

Green Algae, Green Waters

Pollution by definition is known as the introduction of harmful materials in an environment that carry with it the capabilities of eroding a said environment's ecosystem, effectively polluting the area. These aforementioned harmful materials are scientifically recognised as pollutants and can range from a plethora of entities such as volcanic ash, trash, or waste runoff. One of the most common pollutants found in today's modern era is plastic with the most common type of frivolous pollution being seen most frequently in the world's waters, be it either oceans, lakes, or even ponds, no waters are safe from plastic pollution.

An example of this is the once great Peninsula Pond. Peninsula Pond of Mangere once used to be a pristine pond with a surface of water that used to sparkle like diamonds under the Sun that all the residents of Peninsula Park used to walk around and indulge in its beauty from time to time. But that is all but a tale of the past.



Peninsula Pond's muddy polluted waters'

Long gone are the days of a pristine pond with water that used to attract animals and humans of all kinds. What lays now in its wake is a pond with water so murky it has become green with plastic littered everywhere alongside the pond. From interviewing the long-time residents of Peninsula Park, it becomes evident as to what exactly went wrong here. According to the residents, people slowly over time stopped caring for the Pond once Covid hit and people slowly started dumping their rubbish everywhere and with no one caring enough to clean the pond post-Covid, the pond has slowly deteriorated in quality over the years into what it is today as seen in the picture above.

As it stands, the Peninsula Pond is not only just an aesthetic eyesore with no one to clean it up, it is also a health hazard for all of Peninsula Park's wildlife. Most of the plastic bottles littered around the pond are generally bottles composed of either BPA or PS oligomer that once decomposed into water is able to not only disrupt the hormonal functioning of animals if ingested but is also capable of altering or seriously damaging their reproductive systems as well.



'Effect of pollution on wildlife; death'

The image above depicts a dead animal photographed at the bay of Peninsula Pond and from a visual analysis is seen to have suffered from internal poisoning, most likely from either eating the plastic off of the bay or drinking the water from the pond. Regardless of which of these 2 fates it suffered, this piece of evidence is able to highlight the threat that unsanitary ponds such as the one found in Peninsula is able to pose on all the organisms in its vicinity. To make matters worse in a sense, because of how animals have slowly started accidentally ingesting plastic, human health is also of concern now. The above animal is most likely to be a duck that is most commonly eaten by a majority of the residents of Peninsula Park. If perchance a person were to hypothetically take off with a duck from the park and eat it, their health would slowly begin to deteriorate as well as a result of newly found microplastics that have just entered the bloodstream of the consumer. This is because the above case shown in Figure 2 is an extreme death caused by consumption of plastic. A majority of the time, animals are able to get by if they have accidentally ingested plastics as those plastics are most likely to be microplastics which are small pieces of plastic failing to span even 1 millimetre that only significantly deteriorate health if heavily consumed over time. For humans, even the smallest ingestion of plastics causes their developmental systems to deteriorate effectively sickening them.



'Scattered litter near Peninsula Pond'

To make matters even worse, the people of Peninsula do not care for the threat posed by polluting their waters like this. Even after seeing all of the rubbish already dumped in the area, instead of cleaning it up, people frequently go out of their way to litter some more. The aforementioned picture shows an example of people littering various clothing items everywhere instead of doing the right thing which is disposing of it correctly in a bin. The people themselves will have to change their own selves if they truly yearn for change around them.

To conclude, pollution is a pressing global crisis reaching critical levels of tolerance that demands urgent attention. Pollution's far-reaching consequences effectively affect not only the environment but certain aspects of human health as well. These consequences can also be seen crossing into New Zealand's economy as well with more money needing to be allocated for public cleaning. To effectively combat pollution, a collective effort is required not only from governments, but corporations and the people themselves as well. It is only after adopting sustainable practices, enforcing regulations, and promoting awareness will we then be able to, to an extent, mitigate pollution's impact on the future of Earth and its inhabitants' future generations.

Bibliography

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