

Spring Weather Brings Out The Beachcomber

By BYRON FISH

THERE'S an old saying among beachcombers that if you wait long enough, anything you want will eventually drift in on the tide. Many people who live on a beach or near a seacoast are sure it's true. They're beachcombers themselves.

No beachcombers are more avid than the residents of Curry county. It has almost 100 miles of salt water shore line.

The dyed-in-the-brine beachcomber begins young. As soon as he can toddle onto the sand he picks up rocks and shells and exclaims over them. He clutches them possessively when he is removed to the car.

As an adult he'll still be a beachcomber, probably of the Robinson Crusoe type, thinking of how he'll use the rusty chain, or old life preserver, or stick of bamboo he turns up along the sands.

The Crusoe is only one type of beachcomber. There are many others who tend toward specialties.

Take the Marine Life beachcomber. He prowls the water's edge looking for starfish, oyster shells, small crabs, and anemones. After a fruitful day he could start a small aquarium, but he is usually content to leave everything except an occasional starfish, which he takes home to dry for an ornament.

The shell beachcomber's work is more permanent. He collects shells to take home and keep in cigar boxes. Clam and oyster shells may become ashtrays.

Most women beachcombers are found in the Driftwood Division. The northern beaches and sandpits abound in small, peculiarly shaped bits of wood, prized as art objects and featured in dish gardens. The Azalea Garden Club has an annual exhibit of driftwood in which the finds are displayed as natural sculpture. In judging for "abstracts" and car-

PARD GETS BRUSHED



Cover girl model Patricia Edelson sees that her wire-haired terrier Pard gets good grooming, too, and he doesn't seem to mind getting the brush off a bit. Pat is using a newly developed curry-comb brush made of polyethylene which is cast in a single mold and guaranteed against breakage, pulled tendrils, or damage by hot water. The tendrils are stiff enough to remove tangles and snarls from long-haired dogs, like Pat's Pard, but flexible and soothing to the skin of short-haired pets, too.

captures some amazing resemblances to birds, fish, animals, and dancers are revealed.

Driftwood is what keeps wives with Robinson Crusoe husbands from saying very much. It is estimated that a five-room house could be heated all winter on the bits of beachwood carried home by some women.

The search for driftwood does not stop with pieces that can be lugged back home. Another type of beachcomber includes artists, photographers, and seascape lovers who look for much larger pieces—up to the entire weathered root system of a windfall Douglas fir. A find of this type results in camera studies, water colors, a session by a beachfire, just looking.

There are two classes of beachcombers who can give a dollars and cents reason for their hobby.

One is the Lumber type, always on the lookout for mill-cut wood lodged alongshore by eddies and tides; two-by-fours, four-by-fours, and marine plywood. Some of it has escaped from mills, some from freighters, but most from "dunnage," planks used in stacking freighter deck loads, and thrown overboard when the ship is unloaded. Many a Puget Sound beach cabin has been built of this lumber and fitted with fixtures that also came ashore as flotsam.

The other practical beachcomber is the Firewooder, whose ranks include most shoreline dwellers

and many close-inlanders. The Firewooder is supplied from the trunks of washed-out trees, lumber mill cull logs, and timber adrift from broken logging booms.

Loggers who transport their timber in the booms have to impress their brands into the end of each log, and by law only the owner or a licensed professional beachcomber have the right to salvage such branded timber. In practice, however, a three-way race often develops between the owner, the professional, and the Firewooder who wants the log for heat.

The firewood beachcomber is legally wrong if he pounces on a drifting branded log with his saw. But many an amateur "rustles" a log by sawing off the brand, disposing of the resultant flat disc of wood on the outgoing tide.

Days or weeks later, along some other beach, the branded log-end will drift ashore and some Robinson Crusoe will take it home to his "patio slab" collection.

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Earth's actors change earth's scenes; and the curtain of human life should be lifted on reality, on that which outweighs time; on duty done and life perfected, wherein joy is real and fadeless. —Mary Baker Eddy.

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