

FREE
PRINTABLE
FIELD GUIDE



Tidal Keepsakes
COASTAL FIELD GUIDE SERIES

Tidal Keepsakes
Coastal Field Guide
Series

FLORIDA BEACHES SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Tidal Keepsakes

*Timeless Coastal Keepsakes, Gathered by the Tide
Common Shells & Where to Find Them*



INCLUDED BEACH GUIDES

- Coladesi Island State Park, FL
- Captiva Island, FL
- Lovers Key State Park, FL
- Sanibel, FL
- Shell Island, FL
- Shell Key Preserve, FL
- South Hutchinson Island, FL

Part of the Tidal Keepsakes
Regional Shell Guide Collection

Explore. Respect. Preserve.

Our beaches are treasures for future generations.

Created by Tidal Keepsakes

www.TidalKeepsakes.com



Pair this guide
with the
Tidal Keepsakes
Shell Discovery
Journal

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Shell Guides





CAPTIVA ISLAND, FL SHELLING GUIDE

Tidal Keepsakes

Timeless Coastal Keepsakes, Gathered by the Tide

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

CAPTIVA ISLAND
FLORIDA



COMMON SHELLS FOUND ON CAPTIVA ISLAND



FLORIDA FIGHTING CONCHS

Large, spiral shells with a pink lip. Highly sought after Florida treasure.



LIONWING WRECKS

Heavy ridged shells with a soft apex. Often found within other seashells.



APPLE MUREXES

Orange shells with long apices and a beautiful pink interior. Collector favorites.



KITTEN PAWS

Star shaped shell fragments with tiny teeth. Often found in sand areas.



LETTERED OLIVES & FLORIDA CONES

Shiny, olive with letter-like patterns and beautiful cone shells with colorful, band markings.



CALICO SCALLOPS

Shells with a variety of patterns, including stripes, spots, and bands.

BEST TIMES TO SEARCH



Low tide is best!

1-2 hours after low tide is ideal for finding shells on the wet sandbars and in shallow water.



★ The Ultimate Prizes: ★



JUNONIA

The most coveted shell on Florida's Gulf Coast. Rare, pristine, and highly prized!



SCOTCH BONNETS

Beautiful spotted shells often found in unique color variations. A true prize find!

TIPS FOR BEACHCOMBERS



Walk the water's edge where waves leave a line of shells.

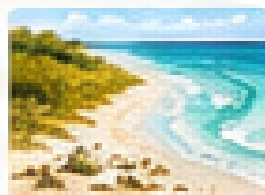


Bring a small net or strainer to look for tiny treasures.



Take only what you need & leave living creatures the shell!

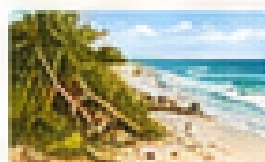
BEST SHELLING LOCATIONS ON CAPTIVA



1. TURNER BEACH PARK (BLIND PASS)

Where to find them: The heavy currents rushing through the pass heavily delivered by the currents of Blindfish Pass. Located at the north end of the island, it receives excellent overnight deposits of large gastropods.

Parking: This lot is highly convenient but expensive. \$12 for 3 hours or \$44 for the day.



3. NORTH CAPTIVA ISLAND (SECLUDED DAY TRIP)

Where to find them: Because there are very few or heavy crowds, the color of undisturbed coconuts are a paradise for photos, unbroken treasures. Walk the uncrowded beaches during a negative low tide to find rare items.



Pair this guide with the
Tidal Keepsakes and become a legend!



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Explore More
Shell Guides



LOVERS KEY STATE PARK, FL SHELLING GUIDE

Tidal Keepsakes

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A guide for beachcombers of all ages

COMMON SHELLS FOUND AT LOVERS KEY STATE PARK



Whole Sand Dollars

Flat, round specimens with a star-shaped pattern. Fragile and beautiful.



Pointed Egg Cockles

Bounded clams with colorful patterns of pink, orange, purple, and tan.



Turban Shells & Nacres

Bounded, low-spired shells with a smooth, polished appearance.



Broken Pieces

Star-shaped shell fragments with tiny holes. Often found in coral areas.

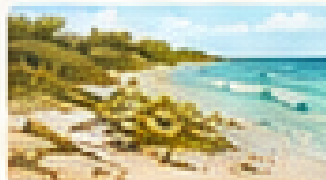
BEST TIMES TO SEARCH



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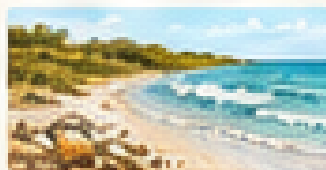


EXACT SPOTS TO FIND SHELLS AT LOVERS KEY



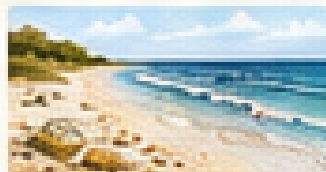
1. THE FAR SOUTH END (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED):

When you arrive on the beach from the main Lovers Key State Park Trail, turn left and walk south. This area curves slightly toward New Pine and features beautiful, driftwood (oak shavings). It experiences intense current action that constantly brings large lightning whelks, oysters, and crabs onto the sandbars.



2. THE FAR NORTH END:

Turning right at the beach boardwalk leads toward Big Carlos Pass. The far north spit is less crowded and is an excellent location for spotting miniature treasures and pristine clam shells in the shallow zone.



3. THE SHALLOW SANDBARS:

At low tide, a series of shallow, rippling sandbars reveal themselves just off the main shoreline. Wading out into knee-deep water is the ultimate way to find intact, unbroken shells before they get tossed and crushed against the beach.

TIPS FOR BEACHCOMBERS



Walk the water's edge where waves leave a line of shells.



Bring a small sifter or strainer to look for tiny treasures.



Take only what you need to leave living treasures behind!

ADVANCED TECHNIQUES FOR THIS PARK



1. DO NOT PEEK-LOOK-ONE!

Avoid collectors on the Florida Shelling Frontier forum note that the best treasures at Lovers Key are buried. Dig right at the low tide line and sweep your hands or a long-handled sand rake (NOs) 6 inches into the wet sand to uncover hidden lightning whelks, lightning crabs, and scallops.

2. ARRIVE EARLY FOR SAND DOLLARS:

Because sand dollars are incredibly fragile, avoid trampling them with the beach and sweep up as they come on high or low tide for others to take. Arriving early after the park opens at 8 AM with someone you get the first pick.

HELP PROTECT OUR BEACHES



SANIBEL, FL SHELLING GUIDE

Tidal Keepsakes

Timeless Coastal Keepsakes, Gathered by the Tide

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

COMMON SHELLS FOUND ON SANIBEL BEACHES



LIGHTNING WHELKS

Rare, flat shells with a real spine and wide opening. Often found whole.



PEAR WHELKS

Round shells with a pear shape and banded spine.



BANDED TULIPS

Small, glossy shells with beautiful banded patterns.



FLORIDA FIGHTING CONCHES

Large, flat shells with a pale lip. Highly sought after.



CALICO SCALLOPS

Colorful scallops with symmetrical color patterns.

BEST TIMES TO SEARCH

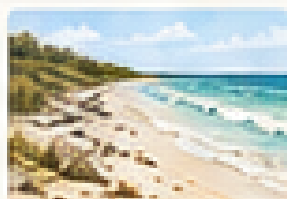


Low tide is best!

1-2 hours after low tide is ideal for finding shells on the wet sandbars and in shallow water.



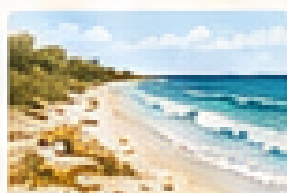
TOP SHELLING BEACHES ON SANIBEL



1. BLIND PASS BEACH & TURNER BEACH

What to find: Lightning Whelks, Pear Whelks, Banded Tulips, and Florida Fighting Conches.

Where to look: Walk the beach right along the open Gulf edge. Wade into the shallow surf at low tide and feel around in the sandy trough with your feet to find massive specimens.



2. BOWMAN'S BEACH

What to find: Calico scallops, Turkey Veneer Clams, Apple Murex, and Green Atlantic Corals.

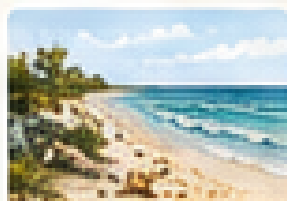
Where to look: Walk a half mile north or south away from the main dune crescent. Dig into the massive, thick shell ridges pushed up on the high beach by past storms.



3. LIGHTHOUSE BEACH PARK

What to find: Cowries, Littered Olives, Chestnut Turbans, Widdowings, and Baby's Ears.

Where to look: Walk past the Sanibel Lighthouse to search the shallow, flat tidal pools that reveal themselves during low tide.



4. GULPSIDE CITY BEACH PARK (ALGIERS) & TARPON BAY BEACH

What to find: Prickly Sand Dollars, Shark's Eye (Mussel Snails), and Common Nereids.

Where to look: Walk the wet surf line at low tide for sand dollars, or carefully work through the "wash line"—the row of dark seaweed left behind on the sand by high tide.

TIPS FOR BEACHCOMBERS



Walk the water's edge where waves leave a line of shells.



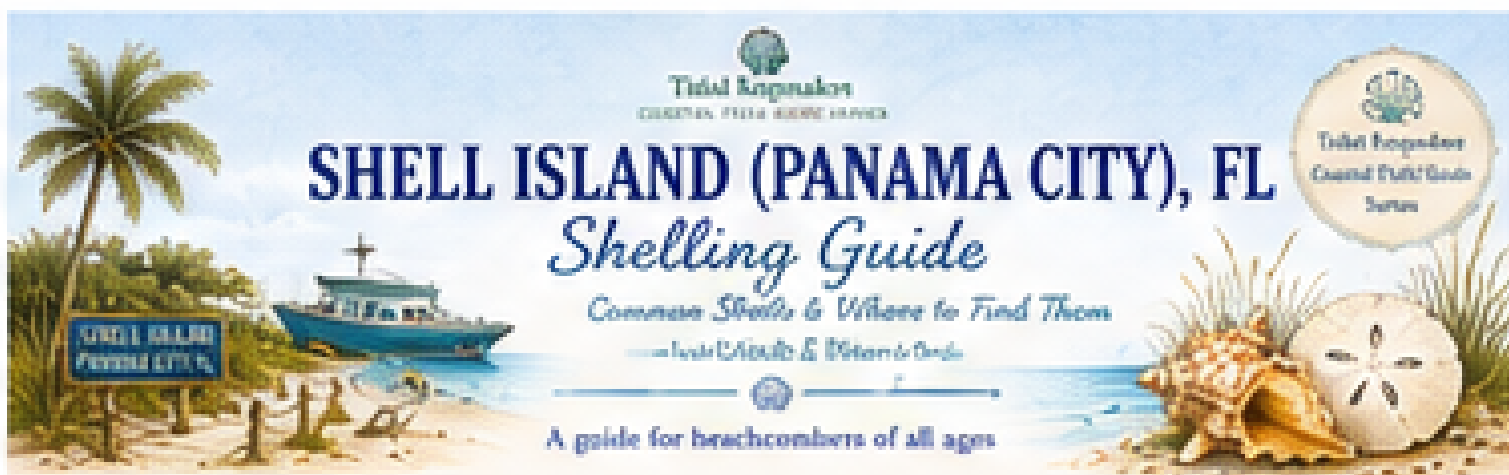
Bring a small sifter or strainer to look for tiny treasures.



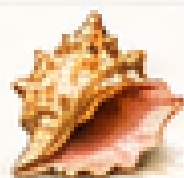
Take only what you need & leave the beauty only the shore!

Explore More Gift Codes



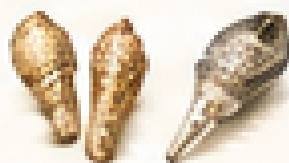


MICRO-LOCATIONS & WHAT SHELLS TO FIND EACH



1. THE GREAT QUEEN CONCH & KING'S CONCH

Florida's largest Conch & King's Conch. Look for them in the shallow water just beyond the beach.



5. PAPER NAUTILUS & RAZOR CLAMS

They float like the queen, protected tidal pools on the north end without washing.



2. LIGHTNING WHELKS

They will usually exit the Gulf of Mexico along the spring tides, not the summer.



6. SAND DOLLARS & SCOTCH BONNETS

Watch the water level during the incoming tide. Look for them on the beach.



3. SCOTCH BONNETS & DEERHORN SHELLS

Shells go down just the summer, summer. These appear to exit low tide from.



8. VELVET OYSTER CLAMS

They go down just the summer. These appear to exit, the wet sand bars.



4. SAND DOLLARS

The true prize of Shell Island. With just the summer, the queen shellfish, look for them in the shallow water just beyond the beach.



10. ALPHABET CONCHES

11. PAPER NAUTILUS. Watch vegetation and incoming tide at high tide. Look for them in the shallow water just beyond the beach.

BEST TIMES TO SEARCH



Low tide is best! 1-2 hours after low tide is ideal for finding shells on the wet sandbars and in shallow water.



TIPS FOR BEACHCOMBERS



With the water's edge where waves leave a line of shells.



Bring a small bucket or strainer to look for tiny treasures.



Take only what you need & leave living creatures the shells!

GOLDEN RULES FOR SHELL ISLAND SUCCESS



1. WAIT, HALF A MILE!

Wait 15 to 20 minutes away from the main ferry drop-off area. Gradually improve your chances of finding treasure, including items.



2. TAKE THE FIRST KNITTEL

Book the earliest 9:00 AM shuttle out of the marina. The first arrivals always bring up the best treasures deposited by the overnight tides before the daytime heat and crowds get in.



3. CHECK FOR CRITTERS

Shell Island is a protected ecosystem teeming with life. Many precious fishing species, whelks, and oysters will have live mollusks or hermit crabs nested inside. Check inside the plumed carefully.

FIELD PROTECT OUR SACRIFICES



SHELL KEY PRESERVE, FL

Shelling Guide

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages



Moine black eyes & Moss Shells

Large, round shells with light "eyes." Moss shells often found where the beach meets the water.



Crosser White Shell

Round, dark shells with a light shell. Common after strong surf and sand dunes.



Turkey Wings

Thin, delicate shells with beautiful banding. Often found in the sand.



Eastern Marine Egg Casting

Thin, round shells with a light shell. Often found in the sand.



Delia Dark Shells & Caribbean Tere

Thin, light shells often found in the sand. Look for perfect openings.



Lateral Olive & Fighting Conch

Thin, light shells often found in the sand. Look for perfect openings.

BEST TIMES TO SEARCH



Low tide is best! 1-2 hours after low tide is ideal for finding shells on the wet sandbars and in shallow water.



WHERE TO FIND SHELLS ON SHELLS



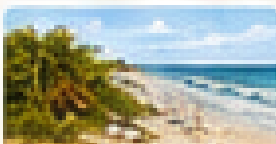
1. THE WEST SIDE OF THE ISLAND

This is the most active coastline. With the sandy stretches directly open to the Gulf is find heavily deposited lightning whelks, olives, and massive fighting conchs rolling out of deep water.



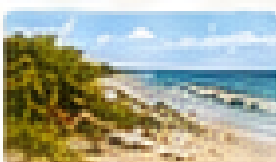
2. THE NORTH BEACH

Consider the broader public TIDEAL finds them on the northern side of the island. There calm waters are the natural refuge.



3. THE OCEAN DRIVE BEACH

This is where the experienced beachcombers are looking for the best. With sand and the shallow sand ridges at low tide to plant, larvae, and large deepwater storage, out of the water.



4. THE MANGROVE ROOT TANGLES

Walk along the island's interior edges where waves meet the beach. Ground crabs and moving water frequently drop empty, sandstone "spooned" shells into the root systems, sheltering them from sun bleaching.

TIPS FROM BEACHCOMBERS



With the water's interference, shells are hard to find.



Bring a small bucket or container to look for tiny treasures.



Take only what you need & leave living creatures behind.



Every shell has a story—keep the heart of the shell!



Pair this guide with the TIDEAL Carolina Shell Discovery Journal

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SOUTH HUTCHINSON ISLAND, FL

Shelling Guide

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

EXACT SPOTS TO FIND SHELLS ON SOUTH HUTCHINSON ISLAND



1. TAKE THE FIRST DRITTLE OUT:

Book the earliest trip with operators like Hubbard's Marina or the Shell Key Shuttle from Fort & Collier. The very first hour of the morning gets you to the beach right-side shell deposits before anyone else clears them out. Otherwise you get what is left.



2. THE VERY DARK STRIKE POLES:

A massive portion of Shell Key's beach and high beach is a strictly protected shorebird nesting area. It is strictly roped off's keep your feet on the board's shadows to respect the wildlife terrain and make a note. Respect as given. On the way out.



4. TO LIGHTHOUSE BENT TACKLES:

There are absolutely no restaurants, truck zone, or water facilities on the island. Please your own small bags, water, shade, and plenty of hydration. Super simple, even large amounts of.

BEST TIMES TO SEARCH



Low tide is best!
1-2 hours after low tide is ideal for finding shells on the wet sand and in the shallow water.



TIPS FOR BEACHCOMBERS



With the water's edge often moves there is less for shells.



Bring a small bucket or container to look for tiny treasures.



Take only what you need & leave nothing behind the shore!

STRATEGIC TIPS FOR THE TREASURE COAST



1. BENT THE MARRED BOW:

Unlike Gulf shelling where you want clean sand, Atlantic shelling requires you to dig. The heavy surf throws shells into the floating suspension network. Walk the high tide line and use a small stick or hand rake to carefully separate the wood piles to reveal hidden glossy olives, crown conchs, and scallops.



2. TARGET THE NEGATIVE LOW TIDES:

Check tide table charts for "minus" or negative low tides. When the tide pulls out past its normal bounds, it completely exposes the shallow edges of the offshore wave reefs, giving you access to deep-water shells before the waves reclaim them.



3. GO AFTER ATLANTIC STORMS:

Because the East Coast has a stronger drop-off, rough weather waves act like a giant vacuum, lifting the ocean floor and violently tossing massive, perfect shells onto the high dunes.

HELP PROTECT OUR BEACHES



Put the guide with the
Tidal Keepers
Shell Discovery Journal

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



THANK YOU FOR EXPLORING FLORIDA'S BEAUTIFUL SHORES

Every shell has a story—
and every beach holds a treasure.

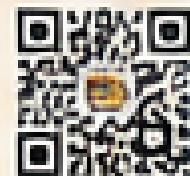


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Beginners



Signature Gift Box

A Beautiful
Coastal Gift



Collector Box

For Serious
Shell Lovers

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