

SARGASSUM

(seaweed)

- Do you enjoy finding different shells?
- Do you like to watch hermit crabs and ghost crabs scuttle around on the beach?
- Are you fascinated by the starfish and jelly fish?
- Do you appreciate the beach poppy and other dune plants?
- Would you like to see the burrowing owl that makes its home in the dunes?
- Could you watch shore birds all day?

At some times of the year (mostly in the spring and summer), you may find a lot of sargassum seaweed, along with other beach treasures.

The seaweed may seem messy, and sometimes it can smell pretty fishy, too! Think of the seaweed as Nature's way to rebuild the beach by providing shelter in this floating ecosystem.

What is seaweed doing to make a better beach for all of us?

The seaweed

- protects the island.
- prevents coastal erosion.
- provides critical habitat for sea life, including fish, juvenile sea turtles, and sea birds.

A story in the Corpus Christi Caller Times explains: “The seaweed is actually a type of sargassum, or brown algae, that grows abundantly in the Sargasso Sea off the coast of the United States just south of Bermuda. Although there is a period when the seaweed is heaviest, it is always around because it is a free-flowing feature of the Gulf of Mexico.”

Seaweed naturally accumulates along the shoreline, providing a buffet for birds and other creatures.

Please be careful when you walk across the seaweed. It may be hiding things you don't want to step on!

We invite you to explore the seaweed for the fascinating ocean life that travels with it. Nature will clean the beach when it is time for the seaweed to go away!

Sponsored by Keep Port Aransas Beautiful Inc. (KPAB), a non-profit Keep Texas Beautiful and Keep America Beautiful affiliate. www.kpab.org