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Pocket beaches are natural treasures

FORT MYERS, FL – A glance to your left might produce a spectacular view of a rocky cliff; a glance straight ahead would show the glory and magnificence of the sea; and a glance to your right will satisfy your desire for natural beauty with yet another amazing rocky cliff. Where are you? On a pocket beach, of course.

“Pocket beaches are typically retained in deep bays between two large rocky headlands. They are straight or arc-shaped, and sand movement into or out of them is low compared to most other beach types. As a consequence, they tend to be remarkably stable in size,” says coastal scientist Craig Everts, Ph.D., who is based in California

Pocket beaches are common in the U.S., especially on the west coast, and offer some of nature’s most beautiful scenery. Although a pocket beach offers unique beauty, it also offers all the perks of a regular beach – swimming, boating, fishing, surfing and relaxing.

Marine animals love pocket beaches, too – they make great habitats for shorebirds, crabs and other small animals and microorganisms.

Some popular pocket beaches on the west coast are those at Corona del Mar and Laguna Beach in California. In fact, Laguna Beach has between 10 and 15 individual pocket beaches within its coastline.

The east coast of the U.S. also has pocket beaches, but many of them are manmade. Coastal engineers construct pocket beaches by building long structures perpendicular to the shoreline, such as jetties, on one or both sides of a beach. They are usually constructed in areas where natural beaches are narrow.

One example of such a beach is Upham Beach in Pinellas County on the west coast of Florida. This beach is situated between a rock jetty and a T-groin and was constructed in 2006 to slow erosion.

An example of a manmade pocket beach on the west coast is the Big Corona Beach in Newport Beach, Calif. This beach is about a half-mile long and is framed by cliffs and a rock jetty that forms the east entrance to Newport Harbor.

For more information about pocket beaches, visit www.asbpa.org.

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ABOUT ASBPA

Founded in 1926, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) represents the scientific, technical and political interests along the coast in an effort to shape national research and policy concerning shore and beach management and restoration. ASBPA strives to engage in a factual debate on coastal issues and economics that will foster sound, far-sighted and economical development

and preservation of our beaches; thereby aiding in placing their beliefs within the reach of the largest possible number of people in accordance with the ideals of a democratic nation. For additional information about ASBPA, please visit www.asbpa.org.