



On July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020, SeaKeepers hosted another Kayak Clean-up on the Miami River. Ten (10) volunteers attended and removed about 21 pounds and 295 pieces of trash from the Miami River. Most of the garbage found was plastic and foam pieces, plastic bottle caps, food wrappers, glass bottles, and plastic bottles. Interestingly, Seybold Canal, where the kayaks launched from, was drastically cleaner than in past outings. As the team continued south east along the main river, the north east bank where the West Flagler bridge intersects the River was a virtual landfill, and where the team spent most of their actual clean-up time. In a video taken by one of the volunteers, a manatee can be seen eating its usual vegetation of choice, yet surrounded by floating plastic pieces. It is easy to imagine that without the intervention of the clean-up crew, the manatee would have very likely eaten the very plastic that was promptly picked up. Each piece collected was recorded and categorized in the Clean Swell App, which can help determine which areas are most affected by marine debris, and which trash items are most problematic.

SeaKeepers hopes to continue the Kayak Clean-up project as a way to engage the community in keeping our waterways and marine ecosystem clean and free of life threatening plastic and debris, while also keeping safe in this time of COVID-19 when large group beach cleanups are limited. We look forward to expanding this program by not only making it a regular occurrence, but also calling to action all others in the community and other communities to also take to the water and do their part. Thank you to all of our volunteers!

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