

# Shellfish at the Shore

These and other Massachusetts shellfish can become contaminated with red tide toxin.  
ALWAYS check with the local shellfish constable before harvesting any shellfish. NEVER harvest shellfish in any area closed to shellfishing.



## Quahog

*Mercenaria mercenaria*

**Distribution:** Gulf of St. Lawrence to Florida

**Habitat:** Intertidal to 60 feet

**Identification:** 2¾ to 4¼ inches long; dense shell, external surface with concentric rings, prominent growth rings



## Soft Shell Clam

*Mya arenaria*

**Distribution:** Labrador to North Carolina

**Habitat:** In sand or mud intertidal to 60 feet

**Identification:** 1 to 5½ inches long; ovate moderately thin shell; ends rounded, one narrower than the other; exterior chalky grayish white; irregular concentric growth lines



## Razor Clam

*Ensis directus*

**Distribution:** Labrador to South Carolina

**Habitat:** In sand intertidally, subtidally to 120 feet

**Identification:** 3 to 8 inches long; elongated oblong thin shell; both ends squared; olive-green



## Oyster

*Crassostrea virginica*

**Distribution:** Gulf of St. Lawrence to Gulf of Mexico

**Habitat:** Hard or soft bottom, intertidal to 40 feet, typically in low salinity waters

**Identification:** 2 to 8 inches long; thick shell narrowed at one end; large irregular broad oval to elongate; exterior grayish or yellowish white



## Bay Scallop

*Argopecten irradians*

**Distribution:** North shore of Cape Cod to Virginia

**Habitat:** Muddy sand and in eel grass; 1 to 60 feet

**Identification:** 1½ to 4 inches long; almost circular, shell is white to dark gray or brown, radial grooves between 17 to 18 radial ribs



## Waved Whelk

*Buccinum undatum*

**Distribution:** Arctic to New Jersey

**Habitat:** On rocks, sand, or gravel, lower intertidal to 600 feet

**Identification:** 1¾ to 5½ inches high; yellowish white to pale yellowish brown; ovate thick shell; elevated conical spire about half the length of shell; convex whorls with broad ribs



## Surf Clam

*Spisula solidissima*

**Distribution:** Nova Scotia to South Carolina

**Habitat:** below low tide line to 140 feet

**Identification:** 1¾ to 7 inches long; large, oval or elongate triangular; shell is yellowish-white to grayish; smooth except for concentric growth rings



## Knobbed Whelk

*Busycon carica*

**Distribution:** Cape Cod to northern Florida

**Habitat:** On sand, shallow depths to 30 feet

**Identification:** 4 to 9 inches high; somewhat spindle shaped; grayish white to grayish brown shell; large with low conical spire; large body whorl; long wide open canal



## Channeled Whelk

*Busycotypus canaliculatus*

**Distribution:** Cape Cod to Northern Florida

**Habitat:** Sand and mud, intertidal to 60 feet

**Identification:** 3½ to 7½ inches high; grayish to red-yellowish white; pear-shaped, large, moderately elevated conical spire; broad body whorl; deep narrow channel



## Northern Moon Snail

*Lunatia heros*

**Distribution:** Gulf of St. Lawrence to North Carolina

**Habitat:** In sand intertidally to deeper water (1200 feet) in southern range

**Identification:** 1½ to 5 inches high, nearly equally as wide; almost round; smooth grayish-white to grayish brown shell; low spire, broadly conical with gently convex whorls

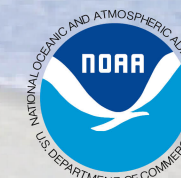


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Prepared by the Massachusetts  
Division of Marine Fisheries,  
Shellfish Sanitation and  
Management Program  
with support from the  
National Oceanic Atmospheric  
Administration.

Grant # NA09NMF4520029



PSP Monitoring  
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