Bay Clam Densities in Netarts Bay, 2013-2014

Eastside (Yager Creek and Whiskey Creek Flats)

**Cockles**
*Clinocardium nuttallii*
- Found in sand or sandy mud sediments
- Located near the surface
- Live throughout the intertidal
- Size 1.5 - 3 inches
- Harvest with a rake; avoid eelgrass beds
- Tip: often found laying on the surface

**Gaper Clams**
*Tresus capax*
- Found in sandy sediments
- Located 1 to 3.3 feet deep
- Live in low intertidal
- Size 3-6 inches
- Harvest with a shovel or shrimp pump; avoid eelgrass beds
- Tip: gaper shows can look like burrowing shrimp holes. Stick your finger in the hole and if you feel the neck retract, you have found a gaper. Dig beside the show to avoid damaging the clam.

**Butter Clams**
*Saxidomus gigantea*
- Found in sandy mud sediments
- Located 0.5 to 1.2 feet deep
- Live in the high intertidal
- Size 2 - 4 inches
- Harvest with a shovel or rake
- Tip: dig carefully; the clam might not be directly below show

**Native Littleneck Clams**
*Leukoma staminea*
- Found in sandy mud sediments
- Located surface to 0.8 feet deep
- Live in the high intertidal
- Size 1.5 - 2.5 inches
- Harvest with a rake; avoid eelgrass beds
- Tip: most common and readily accessible by foot on the flat near the Whiskey Creek Fish Hatchery

**Additional clamming maps and directions to access points can be found at:**
www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/SEACOR

**Tools of the Trade**
- Shovel
- Rake
- Shrimp Pump
- Bucket

**Happy Camp**
- Additional access point just south of map near the boat ramp.

The blue stars indicate easy walk-on access points. Shellfish Preserves are areas closed to clam harvest.

Shellfish Preserve

Eastside (Yager Creek and Whiskey Creek Flats)

Shellfish Preserve

Tools of the Trade

Shovel
Rake
Shrimp Pump
Bucket

Happy Camp

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Bay Clams

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What is SEACOR?

The Shellfish and Estuarine Habitat Assessment of Coastal Oregon (SEACOR) is part of ODFW’s Shellfish program. SEACOR staff conduct counts of bay clams in Oregon estuaries. The primary goals include:

- Document where recreationally important bay clams are found
- Count the abundance and biomass of each species
- Describe the type of habitats where each species is found

This research targets recreationally harvested bay clams: cockles, butters, gapers, and native littlenecks.

Information obtained by SEACOR informs resource managers and provides a baseline for monitoring future changes in Oregon estuaries.

How Deep Should I Dig?

- Cockles (orange bar): surface to 0.5 feet
- Butter clams (yellow bar): 0.5 to 1.2 feet
- Native littleneck clams (blue bar): surface to 0.8 feet
- Gaper clams (purple bar): 1 to 3.3 feet

Different bay clam species live at different depths in the sediment.

How Many Clams Can I Harvest?

The daily catch limit is 20 bay clams (cockle, butter, native littleneck and gaper clams) per person, of which only 12 may be gaper clams. For more on shellfish regulations visit: www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/regulations

What is Good Clamming Etiquette?

1. Refill your holes: A pile of sand can harm clams you may want to dig another day.
2. Avoid digging in the eelgrass: Eelgrass is an essential home for many animals living in the estuary. Once eelgrass is dug up, it no longer provides that necessary shelter. Dig in gaps between eelgrass patches.

When Should I Dig?

Bay clams are often harvested in the intertidal—the part of the beach between high tide and low tide. Many clams live in the low intertidal, only accessible during a minus tide. Find tide tables at: www.tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov

For More Information

Website www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/SEACOR
Email ODFW.SEACOR@state.or.us
Shellfish Regulations www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/regulations
Shellfish Harvest Hotline 1-800-448-2474

Recreational shellfish license fees provided funding for this study. Clam diggers and crabbers contribute directly to research on resources they use.

A SEACOR biologist recording habitat data in Netarts Bay

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Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Marine Resources Program
2040 SE Marine Science Dr.
Newport, OR 97365
541-867-4741

Where to Harvest Bay Clams

Netarts Bay Clamming Flats

Clammers on Yager Creek Flat

Eastside (for SEACOR study)

How to Dig?