founders of 5 Gyres

Stiv Wilson, Associate Director of 5 Gyres, joined 5 Gyres' first expedition across the North Atlantic in 2009, and joined the team immediately after. The first expedition was funded entirely from the crew - 5k each.

"In some places the plastic trash looks like endless confetti floating in a perfect night sky." - Stiv Wilson, Associate Director, 5 Gyres.

After 5 Gyres' scientific findings of plastic microbeads in the Great Lakes, Wilson spearheaded the grass roots campaign to engage major manufacturers in eliminating plastic microbeads from their products. He negotiates with members of the Personal Care Product Council, and helped draft content that has become a bill that was sponsored in California by State Assemblymember Richard Bloom in May of 2014.

The bill came up for vote on August 22nd, but lost by a single vote. 5 Gyres and other partners are working to try to resurrect the bill. A similar bill was introduced in New York. And now a national campaign is underway.

This is how 5 Gyres works. They conduct the science at sea (or lake), then use their findings to develop campaigns on land to protect our waters. They know the task is daunting, but with each policymaker, corporate partner, and individual engaged, they are moving us one step closer to a planet with plastic free oceans.

Visit 5gyres.org to follow the endless expeditions throughout the worlds waterways, and support their efforts so we can have a plastic, pollution-free planet one day.



Mary Osborne, Patagonia surf ambassador and ocean host.



FACT: California flushes approximately 38 tons of microbeads into our water systems every year.



FACT: The amount of plastic in the North Pacific Gyre has increased 100 fold in the last 40 years.



FACT: Every piece of plastic that has ever been produced still exists, unless it has been incinerated.



FACT: 8% of the world's oil is used for plastic production.

FACT: In the last ten years we have produced more plastic than during the whole of the last century.



“As a former Marine from the first gulf war,  
I found a fight worth fighting for -  
**AN OCEAN FREE OF PLASTICS”**  
- Marcus Eriksen, co-founder 5 Gyres



# CALL TO ACTION:

## BAN THE BEADS

Go to 5 Gyres' campaign page and sign the petition to ban plastic microbeads in 2015. We lost in 2014 by one vote - in 2015 we're gearing up for a win.

[5gyres.org](http://5gyres.org)

# GAME CHANGER

*I believe we  
can eliminate  
plastic pollution*

Anna Cummins, co-founder  
5 Gyres, activist, surfer, mother

## LIFE CHANGER



Rainbow Light, the #1 most trusted natural vitamin brand\*, is on a mission to build a stronger state of health for people and the planet. Each formulation is research-backed with a blend of superfoods, plant enzymes and probiotics to deliver the ultimate in health and energy for game changers like Anna—because she's on a mission too. Rainbow Light's 100% recycled and infinitely recyclable Eco-Guard® packaging keeps 10 million plastic bottles from entering the waste stream every year.

Learn how Anna and Rainbow Light are working to end plastic pollution. Visit [rainbowlight.com/gamechanger](http://rainbowlight.com/gamechanger)

\*Wiest & Co. 2014

Photo by: Daniel Amezcua