

Ostrea edulis - European Oyster



Arjan Gittenberger

- Shell gray, cream, or brownish on the outside, white inside
- Up to 8 inches wide
- Flat and typically round, shell slightly scalloped on the outside
- Found in estuarine and marine environments in intertidal and shallow waters up to 30 feet deep
- Attaches to rocks and artificial structures (such as docks or piers), also occurs on mudflats
- Native to Europe and Northern Africa
- Intentionally introduced to several areas in New England for aquaculture, now found from Connecticut to Nova Scotia



Janice Bello

Bivalves, or shellfish, belong to a group of mollusks that have a body contained within two shells joined by a hinge. All are filter feeders. Some species attach to substrates directly or with strong (byssal) threads. Others burrow into mud or sand using a muscular foot. Many species are commercially important in New England.

Similar Species



Susan Hewitt

Crassostrea virginica
Eastern Oyster, Virginia Oyster

- Light gray or white shell
- Shell shape highly variable, from elongated (above) to cup shaped (below)
- Grows up to 10 inches long
- Typically has purple muscle scar on inside of shell
- Found throughout New England



Adrienne Pappal



Arjan Gittenberger

Mytilus edulis
Blue Mussel

- Smooth, dark-blue or brown shell
- Narrow at hinge, then widens
- Grows up to 4 inches long
- Found in rocky to muddy intertidal and estuarine habitats throughout New England
- Often grows on docks, buoys, and pilings
- Overlaps with the visually similar *M. trossulus* in the Gulf of Maine



Adrienne Pappal



Elizabeth Wu

Modiolus modiolus
Northern Horsemussel

- Dark- to light-brown shell, sometimes with a hairy "beard"
- Grows up to 6.5 inches long
- Less pointed at hinged end than *M. edulis*
- Found in rocky and sandy habitats in cooler or deeper waters throughout New England, shell often found washed up on beaches



Kelsey Moon



Cristina Kennedy

Hiatella arctica
Wrinkled Rock Borer

- White shell with raised ridges
- Small (up to 1.5 inches long)
- Irregular shape, one end rounded and one end blunt
- Found wedged among rocks and seaweed on floating docks, rocky intertidal, and subtidal habitats
- Occurs throughout New England, more common north of Cape Cod



Anders Warén

Species are all native.