

Mysterious creatures showing up along Oregon's shoreline

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Folks that live and visit the Oregon Coast are discovering sea pickles on the sandy beaches.

The Seaside Aquarium reports the sea pickles or sea squirts, known as pyrosomes are washing up all along the Oregon Coast.

"We came across one on the beach yesterday, but we have reports of hundreds down on the beach in Florence," the aquarium's Facebook post reads.

People adding their comments to the aquarium's post state that they have found the sea pickles at Cannon Beach, Tierra del Mar, Manzanita and Lincoln City. One person wrote, "No doubt from the volcano area off Tonga," referring to a recent undersea eruption that recently trigger small tsunami waves along the Oregon Coast.

The pyrosomes are most commonly found in tropical waters, but stormy ocean conditions are known to bring the mysterious creatures as far north as Alaska. As the ocean currents change with the seasons, beachcombers

have been finding an abundance of pyrosomes along the high-tide line.

The aquarium states in its post that *Pyrosoma atlanticum* is the most observed species found along Oregon beaches. They are described as a rigid, bumpy, pinkish-gray tube about the size of a finger. Throughout the world pyrosomes can range in size from a few centimeters to over 30 feet long, but the common *Pyrosoma atlanticum* reaches a maximum length of two feet.

"These totally tubular critters are actually known as a colonial tunicate, a mass of thousands of smaller organisms with a rigid notochord (a simplistic backbone)," the aquarium post reads.