

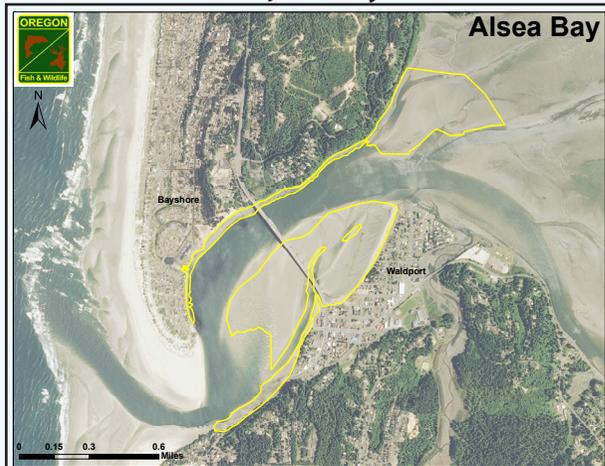
# Alsea Bay

Alsea Bay has a long history of providing excellent recreational fishing, clamming, and crabbing opportunities. The bay also supports commercial bait shrimp and bay crab harvest operations. This shallow bay is adjacent to the town of Waldport and drains the Alsea River and a few smaller creeks.

Strong tidal currents and ocean swells occur in the lower bay near the mouth. The upper bay is dominated by mud flats where burrowing shrimp and softshell clams are common. Eelgrass beds are sparse and patchy. Many purple varnish clams as well as cockle and gaper clams are found in the sand flats of the lower bay.

In 2015, the SEACOR research team studied clam populations and estuarine habitats in Alsea Bay. This information will assist the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in making management decisions to conserve bay clam populations and estuaries for future generations.

## Alsea Bay Study Areas



# What is My Harvest Limit?

A shellfish license is required to harvest. The personal daily catch limit is: 20 bay clams (cockle, butter, native littleneck and gaper clams) of which only 12 may be gaper clams, 36 softshell clams, and 72 purple varnish clams.

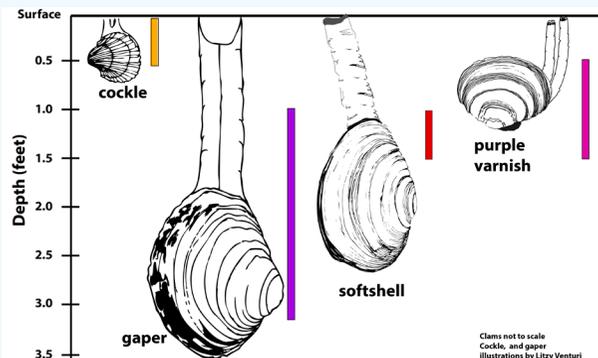
For more on shellfish regulations visit:  
[www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/regulations.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/regulations.asp)



# How Deep Should I Dig?

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

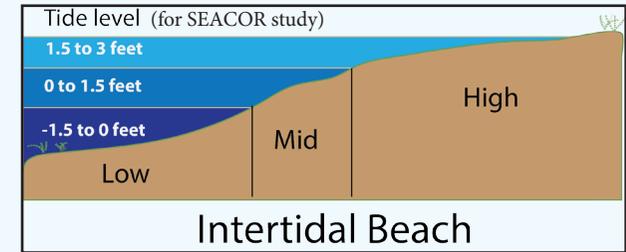
- Cockles (orange bar): surface to 0.5 feet
- Gaper clams (purple bar): 1 to 3.3 feet
- Softshell clams (red bar): surface to 1.2 feet
- Purple varnish clams (pink bar): 0.5 to 1.5 feet



# 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](http://www.tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov)



# 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.



*Clammers gathering cockles in a channel near the bridge*