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Dawn on the sandy beach adjacent to the Bot River Estuary. Sandy beaches make up just over a third of our nation's coastline. At first glance they lack the bustling diversity of life evident on rocky shore; but dig beneath the surface and a world of worms, clams, sea lice and crabs is revealed. Turn over a piece of cast-up kelp and thousands of sand hoppers spring into action to escape the intrusion. Sanderlings and White-fronted Plovers sprint up and down with the waves, ploughing their bills through the sand to extract small creatures. Oystercatchers scissor open white mussels. Life may not be obvious, but it abounds.

Photo and text: George Branch
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