



The Sea At Last

BY BILL FAVER

On a visit to Acadia National Park several years ago, I was intrigued with a plaque at one of the overlooks inviting the visitor to do more than just look out over the sea along the Main coast. It read:



The sea at last! You may have traveled three thousand miles to get here, or perhaps you only stepped across the road. Whatever the journey, to those who love the sea it is always thrilling to stand at its edge.

You are on a rocky point overlooking the waters of another world. The dust, the crowds, the city streets lie behind; a cool vast reservoir of life stretches ahead—filled in different regions with billions of animals and plants.

Take a path to the shore. Smell and feel the salt air. Explore the remarkable tide zone; the clasp between ocean and land. And perhaps ask yourself, "Where does man fit, what is his role?"

This same invitation applies to all of us who come to the edge where land and sea meet. We come for varied reasons: to lie in the sun, to play in the surf, to fish, to sail or go boating, to photograph, to rest or rock on the porch.

Whatever our reasons for being here, we can learn to appreciate the coastal environment if we will try to understand the complex interactions taking place. There is not better way to do this than by taking the time to investigate the shore, looking for its inhabitants and observing their surroundings, trying to find out why they live where they do, what they eat, and what eats them. And, when our investigations bring us to man's relationship to the sea and its creatures, we can develop the kind of concern that should carry over into our lifestyles and our daily activities.

The sea at last! Perhaps you, like many, take from it what you want and never think much about it. Or, perhaps you, like many others, have come for many miles or stepped across the road to acknowledge its rich heritage, to respect its fragile ecosystems and to look to its promising future.