

## Tidal Keepsakes

Tidepool Coastal Keepsakes, Curated by the Tide

# NORTH CAROLINA BEACHES SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

### INCLUDED BEACH GUIDES

- Hammocks Beach State Park (Bear Island)
- Cape Lookout, NC
- Coquina Beach, NC
- Bear Island at Hammocks Beach State Park
- Holden & Ocean Isle Beach, NC
- Ocracoke Island, NC

Part of the Tidal Keepsakes Regional Shell Guide Collection

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# HAMMOCKS BEACH STATE PARK (BEAR ISLAND), NC SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

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### COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

<b>KEYHOLE SAND DOLLAR</b> Flat, round, suboval with a keyhole-shaped opening on one side.	<b>SCOTCH BONNET</b> Smooth, glossy cone shell with a flared base and beautiful patterns.	<b>WHELKS (KNOBBED)</b> Spiral shell with rounded knobs or bumps on the whorls.	<b>WHELKS (CHANNELLED)</b> Spiral shell with deep channels or grooves along the whorls.	<b>WHELKS (LIGHTNING)</b> Spiral shell with a tall spire and lightning-like markings inside the opening.
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### WHERE TO FIND THEM

- THE BEACH VIA RED TRAIL**  
Collecting is restricted to the small beach area at the end of the 1.5-mile Red Trail.
- THE SURF & TIDE LINE**  
Walk along the shoreline slowly at low tide. The best finds are often mixed in with pebbles and shell fragments in the surf.
- AFTER STORMS**  
Heavy rains and high tides replenish the supply of fossils by washing them out of the cliff face and onto the accessible beach area.
- BEST TIME TO GO**  
Low tide is best, especially in the morning. Washdays are less crowded and offer more time to explore.

### BEACHCOMBING TIPS

- Walk the beach with or without a bucket at low tide. The best finds are often mixed in with pebbles and shell fragments in the surf.
- Take out small water or strainer there a line of shells.
- Take out small water or strainer there a line of shells.
- Take only what you need & leave living creatures behind.
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# CAPE LOOKOUT, NC SHELLING GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

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### COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

<b>CALICO SCALLOPS</b> Beautifully patterned with squared edges, often found whole or in large pieces.	<b>BAY SCALLOPS</b> Ribbon fan shape with straight edges, colors range from cream to pink, orange, and purple.	<b>MOON SNAILS</b> Smooth, rounded spiral shells with a low spire, found whole.	<b>SLIPPER SNAILS (BOAT SHELLS)</b> Smooth, glossy shells with a low spire, often with beautiful patterns.	<b>JINGLER SNAILS (TRANSLUCENT GOLD/ORANGE)</b> Tiny, delicate shells that "jingle" when shaken, translucent and golden.
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### WHERE TO LOOK ON THE BAYSIDE

- HORSESHOE COVE**  
This is the premier spot for bay-side shelling. The jingles "jangle" shells, and shells fan.
- OFFICER'S ROW**  
The shoreline behind the historic military housing is excellent for spotting Snails during winter, but the rocky and sandy patches there also yield many Slipper Shells and Blue Mussels.
- NORTH BEACH**  
Many visit the bayside specifically for sea glass. This area yields weathered shards of white, green, and "honey jar" brown glass.

### SHELLING STRATEGY & TIP

**BEST WINDINGUP**  
The bayside is particularly shallow and erodes, while sand flats are usually.

**SHELLING TIP!**  
Living a small order or scope to search through sand, shell very patiently.

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# COQUINA BEACH, NORTH CAROLINA SHELLING GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

### COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

<b>CALICO SCALLOPS</b> Beautifully patterned with squared edges, often found whole or in large pieces.	<b>MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYES)</b> Smooth, rounded spiral shells with a low spire, found whole.	<b>MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYES)</b> Smooth, glossy shells with a low spire, often with beautiful patterns.	<b>CLAMS: LARGE QUINOID &amp; ATLANTIC SEAR CLAMS</b> Large, sturdy clams with beautiful bands, usually found whole or in halves.
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### WHERE TO FIND THEM

- THE HIGH TIDE LINE**  
Most treasures are found along the wrack line (the line of debris and seaweed left by the high tide).
- NEAR THE FISHING PIER**  
The currents around the 495-foot pier often trap shells, making the surrounding sand very productive.
- BEACH FLATS**  
Because it's a bay beach, low tide exposes wide, gentle sand flats where you can easily spot Whelks and Moon Snails before they are buried.

### SHELLING TIP

For the best results at Coquina Beach, aim for low tide or explore the "wrack line" where the highest waves deposit debris. While many people find lots of shells here, others find mostly broken pieces, so digging slightly into the shell piles can help you find intact treasures.

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# ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

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### COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

<b>ATLANTIC SURF CLAMS</b> Large, heavy clams with thick shells, smooth and rounded.	<b>WHELKS (KNOBBED &amp; CHANNELLED)</b> Spiral shells with knobs or deep channels along the whorls, often found whole after storms.	<b>MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYE)</b> Smooth, rounded snails with a spiral "eye" pattern, fossilized and beautiful, three occurring.	<b>BAY SCALLOPS</b> Ribbed fan-shaped shells in shades of pink, orange, tan, and cream.	<b>BLUE MUSSELS</b> Common bivalves found in clusters or beds, deep blue to purple.
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### WHERE TO FIND THEM

- THE BEACHS IN BEARING**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- FISHING PIER**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- LOOKING FOR SHELLS**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- BEST TO GO**  
Low tide is best, especially in the morning.

### BEACHCOMBING TIPS

- Timing: Low tide is best after low tide.
- Seasonal Advantage: Spring and fall are the best times. Strong sun's rays can dry out shells and bring the beach to life.
- Look for Green: Keep an eye out for green sea urchins and other finds.

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# LEWES BEACH, DE SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

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### COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

<b>MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYE)</b> Smooth, rounded snails with a spiral "eye" pattern, fossilized and beautiful.	<b>ATLANTIC BAY SCALLOPS</b> Ribbed fan-shaped shells in shades of pink, orange, tan, and cream.	<b>SLIPPER SHELLS</b> Smooth, glossy shells with a low spire, often with beautiful patterns.	<b>SEA GLASS</b> Weathered glass smoothed by the sea, colors include, orange, and rare shades.	<b>QUAHOGS &amp; CLAMS</b> Large, heavy clams with thick shells, often white, brown, grey, or black.
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### WHERE TO FIND THEM

- THE BEACH**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- THE JETTIES**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- THE POOLS AT LOW TIDE**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- NOTE LINE ANIMALS**  
Look for shells on the beach.

### BEACHCOMBING TIPS

- Bring a sifter: Help you find small shells and sea treasures.
- Walk Slowly Wet Sand: The wet sand holds the best treasures.
- Look for Green: New shells and sea glass are often common.

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# OCEAN CITY BEACH, MD SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

### COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

<b>WHELK SHELLS</b> Spiral shells with varying patterns.	<b>MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYE)</b> Smooth, rounded snails with a spiral "eye" pattern.	<b>ATLANTIC BAY SCALLOPS</b> Ribbed fan-shaped shells in shades of pink, orange, tan, and cream.	<b>COCKLE SHELLS</b> Cup, heart-shaped shells with varying ribs, often found in abundance.	<b>SEA GLASS</b> Weathered glass smoothed by the sea, colors include teal, white, and purple.
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### WHERE TO FIND THEM

- NORTH OC BEACH**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- MIDTOWN BEACH**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- SOUTH OCEAN BEACH**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- BEST TIME TO GO**  
Low tide is the best time in the morning.

### BEACHCOMBING TIPS

- Walk the Wreckline: That's where shells hide.
- Check the Wash Line: Shells collect in the seaweed and debris.
- After Storms: New shells and sea glass are most common, and sea urchins.

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# REHOBOTH BEACH, DE SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

### COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

<b>MOON SNAILS (SHARK'S EYE)</b> Smooth, rounded snails with a spiral "eye" pattern.	<b>JINGLER SHELLS</b> Tiny, delicate shells that "jingle" when shaken, translucent and golden.	<b>ATLANTIC BAY SCALLOPS</b> Ribbed fan-shaped shells in shades of pink, orange, tan, and cream.	<b>QUAHOGS &amp; CLAMS</b> Large, heavy clams with thick shells, smooth finish, usually in shells.	<b>SEA GLASS</b> Weathered glass smoothed by the sea, colors include green, white, and rare shades.
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### WHERE TO FIND THEM

- NORTH OC THE BOARDWALK**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- BEYOND THE BOARDWALKS**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- THE POOLS AT LOW TIDE**  
Look for shells on the beach.
- BEST TIME TO GO**  
Low tide is the best time in the morning.

### BEACHCOMBING TIPS

- Walk the Wreckline: That's where shells hide.
- Check the Wash Line: Shells collect in the seaweed and debris.
- After Storms: New shells and sea glass are most common.
- Leave the Animals: Don't touch or disturb.

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