

**FREE PRINTABLE FIELD GUIDE**

Tidal Keepsakes  
COASTAL FIELD GUIDE SERIES

# MARYLAND & DELAWARE BEACHES SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

Tidal Keepsakes  
Timeless Coastal Keepsakes, Gathered by the Tide

**INCLUDED BEACH GUIDES**

- Assateague Island National Seashore, MD
- Calvert Cliffs State Park, MD
- Cape Henlopen State Park, DE
- Lewes Beach, DE

Part of the Tidal Keepsakes Regional Shell Guide Collection

*Explore. Respect. Preserve.*  
Our beaches are treasures for future generations.

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## ASSATEAGUE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE, MD

### Shelling Guide

Timeless Coastal Keepsakes, Gathered by the Tide

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

**COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND**

- WHELKS (KNOBBED & CHANNELLED)
- MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYE)
- WAMPUM (QUOIQOG FRAGMENTS)
- ATLANTIC SURF CLAMS
- JINGLE SHELLS (TRANSLUCENT GOLD/ORANGE)

**WHERE TO FIND THEM**

- THE BEACH VIA RED TRAIL**  
Shelling is excellent on ocean beaches east of the trail and near the
- THE SUBT & TIDE LINE**  
With the shoreline at low tide. The best finds are often mixed in with shell fragments.
- AFTER STORMS**  
Strong winds and high tides uncover new shells on the beach and in the wreck line.
- BEST TIME TO GO**  
Low tide is best, especially in the morning. Wrecks are less crowded and offer more time to explore.

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## CALVERT CLIFFS STATE PARK, MD

### Shelling Guide

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**COMMON SHELLS & FOSSILS YOU CAN FIND**

- CHESAPECTEN (SCALLOPS)
- EPIHORA (MD STATE FOSSIL)
- GIANT TREE OYSTERS
- GLYCYMERIS (CLAMS)
- SHARK'S EYES (MOON SNAILS)

**WHERE TO FIND THEM**

- THE POINT**  
The western end of the park is one of the best spots for fossils and horseshoe crabs.
- FISHING PIER**  
Look around the pier for Moon Snails, Atlantic Clams, Zostera, and other shells.
- HERRING POINT**  
Known for eroded cliffs and fossil exposure after rain.

**BEACHCOMBING TIPS**

- Timing**  
Low tide or right after low tide.
- Seasonal Advantage**  
Spring and fall storms bring new shells and fossils to the shore.
- Look for Green**  
Keep an eye on for green sand dollars and other unique finds.
- Note**  
Leave the shells and fossils where they belong.

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## CAPE HENLOPEN STATE PARK, DE

### Shelling Guide

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A guide for beachcombers of all ages

**COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND**

- KNOBBED & CHANNELLED WHELKS
- WHELK EGG CASES
- MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYES)
- JINGLE SHELLS
- QUAHOGS & SURF CLAMS

**WHERE TO FIND THEM**

- THE GULF (SOUTH SIDE SHORELINE)**  
Walk the beach near nature for the dunes on opposite the dunes.
- THE POINT**  
The "mother lode" location - walk the point and pick through.
- FERRY CUT (UNION RIVER INLET)**  
Look for strong tidal currents bringing in whelks, Moon Snails, and Clams.
- BEST TIME TO GO**  
Low tide is best, especially in the morning.

**BEACHCOMBING TIPS**

- Collection Limits**  
Up to one gallon of uncrushed shells per person per day.
- Check the Wreck Line**  
That's where the best finds live!
- After Storms**  
New shells and egg cases are more common.
- Tooth Help**  
Bring a small object on a string to help find tiny treasures.

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## DELAWARE SEASHORE STATE PARK

### Shell Identification Guide

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**COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND**

- CHANNELLED WHELK
- KNOBBED WHELK
- MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYE)
- ATLANTIC SCALLOPS
- OYSTERS

**WHERE TO FIND THEM**

- BROADKILL SOUTH OF THE TOWERS**  
Great for whelks, clams, and surf clams along the open beach.
- INDIAN INLET**  
Strong currents bring in Moon Snails, Quahogs, and other larger shells.
- ROOSEVELT INLET & JETTY AREA**  
Look near the rocks and jetties for whelks, oysters, and surf clams.
- BEST TIME TO GO**  
1-2 hours after low tide is ideal for finding shells on the wet sand.

**BEACHCOMBING TIPS**

- Walk North or South**  
Explore both directions along the beach.
- CHECK THE WRECK LINE**  
Shells collect in the seaweed and debris.
- After Storms**  
High tides and storm bring in new shells and egg cases.
- RESPECT WILDLIFE**  
Leave shells and animals where they belong.

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## LEWES BEACH, DE

### Shell Identification Guide

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**COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND**

- MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYE)
- ATLANTIC BAY SCALLOPS
- SLIPPER SNAILS
- SEA GLASS
- QUAHOGS & CLAMS

**WHERE TO FIND THEM**

- THE BEACH**  
Walk the shoreline at low tide for whelks, shells, scallops, and sea glass.
- THE JETTIES**  
Look around and beyond the tracks for whelks, clams, and sea glass.
- TIDE POOLS AT LOW TIDE**  
Check shallow pools near the rocks for tiny shells and surprises.
- BEST TIME TO GO**  
Low tide is especially in the morning.

**BEACHCOMBING TIPS**

- Bring a Sifter**  
Helps you find small shells and sea glass.
- Walk Slowly at Low Tide**  
The wet sand holds the best and the freshest finds.
- LOOK AFOUR**  
New shells and sea glass are often found.
- Leave Live Animals**  
Keep your beaches natural and beautiful.

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## OCEAN CITY BEACH, MD

### Shell Identification Guide

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**COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND**

- WHELK SHELLS
- MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYE)
- ATLANTIC BAY SCALLOPS
- COCKLE SHELLS
- SEA GLASS

**WHERE TO FIND THEM**

- NORTH OC BEACH**  
Less crowded and great for finding larger shells.
- MIDTOWN BEACH**  
Avoid deep runs shoreline at low tide.
- SOUTH OC BEACH**  
Walk past the water's edge for the best finds.
- BEST TIME TO GO**  
Low tide is the morning best.

**BEACHCOMBING TIPS**

- Walk the Waterline**  
The wet sand holds the best fresh shells.
- Check the WRECK LINE**  
Shells collect in the seaweed and debris.
- After Storms**  
New shells and sea glass are more common.
- Use a Sifter**  
Helps find tiny shells and hidden gems.

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## REHOBOTH BEACH, DE

### Shell Identification Guide

Timeless Coastal Keepsakes, Gathered by the Tide

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

**COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND**

- MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYE)
- JINGLE SHELLS
- ATLANTIC BAY SCALLOPS
- QUAHOGS & CLAMS
- SEA GLASS

**WHERE TO FIND THEM**

- NORTH OF THE BOARDWALK**  
Walk along the shore for the best finds in street shells.
- BEHIND THE BREAKWATERS**  
Look near the rocks for whelks and clams.
- TIDE POOLS AT LOW TIDE**  
Small shells and sea creatures hide here.
- BEST TIME TO GO**  
Low tide is the morning is best.

**BEACHCOMBING TIPS**

- Walk the Shoreline**  
The wet sand holds the best fresh shells.
- Check the Wreck Line**  
Shells collect in the seaweed and debris.
- After Storms**  
New shells and sea glass are more common.
- Leave Live Shells**  
Keep live shells in the water.

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