



## The Shells of Plymouth Long Beach, Massachusetts By Brian Cassie, Naturalist and Author

Specialties : Smooth Velutina, Atlantic Awning Clam, Immaculate Moon Shell

Plymouth Long Beach, most often referred to simply as Plymouth Beach, is a three-mile long barrier beach protecting Plymouth Harbor. There are houses quite far out along the beach road and much of the northern 3000 feet of the peninsula is host to nesting Common and Least Terns, Laughing Gulls and Piping Plovers in the summer. Plymouth Beach is an excellent place to study shorebirds in spring, late summer, and fall as they refuel on bountiful invertebrates, (including some on this list) during their migrations. In winter, you may see seals and sea ducks in the open ocean or bay, and Snow Buntings, Horned Larks and possibly a Snowy Owl in the dunes.

The best shelling areas here are at the northern end of the beach so prepare for a long walk and bring along a bag for collecting some drift. On the outer beach, you will doubtless find large numbers of New England Nassas, often alive in driftlines, along with even larger numbers of juvenile Atlantic Surf Clams and Common Chink Shells. In the shell mix also look for Gould's Pandora, Lunar Dove Shell, and various moon shells, including Spotted, Shark's Eye, and the very uncommon Immaculate Moon Shell. If you look hard, you may find a Harp Lora, Smooth Velutina, or some other nice offshore species. Turn the corner at the north end of Plymouth Beach and walk back along the muddy bay side of the point and the shells change to include Common Periwinkle, Mud Snail, Amethyst Gem Clam, Atlantic Awning Clam, and Salt Marsh Snail.

### MARINE GASTROPODS

- \_\_\_ Noah's Puncturella, *Puncturella noachina*
- \_\_\_ Atlantic Plate Limpet, *Tectura testudinalis*
- \_\_\_ Common Slipper Shell, *Crepidula fornicata*
- \_\_\_ Flat Slipper Shell, *Crepidula plana*
- \_\_\_ Convex Slipper Shell, *Crepidula convex*
- \_\_\_ Smooth Top Shell, *Margarites helacinus*
- \_\_\_ Northern Chink Shell, *Lacuna vincta*
- \_\_\_ Common Periwinkle, *Littorine littorea*
- \_\_\_ Smooth Periwinkle, *Littorina obtusata*
- \_\_\_ Rough Periwinkle, *Littorian saxatilis*
- \_\_\_ Shark's Eye Moon Shell, *Nererita duplicatus*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Northern Moon Shell, *Euspira heros*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spotted Moon Shell, *Euspira triseriata*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Immaculate Moon Shell, *Euspira immaculata*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Dogwinkle, *Nucella lapillus*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Well-rib. Dove Shell, *Costoanachis lafresnayi*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lunar Dove Shell, *Astyris lunatus*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Waved Whelk, *Buccinum undatum*
- \_\_\_\_\_ N. England Neptune, *Neptunea decemcostata*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stimpson's Whelk, *Colus stimpsoni*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pygmy Whelk, *Colus pygmaeus*
- \_\_\_\_\_ New England Nassa, *Illyanassa trivittata*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eastern Mud Nassa, *Illyanassa obsoleta*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Smooth Velutina, *Velutina velutina*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Harp Lora, *Propebela harpularia*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Interrupted Turbonille, *Turbonilla interrupta*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Channeled Barrel Bubble, *Acteocina canaliculata*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Bittium, *Bittium alternatum*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pointed Cingula, *Onoba acueus*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Truncate Hydrobia, *Hydrobia truncata*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Salt Marsh Snail, *Melampus bidentatus*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mouse-eared Ovatella, *Myosotella myotis*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Retrovert Pteropod, *Limacina retroversa*

CHITONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Northern Red Chiton, *Tonicella rubra*

MARINE BIVALVES

- \_\_\_\_\_ Common Awning Clam, *Solemya velum*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Transverse Ark, *Anadara transversa*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Bay Scallop, *Argopecten irradians*

\_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Deep Sea Scallop, *Placopecten magellanicus*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Blue Mussel, *Mytilus edulis*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Northern Horse Mussel, *Modiolus modiolus*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Ribbed Mussel, *Geukensia demissa*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Common Jingle Shell, *Anomia simplex*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Prickly Jingle Shell, *Anomia squamula*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Eastern Oyster, *Crassostrea virginica*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Northern Dwarf Cockle, *Cerastoderma pinnulatum*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Eastern Aligena, *Aligena elevata*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Flat Lepton, *Mysella planulata*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Surf Clam, *Spisula solidissima*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Dwarf Surf Clam, *Mulinia lateralis*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Ribbed Pod, *Siliqua costata*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Common Razor Clam, *Ensis directus*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Northern Dwarf Tellin, *Angulus agilis*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Baltic Macoma, *Macoma balthica*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Ocean Quahog, *Arctica islandica*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Northern Quahog, *Mercenaria mercenaria*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ False Quahog, *Pitar morrhuanus*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Amethyst Gem Clam, *Gemma gemma*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ False Angel Wing, *Petricola pholadiformis*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Great Piddock, *Zirfaea cristata*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Arctic Rock Rorer, *Hiatella arctica*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Common Shipworm, *Teredo navalis*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Soft-shelled Clam, *Mya arenaria*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Lea's Spoon Clam, *Periploma leanum*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Glassy Lyonsia, *Lyonsia hyalina*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Gould's Pandora, *Pandora gouldiana*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Long-finned Squid, *Loligo pealei*