Jamaican Beaches
Introduction

- Visiting the beach is a traditional recreational activity for many Jamaicans. With an increasing population, there is a great demand for the use of beaches. However, many of the public beaches are of poor quality, lack proper facilities, and face the problem of fishermen encroaching.

- Over the years some of these natural resources are on the verge of destruction because of the inadvertent and/or direct intentions of organizations and individuals. One such threat to the preservation of beaches is pollution. To have healthy environmentally friendly beaches in our Island we must unite to prevent pollution.

- This display gives an overview of some beaches in Jamaica and existing threats. It also examines the Kingston Harbour and how we can protect these natural resources.
Jamaica is blessed with many beautiful beaches in the different parishes; the most popular are located in Westmoreland (Negril), St. Ann, St. James, and St. Catherine (Portmore).

Some of the more popular beaches in the parishes:
Kingston and St. Andrew

- Harbour Head
- Gunboat
- Copacabana
- Ocean Lake
St. Thomas

- Lyssons
- Rozelle
- South Haven
- Mezzgar’s Run
- Retreat
- Prospect
- Rocky Point
Portland

- Innis Bay
- Long Bay
- Boston
- Winnifred
- Blue Hole
- Hope Bay
St. Mary

- Rio Nuevo
- Rockmore
- Murdock
St. Ann

- Roxborough
- Priory
- Salem
- Sailor’s Hole
- Cardiff Hall
- Discovery Bay
- Dunn’s River Beach

DUNN’S RIVER FALLS
DUNN’S RIVER FALLS is an icy-cold stream, tumbling down some 600 feet of natural steps unto a white sand beach. The falls is usually crowded with visitors and locals who seek the thrill of climbing the sometimes slippery rocks.
Trelawny

- Rio Bueno
- Braco
- Silver Sands
- Flamingo
- Half Moon Bay
St. James

- Greenwood
- RoseHall
- Coral Gardens
- Ironshore
- Doctor’s Cave
Hanover

- Tryall
- Lance’s Bay
- Bull Bay

A DAY AT THE BEACH AT MOSQUITO COVE, HANOVER

MOSQUITO COVE is a beautiful inlet of the blue Caribbean Sea in the parish of Hanover. It consists of a very quiet beach and calm waters. The picture shows activities at a fisherman’s regatta.
Westmoreland

- Little Bay
- Whitehouse
- Fonthill
- Bluefield
St. Catherine

- Port Henderson
- Hellshire
- Fort Clarence
St. Elizabeth

- Galleon
- Hodges
- Fort Charles
- Calabash Bay
- Great Bay
Manchester

- Calabash Bay
- Hudson Bay
- Canoe Valley
Clarendon

- Barnwell Dale
- Jackson Bay
The following is a brief summary of some of our beautiful beaches:
Before 1975 it was an open stretch of public beach in Montego Bay with no landscaping and privacy; it was visible from the main road. However, the Urban Development Corporation refurbished and improved the structures, adding sporting facilities, snack counters, restaurant, jet skies, snorkeling, parking facilities and a life guard.
Rocky Point Beach

- Rocky Point Beach is found in St. Thomas and is used by both Jamaicans and tourists for relaxation and vigor after a long drive along the mud track to the Morant Point Lighthouse. It is a sandy beach that has a small food shop, bars, and sanitary conveniences. It is a meeting place where residents and fishermen eat and socialize. Some of the attractions at this natural scene are the trips with the fishermen in motorboats from the great morass up to the beach, the panoramic breathtaking view of the sunset on the water and the array of pretty shells lying on the sand waiting to be discovered.
Doctor’s Cave Beach

- This beautiful white sand beach near Doctor’s Cave is the pride of Montego Bay, in St. James. Originally the Doctor’s Cave Bathing Club; it tried unsuccessfully in the 20th century to prevent colored (black) people from bathing and using the beach. The name is literal; the original bathing beach was just a small sandy cave belonging to Dr. Alexander Mccatty where he and his friends used to swim. There was no mixed bathing in those days; the men swam in the morning, nude while the ladies swam in the afternoon well clothed in bathing caps, pantaloons and rubber shoes. In 1906 he donated his beach property to the town of Montego Bay, to be used as a bathing club. It became a part of social activity in the city, embracing a cosmopolitan and ever widening public.

- Doctor’s Cave circa 1959
Dunns River Falls and Beach

- This attraction is about five miles from St. Ann’s Bay, on the road to Ocho Rios and is a favorite for locals and tourists. The beach has clean, bright sand and at one point of the tiny bay, Dunn’s river empties its clear cool waters over a series of rocky ledges. Swimmers can swim in the stimulating water of the falls or swim in the warmer sea water.
The name “hellshire” is a corruption of “healthshire” in St. Catherine. Historian, Edward Long stated that the area was known for healthy air. Within easy reach of Kingston, Hellshire beach offers swimming and snorkeling, with a sparkling touch. It is very popular with Kingstonians who for generations were barred from the beach by wild scrub and hostile cactus country. However, the Urban Development Cooperation has restored and improved the condition of Hellshire making it one of the main beaches in St. Catherine.
Boston Beach

- This pristine beach is ten miles east of Port Antonio and is protected by an off-shore reef. It is white sand and is ideal for swimming and picnic. It has huge breaking waves which have become the latest prized venues for international surfing meets. Many surfing championship have been held at this beach such as the National Open Surfing Championship.
Puerto Seco Beach

- Is at Discovery Bay, in St. Ann, and is open daily from 9:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m. it has the facilities of a bar, restaurant and toilet but has limited water sports.
Lollypop Beach

- This beach is at Sandy Bay, just five miles west of Montego Bay on the road to Lucea and Negril. Tour of this beach is available once a week, on Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. It includes a 15 minute glass bottom boat ride, a full reggae band, seafood, jerked meats and dinner. Traditional dance groups perform kumina, reggae and limbo.
Cornwall Beach

- Cornwall beach offers an underwater marine park; a long beach of white sand dotted with cabanas, water sports, scuba diving, snorkelling, a craft training centre where you can watch articles being made from straw and wood; and a cafeteria. On Saturday evenings there is a jonkanoo beach party with masked and limbo dancers. It is in the centre of the town of Montego Bay.
Fort Clarence Beach

- This recreational beach facility was formally opened on May 2, 1976, with the Governor General Florizel Glasspole, as special guest. It was governed by the Hellshire Development Company. Over the years, Fort Clarence has hosted many annual events such as Ms. Fort Clarence Bikini pageants, “Fresh”, Fully Loaded and many more successful stage shows. However, during the early 21st century residents started complaining about the loud noises, gun salutes, violence and traffic problems from the events performed at the beach. In 2003 the Urban Development Cooperation declared that the beach would no longer accommodate these types of events.
Makka Surf Beach

- This is in St. Thomas and is ideal for surfing; in 2011 it hosted the National Open Surfing Championship with internationally recognized surfers honing their skills.
Long Bay Beach

- This is in Negril, Westmoreland; with curved white sand beach about five miles long. A coral reef lies within wading distance offshore, and the water is calm. The beach front is developed with low rise hotels, cottages, restaurants and bars.
Buccaneer Beach

- Buccaneer beach was opened in 1964 as part of the government plan for a recreation of the Palisadoes strip and became a public beach. Before it was renovated and made new, it was ten acres of land festooned with wild brush and cactus. A fresh water lagoon running through it completes its rugged natural splendor. It provides a panoramic view of Kingston Harbour and the immediate surroundings.
Gunboat Beach

- During the 1970s this was one of the most frequent used beaches in Kingston. It is situated on one of the broader sections of the Palisadoes, eastward from the airport. Prior to world war two, this area consisted of a marshy shallow salt flats, with scattered patches of mangrove trees of different varieties and cactus. The war brought the construction of a fleet air arm station, the saline flats filled in and the trees destroyed. From this gradually evolved the present airport and the Gunboat beach.
Boston Beach

- Boston beach was owned by Robin Moore and handed over to the Beach Control Authority of Jamaica so that the people of the island could enjoy it in 1962.
Port Henderson Beach

- Port Henderson beach is located on a property that was once owned and operated by John Henderson in the late eighteenth century. At the end of the eighteenth century the mouth of the Rio Cobre silted up and Passage Fort was superseded by Port Henderson as the embarkation point for Spanish Town. The beach became a popular holiday resort.
Harbour and Beach Pollution

- When individuals and organizations intentionally and inadvertently introduce something harmful in the environment which makes it harmful for humans and animals, they are guilty of polluting the environment. Harmful materials in the environment are called pollutants, and can be found on land, in the air and our beaches.

- Water pollution occurs when pollutants get in our rivers, wells and beaches. Jamaica is known to have some of the most beautiful beaches in the world, formed from the remains of coral and algal species associated with our coral reefs. However, some of these beaches have been under severe threat, recent studies have shown that our beaches are contaminated with oil and other contaminants that are damaging to recreational activities. Regular deliberate discharge of effluent will eventually destroy the attractiveness and use of our beaches.

- Marine litter or garbage is another problem. More than half of the garbage found on the beaches are plastic, discarded containers, juice boxes such as Styrofoam plates, and plastic bags. We can reduce the amount of garbage on our beaches by carefully disposing of plastics and other non-biodegradable materials. If we do not then the garbage will eventually take over the beaches which will in turn put a stop to recreational activities.
Beach erosion is a problem caused by sand mining, removal of vegetation, destruction of the reefs, changes in currents and work building structures in the active beach zone. Over fishing has been made worse by inappropriate fishing methods such as dynamiting that deplete the fish stock and destroy large sections of the living coral reef. Without reefs to protect shorelines from erosion caused by waves, and rising sea level, beaches will be flood and disappear.
Threats to the Beach
Kingston Harbour Pollution

- Kingston Harbour is located in the Island of Jamaica and is the seventh largest harbour in the world. For centuries, it has been the main trading port of Jamaica that has sustained and increased the development of the economy of Kingston and the wider Jamaica. In fact it was one of the best and beautiful harbours in the world.

- For many years the harbour maintained itself in an ecologically balanced and healthy state. Fish, shrimp and lobster once abound in its waters and coral were plentiful. Swimming, sport fishing and sightseeing were popular activities.
The rapid growth of Kingston city resulted in pollutants being washed and dumped in the harbour; Sewage from housing schemes, industrial waste, residential garbage and agricultural chemicals from farms by rivers and streams, and solid waste been dumped into gullies and in the harbour itself destroy the natural wonder.
Studies and survey done by scientist reveals that sewage, industrial, agriculture, and solid wastes are the major contributors to the pollution of the Kingston Harbour. This has resulted in the Following:

- A reduction of oxygen levels in the harbour
- The proliferation and overabundance of phytoplankton
- The accumulation of toxic chemicals
- The increased levels of bacteria and other disease carrying organism
- A severe decline and destruction of its fishery potential
- The loss of marine organisms and habitats particularly the benthic components
- The reduction of its recreational attractiveness and the increasing threat to and actual effect on public health