

FREE
PRINTABLE
FIELD GUIDE

Tidal Keepsakes
Coastal Field
Guide Series

SOUTH CAROLINA BEACHES SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

Tidal Keepsakes

Timeless Coastal Keepsakes, Gathered by the Tide

A coastal field guide for beachcombers of all ages

INCLUDED BEACH GUIDES

- Botany Bay, SC
- Bull Island, SC
- Edisto Beach, SC
- Folly Beach, SC
- Huntington Beach
State Park, SC
- Kiawah Island, SC

Pair this guide
with the
Tidal Keepsakes
Shell Discovery
Journal

Part of the Tidal Keepsakes
Regional Shell Guide Collection

Explore. Respect.

Our beaches are treasures for future generations.

Created by Tidal Keepsakes
www.TidalKeepsakes.com

Explore More
Shell Guides



BOTANY BAY, SC SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

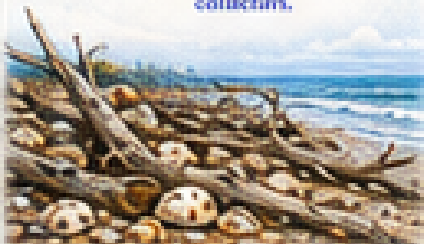
Botany Bay Heritage Preserve on Edisto Island is a world-class shelling destination, primarily because removing anything—including shells, driftwood, and fossils—is strictly prohibited. This rule has turned its “Boneyard Beach” into a massive, undisturbed showcase of giant treasures that you can admire and photograph but cannot take home.

📍 TOP FINDING SPOTS AT BOTANY BAY 📍



BONEYARD BEACH

This is the primary attraction. It is littered with thousands of large, intact shells and bleached, salt-soaked trees that act as natural display stands for collectors.



HAMMOCK ISLAND

Reached by a half-mile causeway from the parking lot, this barrier island is famously covered in shells.



TREE “ALTARS”

A local tradition involves shellers hanging impressive Whelk shells and other finds in the branches of the dead palmetto and oaks along the shoreline for others to see.



📍 COMMON SHELLS TO SEE 📍

WHELKS (KNORRER & CRANIELLED)



Large, spiral shells with knobs or deep channels; often found whole.

OYSTERS & HARD CLAMS



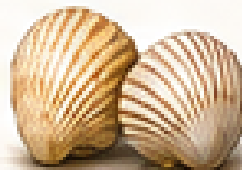
Abundant and large; oyster shells often form massive clusters.

BLOOD ARKS & PONDEROUS ARK



Thick, heavy shells with strong ribs. Blood Arks are reddish inside.

GIANT COCKLES



Large, heart-shaped shells with strong ribs commonly found along tide lines.

LETTERED OLIVES (STATE SHELL)



Smooth, olive-shaped shells marked with beautiful letterlike patterns in brown or orange.

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Created by Tidal Korpulent

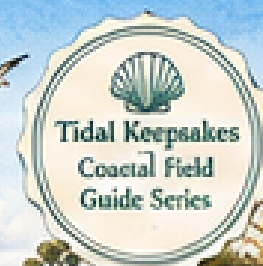




BULL ISLAND (CAPE ROMAIN), SC SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages



COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

SAND DOLLARS



Flat, round echinoids with a petal pattern on top; often found whole in the surf or tide pools.

MOON SNAIL (SHARK'S EYE)



Smooth, rounded snails with a spiral "eye" pattern; fossilized and beautiful.

KNOBBED WHELK



Spiral shell with rounded knobs or bumps on the whorls; often found whole after storms.

LIGHTNING WHELK



Spiral shell with a tall spire and lightning-like markings inside the opening.

FLORIDA HORSE CONCH



Large, heavy sea snail shell; thick flared opening with a pink interior; often with living hermit crabs.

BANDED TULIPS



Elongated, tulip-shaped shells with a flared lip; often found in pairs.

LETTERED OLIVES (STATE SHELL)



Almost oval-shaped shell; their shells often form powerful letter-like patterns in brown.

SCALLOPS



Fan-shaped shells with numerous small, rounded eyes along the margin; often found in shallow water and along the wreck line.

ANGEL WINGS



Thin, heart-shaped shells with wavy, glossy wings; especially tide pools.

JINGLE SHELLS (TRANSLUCENT)

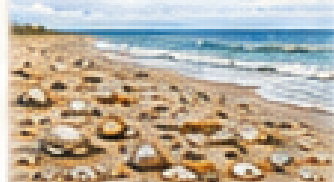


Tiny, delicate shells that "jingle" when shaken; translucent and golden.

PRIME SHELLING LOCATIONS ON BULL ISLAND

CAPE ROMAIN WILDLIFE REFUGE

A protected area with pristine beaches and excellent shelling after storms.



NORTH END BEACHES

Often less crowded and great for finding Whelks, Scallops, and Sand Dollars.



TIDAL FLATS

Explore low-tide areas for Jingle Shells and other tiny treasures.



NEAR THE LIGHTHOUSE

Scenic and productive for spotting Horse Conchs and Shark's Eye Snails.





EDISTO BEACH SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them



COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

LETTERED OLIVE (STATE SHELL)



Smooth, olive-shaped shells marked with beautiful brown-like patterns in brown.

WHEELS (KNODDED)



Spiral shell with rounded "wavy" marked eye" which allows an oval whole.

WHEELS (CHANNELED)



Spiral shell with deep channels or grooves along the wheels.

WHEELS (LIGHTNING)



Spiral shell with a tall apex and lightning-like markings inside the opening.

FORKILLS & SHARK TEETH

Fossilized teeth from sharks; also possible to find bone fragments and other marine fossils.



PEN SHELLS

Long, tubular shells from puddock slugs; often found in pairs.

OYSTERS

Abundant and large; recycled shells are perfect for crafts and gardens.

COCKLES

Thick, heart-shaped shells with strong ribs; commonly found along tide lines.

JINGLE SHELLS

Thin, delicate shells that "jingle" when shaken; translucent and golden.

SAND DOLLARS

Flat, round edwards often found whole in the surf.

TOP SPOTS FOR SHELLING ON EDISTO

THE BEACHES IN THE PARK

The beaches are excellent for looking for pens and cockles.



FISHING PIER

Great spot at low tide to find a variety of shells.



NORTH END

With the north end of the beach for shells after storms.



SEARBOOK ISLAND

Explore the beaches here for a peaceful shelling adventure.



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FOLLY BEACH SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

LIGHTNING WHELK



Spiral shell with a tall
spire and lightning-like
markings inside the
opening.

LETTERED OLIVE (STATE SHELL)



Smooth, olive-shaped
shells marked with
beautiful letter-like
patterns in brown.

SLEEPER SHELLS



Smooth, glossy shells
with a linear striation
often often found
beautiful patterns.

COQUINA SHELLS



Tiny, delicate clams with
smooth, glossy surfaces;
often found in pairs.

LETTERED OLIVES (STATE SHELL)



Smooth, rounded shells
with a repeating letter
pattern (can stand
up straight).

BANDED TULIPS



Elongated, tulip-shaped
shells with a banded top;
often found in pairs.

AUGERS



Long, slender, spiral
shells with a tapered
shape; often found
in pairs.

SAND DOLLARS



Flat, round echinoids
with a petal pattern on
top; often found whole
in the surf.

SHARK TEETH



Fossilized teeth from
various sharks;
commonly found after
storms in all sizes.

STARFISH



Found along the shore;
the shore;
especially after
and storms.

BEST PLACES TO SHELL ON FOLLY BEACH

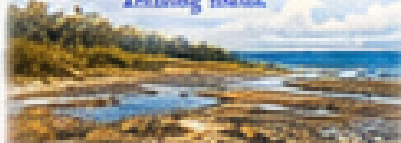
THE WASHOUT (WEST END)

A unique spot
across the unique
shells and shell
fossils.



MORRIS ISLAND (SHERMAN'S ISLAND)

Accessible by boat.
Great for uncrowded
beaches and
amazing shells.



FOLLY BEACH PIER AREA

The area around the
pier is productive,
especially at low
tide.



SUNRISE & SUNSET WALKS

Early morning or
evening walks
often reveal the
best treasures.



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HUNTINGTON BEACH STATE PARK, SC SHELL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Common Shells & Where to Find Them

A guide for beachcombers of all ages

COMMON SHELLS YOU CAN FIND

LETTERED OLIVE (STATE SHELL)



Smooth, olive-shaped shells marked with beautiful letter-like patterns in brown or orange.

MOON SNAIL (SHARK'S EYE)



Smooth, rounded snails with a spiral "eye" pattern; fossilized and beautiful.

KNOBBED WHELK



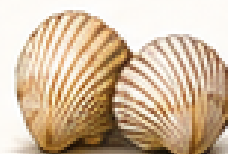
Spiral shell with rounded knobs or bumps on the whorls; often found whole after storms.

WHELKS (LIGHTNING)



Spiral shell with a tall spire and lightning-like markings inside the opening.

COCKLES



Thick, heart-shaped shells with strong ribs; commonly found along tide lines.

SAND DOLLARS



Fan-shaped shells with ribs; a favorite find in shallow water along the tide.

SCALLOPS

BLOOD ARKS



SHARK TEETH

Fossilized teeth from various sharks; common after storms.

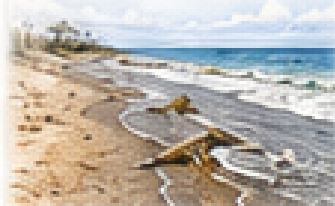
JINGLE SHELLS (TRANSLUCENT)

Thin, delicate shells that "jingle" when shaken; translucent and golden.

TOP SHELLING SPOTS IN THE PARK

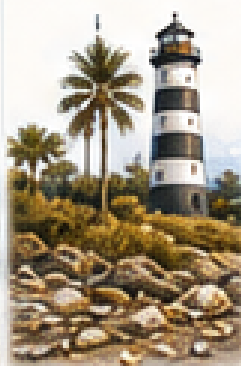
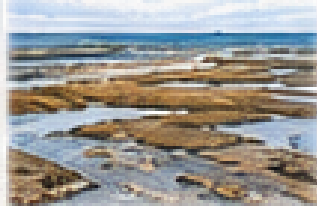
THE BEACH (NEAR THE LAGOON)

Explore along the shoreline where shells wash up after tides and storms.



AT LOW TIDE

Wide stretches of beach are exposed, perfect for finding hidden treasures.



NEAR THE LIGHTHOUSE AREA

Scenic and productive for spotting Whelks, Sand Dollars, and Shark Teeth.



WRECK LINE

Focus on the line of seaweed and debris left by the high tide.



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