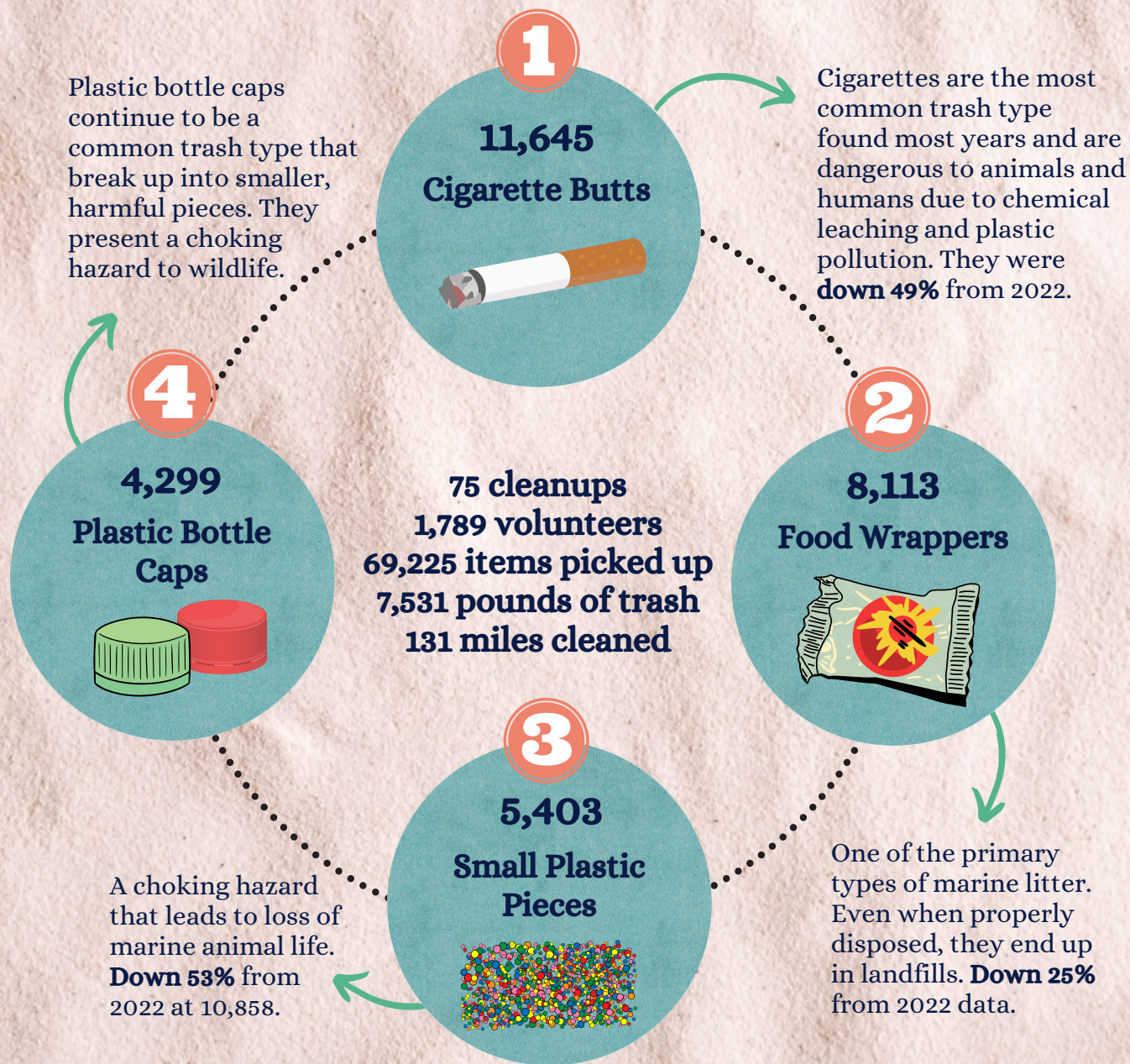


# Picking Up Trash

## *on the ground & in the Sound*

2023 Connecticut Cleanup data



## Falling Rain, Falling Numbers

2023 was a year of significant rainfall. While 87 cleanups were scheduled, only 75 took place, and many cleanups saw fewer volunteers. That meant less total trash picked up, and fewer trash items recorded.





# Cleanup Stories



“Cleanups are important because they are an immediate and tangible change,” says Annalisa Paltauf, who has been managing the cleanup program for Save the Sound, the Connecticut coordinator for the International Coastal Cleanup, since 2017.

“Since college, I have had a strong interest in preserving the environment,” says Paltauf. “I am a trail runner and cyclist and spend most of my free time outdoors, appreciating what nature offers.”

Each year, Paltauf works with volunteer Cleanup Captains to help coordinate cleanups throughout Connecticut by providing support, supplies, and volunteer recruitment assistance.

Yearly cleanups have inspired a larger network of state-wide cleanups. “I love it when someone who volunteered at a cleanup reaches out to me to ask about becoming a Cleanup Captain and organizing their own cleanup,” she says. “It’s encouraging that some of our volunteers have cleanup experiences that inspire them to take their love of the environment to the next level,” such as the high school student who, after volunteering, took initiative to organize two cleanups on their own.

Cleanups are intergenerational and inclusive, which is one of many reasons Paltauf loves being a part of them. The cleanup program encourages the next generation of environmental stewards and community involvement, all while helping to improve the health of our local waterways.

“The environmental benefits are numerous,” Paltauf states, “from making sure litter doesn’t enter the water to preventing discarded fishing lines from entangling wildlife and removing items that can leach chemicals into the ground and our waterways.”

If you are wondering about some of the weirdest things Paltauf has found at cleanups, she says: “A moped, a dog bed, Christmas stockings, and a toilet seat.”



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