

SEAWEED SCAVENGER HUNT

Explore Nature's Beachside Ecosystem



SEAWEED IS A NATURAL PART OF COASTAL LIFE

Galveston Island's beaches often experience seaweed landings during spring and summer. Some years bring light amounts, while others come in more noticeable waves. As of April 2025, several landings have reached the shoreline. This is a natural process, not an emergency. In fact, sargassum, the type of seaweed seen here, plays a crucial role in the health of coastal ecosystems across the Gulf, Caribbean, and Atlantic.

WHAT IS SEAWEED?

The seaweed washing ashore in Galveston is sargassum, a type of brown algae that floats in from the Sargasso Sea in the Atlantic Ocean. This seaweed drifts on ocean currents, eventually reaching beaches throughout the Gulf and beyond.

SEAWEED IS

**A FLOATING ECOSYSTEM, PROVIDING
SHELTER FOR MARINE LIFE**

**AN IMPORTANT PLAYER IN BUILDING
DUNES AND CONSERVING SAND**

**A NUTRIENT SOURCE FOR COASTAL
BIRDS AND BEACH VEGETATION**

**A PROTECTIVE HABITAT FOR JUVENILE
SEA TURTLES AND OTHER SPECIES**

GRAB A BUCKET — LET'S EXPLORE!

Scoop up a handful of floating seaweed and give it a gentle shake into a bucket of seawater. You might spot tiny shrimp, fish, or crabs. These small creatures use the seaweed as a home and hiding place, offering a hands-on glimpse into life beneath the surface.



HOW IS SEAWEED MANAGED ON GALVESTON'S BEACHES?

During large landings, the Galveston Island Park Board monitors conditions at all managed beaches, including:

- East Beach
- Stewart Beach
- Seawall Urban Park
- Dellanera RV Park
- West End Pocket Parks

Seaweed is not removed, as it is essential to the coastal ecosystem. Instead, the Park Board uses specialized surf rake equipment to gently push it away from the shoreline, creating clear paths for beachgoers while allowing the seaweed to decompose naturally and support dune formation.

WHY SEAWEED IS LEFT IN PLACE

The Park Board is the only entity on the island federally authorized to relocate seaweed, and this is done only under strict environmental guidelines. Relocation decisions are based on specific size thresholds — including depth, width, and length of accumulation — and always prioritize public access, health, and safety, while protecting the beach's long-term stability.

PLEASE BE PATIENT WITH SEAWEED

It may not always be picture-perfect, but sargassum is not harmful, and its benefits far outweigh the inconvenience. Our crews are working hard to maintain access while respecting the natural cycle of the beach.

EXPLORE BEYOND THE SHORELINE

There's more to the island than just the beach. Go to [VisitGalveston.com](https://www.visitgalveston.com) for attractions, museums, and activities to make the most of your time — no matter the seaweed forecast.



GALVESTON PARK BOARD OF TRUSTEES

601 Tremont St.

Galveston, TX 77550

409.797.5000

galvestonparkboard.org

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The Park Board works to protect, enhance, and promote Galveston's greatest asset — the island's beaches.