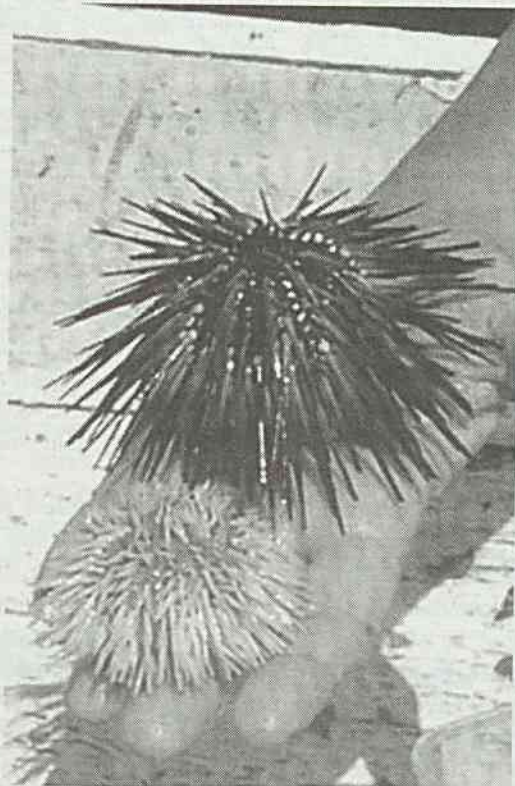


ASK the AQUARIUM

Q. I found a round, purple, prickly ball about the size of a lime at Cape Lookout jetty. It looked like a pin cushion. Can you tell me what it is?

A. Our best bet is that it's a sea urchin. Surprisingly, sea urchins are related to sea stars and sand dollars.



Often called pin cushions or sea porcupines, sea urchins are classified as echinoderms.

Two types of urchins are common in our waters; the purple urchin with long spines, and the white urchin with short spines. The spines aren't venomous, and serve mainly to protect and aide the urchin wedging itself securely into cracks and crevices.

Urchins move on hundreds of tiny tube feet. They live in rocky outcrops, tidal pools, jetties, pilings, seaweed and eel grass beds. They can also be found in deep water and are frequently

hauled up in fishermen's nets. They move slowly and graze on algae, small invertebrates and carrion.

Beneath the urchin's prickly armor is an intricate shell, visible only after the animal has died and its spines have fallen off. Called a "test," the shell is beautifully designed with small, perfectly aligned, raised circles and five equally-spaced elongated triangles. The raised circles are where the spines attach. The tiny holes in the circles are where the hundreds of thread-like tube feet protrude. The tube feet operate on a suction principal.

This makes for slow going, but the strong grip of the hundreds of feet can hold the urchin fast, even in strong currents.

The urchin's mouth is on the bottom of its shell, surrounded by a small ring of soft tissue. Resembling a small beak, the mouth consists of five small teeth. The teeth scrape minute plants and animals from rocks, shells and other solid surfaces. The hole in the top of the shell is for excreting waste.

Many animals prey on sea urchins, including sea stars, conchs, oystercatchers, gulls, crabs and fish. Humans also have a taste for urchins in the form of roe. The roe is

eaten raw and is highly prized in the Orient as a gourmet food.

Turtle Time

By Peggy Sagmiller

It is now mid-June and there are only three Loggerhead Sea Turtle nests on the beach in Pine Knoll Shores. This season is off to a slower start than most, possibly due to a cool spring and cooler than usual water temperatures. Hopefully, the pace will pick up as the weather continues to warm.

Please remember to keep your dogs on leashes when walking on the beach. Sea turtle eggs release an ammonia odor that dogs (as well as other predators) find irresistible. This odor becomes stronger the closer the eggs are to hatching. So does the urge to dig.

We hope everyone enjoyed the Independence Day holiday, but please refrain from shooting fireworks off on the beach in the days and weeks after the fourth. The loud noise and

bright lights disturb and disorient adult sea turtles that may choose that evening to come ashore to nest. All fireworks that leave the ground are illegal, except those in organized public displays. It is also illegal to have grills or campfires on our beach.

Lastly, please remember to take all trash with you when you leave the beach. Trash left on the beach will end up in the ocean and may be ingested by sea turtles, whales and dolphins, leading to a slow death by starvation. Trash (especially plastic) can also block animal airways and kill by suffocation.

Thank you for your understanding and help in making our beaches safe, clean and welcoming to all!

At the Library

Bogue Banks Public Library, Pine Knoll Shores
(252) 247-4660 • <http://carteret.cpplib.org>

CALENDAR FOR JULY

The library will be closed on Tuesday, July 4 for the holiday.

Carteret County Public Web Space: <http://carteretcpplib.org>

Books at the Beach: A special program for adults who enjoy reading and talking about what they read. The books selected are by authors who will be attending the Book Festival in October. The programs will run from 2 to 4 p.m. on Wednesdays in the Art Gallery of the library. "Widow of the South" by Robert Hick is the book chosen for the July 12 program. The program will be moderated by Sue Ross, PhD. "Brave Enemies" by Robert Morgan will be discussed on July 26 with Amy Tilly, MA as moderator.

What's New for Children: Registration for the summer reading program "Paws, Claws, Scales and Tales" continues during the month of July. Prizes will be given as reading goals are met. The *Storytelling Festival* returns to Carteret County on Wednesdays. The Festival will be held at the Maritime Museum in Beaufort at 10 a.m. July 12 Donna Washington, a teller of fantastic tales, returns for her 3rd festival. July 19 'String Celebration', with music and song, brings us stories from far away lands. July 26 the festival concludes when the 'Grey Seal Puppets' presents "Bathtub Pirates" the tale of a kid at sea!

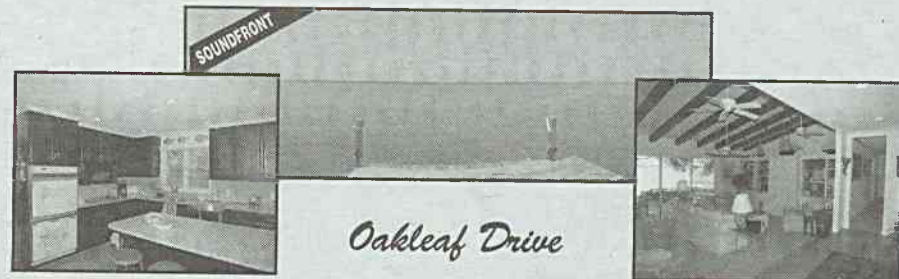
Featured Artists for July: The Art Gallery will feature a selection of large oil paintings by the library's art coordinator, Walter Bone. The show includes French landscapes, Caribbean beach scenes and some new Carolina waterfalls. The Showcases display the work of woodcarver George Brooks formerly of Emerald Isle. Mr. Brook's favorite subjects are the coastal birds that inhabit our coast.

Reception for Artists on Friday, July 14 at 3 p.m. at the library. Come and meet our featured artists. This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Library and is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

Storytimes will be held each Thursday in July at 10 a.m. for preschoolers and on the first and third Wednesday at 10 am for toddlers. All programs are with Ms. Brita.

Regular hours are Monday through Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Bogue Banks Public Library is a branch of the Carteret County Public Library in Beaufort and is affiliated with the Craven-Pamlico-Carteret Regional Library.

We do Pine Knoll Shores!



One-level, 5 bedroom, 3 bath home on deep water with free flowing design tailored for stylish living & elegant entertaining. Unsurpassed views of Bogue Sound!



Shutters on the Sound

Professionally decorated condo overlooking Bogue Banks 15th tee & fairway with good views of Bogue Sound! \$460,000



Egret Lake

Luxury home with free-flowing floor plan overlooking beautiful Egret Lake in exclusive Beacon's Reach!
Price reduced to \$737,000

Cannon & Gruber
REALTORS

252-726-6600
800-317-2866

www.cannongruber.com/tsl