



**Razor Clam** (*Ensis Directus*) Razor Clams are called so because they look like old fashioned barber's straight razors. They can be eaten but often are not. Care must be taken when pulling Razor Clams out of the sand as their shells are sharp and can cut skin easily.



**Scallop** (*Argopecten Irradians*) The Scallop is a filter-feeding bivalve that does not bury itself in the sand or mud. When threatened, it will swim away by clapping its two shells together. When this happens the Scallop bounces along the bottom. Young Scallops attach themselves to eelgrass. The Niantic Bay Scallops, at one time, were very abundant in the Bay and were a highly prized species. The adductor muscle is the part of the Scallop that is eaten. Once the eelgrass started to die off in the Bay, the Scallop population also declined.



**Surf Clam** (*Spisula Solidissima*) The Surf Clam is the largest clam found in New England. It is a bivalve. 70% of all clams harvested are Surf Clams. Sea Gulls scoop up the Surf Clams and drop them onto any hard surface to break open the shell so that they can consume them.



**Quahog** (*Mercenaria Mercenaria*) Quahogs are hard shelled mollusks, found mostly in mud flats. The name Quahog comes from a Native American word, "Popquahock", which they translate to "horse fish". Quahogs can live up to 40 years. They can be found in mud flats and estuaries along the New England Coastline. The entire inside of a Quahog can be eaten raw or cooked, such as in Clam Chowder. Native Americans used the purple inner shell as money called "Wampum" and also used it in jewelry. Quahogs are a highly rated seafood.

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## NIANTIC BEACHES LIVING ECOSYSTEM PROJECT SHELLS OF NIANTIC



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**Slipper Shell** (*Crepidula Fornicata*) is the most common seashell found along the New England coast. Slipper Shells are snails and will attach themselves on top of each other. They will also anchor themselves onto any hard surface and remain there stationary. You will usually find Slipper Shells on beaches with heavy surf.



**Periwinkles** (*Littorina Littorea*) are the most common snails that are found along the Connecticut shoreline. The Periwinkle is a herbivore and eats the algae off the rocks. Some people will eat Periwinkles after boiling them when they die. Their shells are often used by hermit crabs.



**Cockle** (*Cerastoderma Edule*) Cockles are small edible saltwater clams. They are bivalve mollusks. Commonly found on sandy beaches.



**Blue Mussel** (*Mytilus Edulis*) The Blue Mussel is a filter-feeding bivalve. Blue Mussels live in large groups called mussel clumps. Years ago mussels were used as crab bait. Now, they are considered a highly prized seafood. The Blue Mussel's population has been on the decline due to pollutants in the water.



**False Angel Wings** (*Crytopleura Costata*) are bivalves. Many say when the two shells are spread out, they look like angel wings.



**Jingle Shell** (*Anomia Simplex*) The Jingle Shell is a mollusk and a bivalve-like clam (it is in two shells). The translucent thin shell stays shiny after it dies. This is a very popular shell for beachcombers. Some people will make wind chimes or even necklaces with the shells.



**Oyster Drill** (*Urosalpinx Cinerea*) Oyster Drills are very destructive snails which attack any kind of shellfish, especially Oysters. In large numbers, Oyster Drills can completely wipe out a shellfish bed.