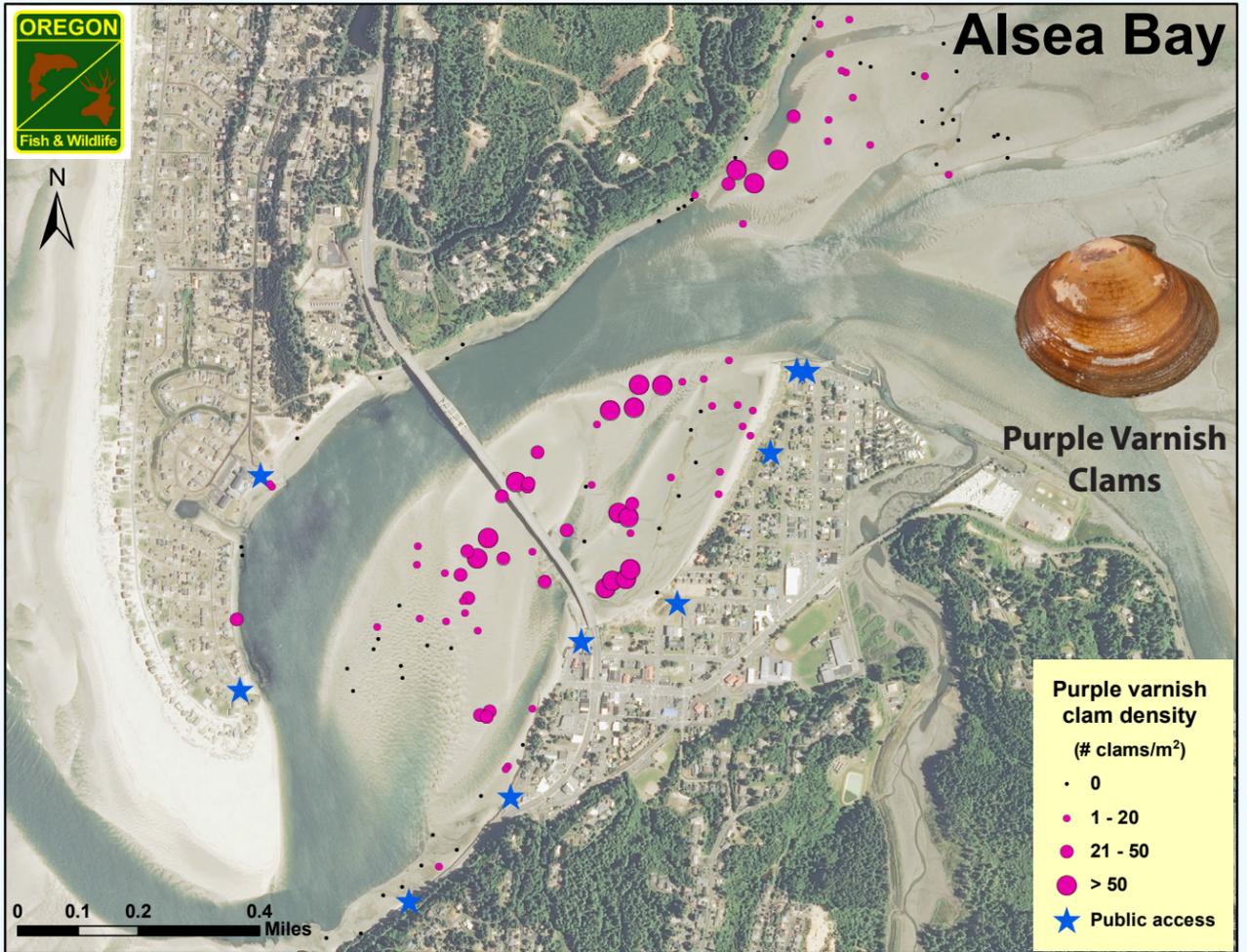


Bay Clam Densities in Asea Bay, 2015

Additional clamming maps and directions to access points can be found at:



www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/SEACOR



Purple Varnish Clams

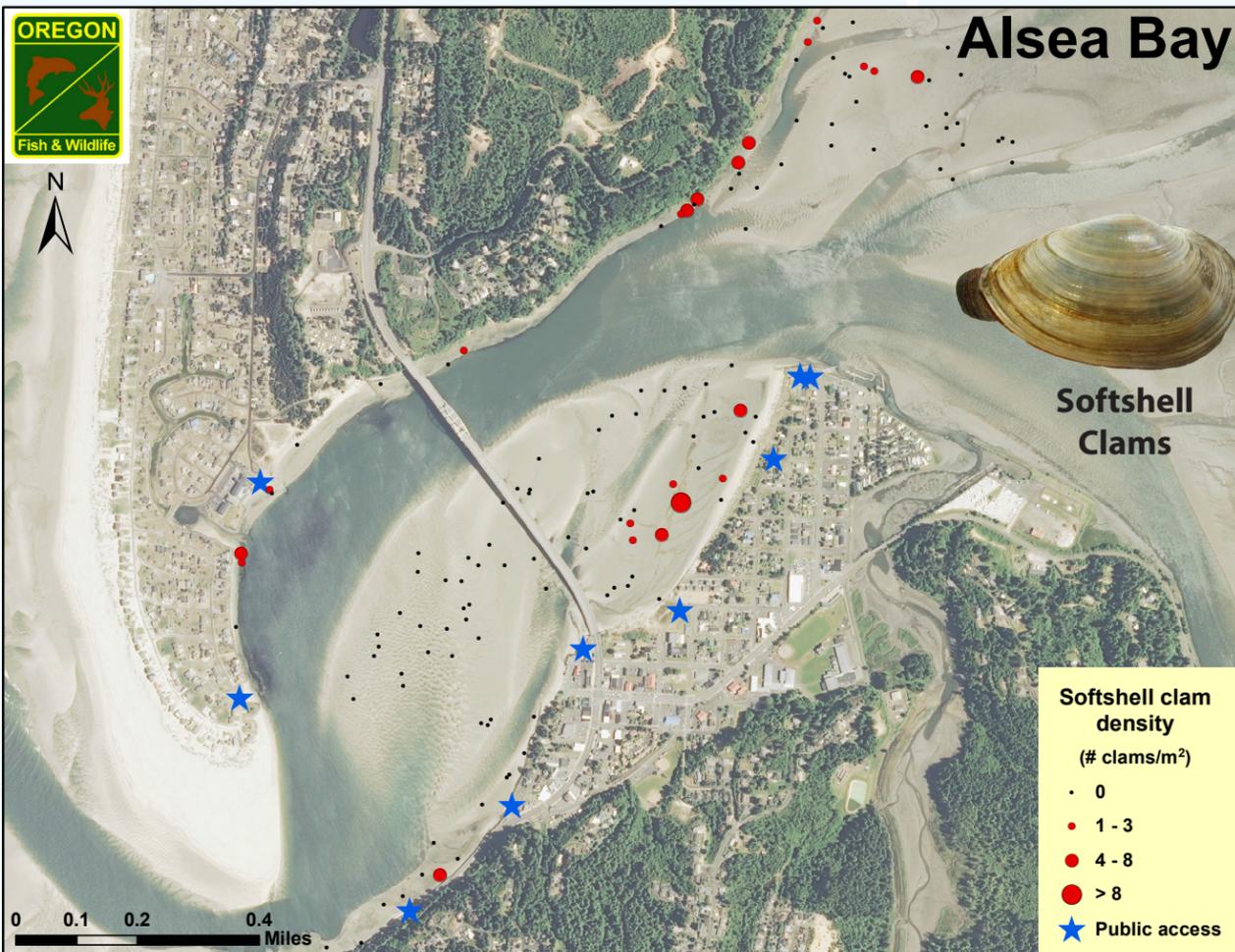
(*Nuttallia obscurata*)

- Found in sandy sediments
- Located 0.5 to 1.5 feet deep
- Live in the high intertidal
- Size 1.5 - 3 inches
- Harvest with a shovel



Purple Varnish "show"

- Tip: look for two small side-by-side holes in the high sandy areas. Purple varnish clam shows can be hard to see.



Softshell Clams

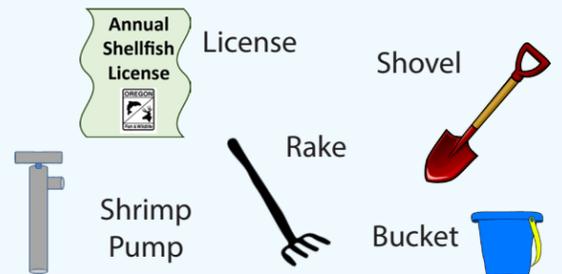
(*Mya arenaria*)

- Found in sandy mud sediments
- Located 1 to 1.5 feet deep
- Live in the mid to high intertidal
- Size 2 - 3.5 inches
- Harvest with a shovel
- Tip: dig carefully; the shell is thin and breaks easily. Softshells are tolerant of the lower salinities and can be found up river.



Softshell "show"

Tools of the Trade



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.



Cockle "show"

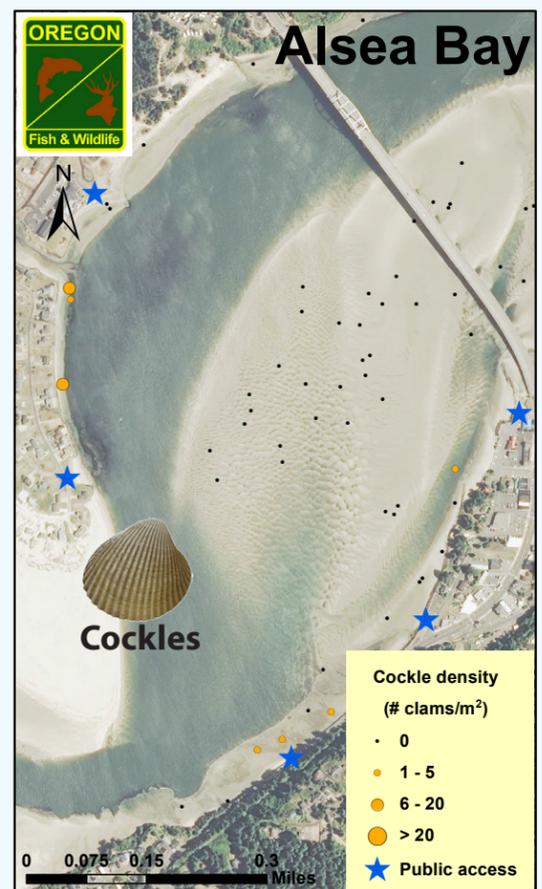
Gaper Clams

(*Tresus capax*)

- Found in sandy gravel sediments
- Located 1 to 3.3 feet deep
- Live in low intertidal, harvest on a minus tide
- 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.



Gaper "show"

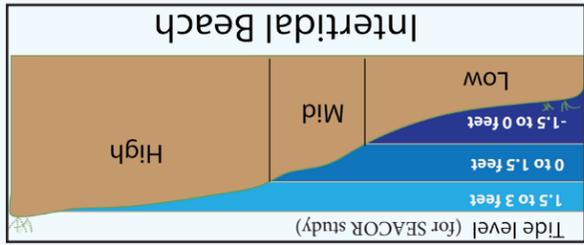




Clammers gathering cockles in a channel near the bridge

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.

What is Good Clamming Etiquette?



Find tide tables at: www.tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov

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.

When Should I Dig?

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. SEACOR's primary goals:

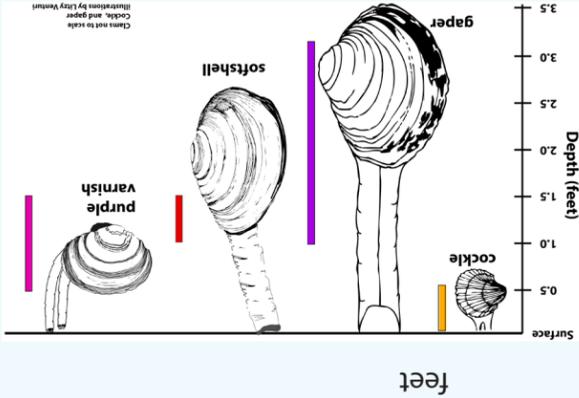
- Document** where recreationally important bay clams are found
- Count** the abundance and biomass of each species
- Describe** the type of habitats where each species is found

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.



SEACOR biologists collecting samples on Alsea Bay



- 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

How Deep Should I Dig?



For more on shellfish regulations visit: www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/regulations.asp

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

What is My Harvest Limit?



SEACOR biologists recording habitat data in Alsea Bay



For More Information

Website

www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/SEACOR.asp

Email

ODFW.SEACOR@state.or.us

Shellfish Regulations

www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/regulations.asp

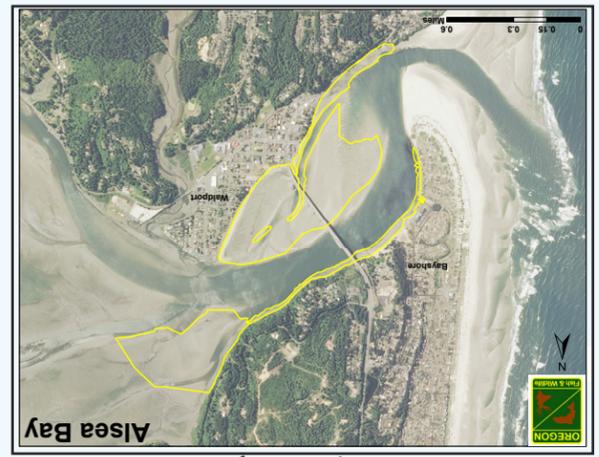
Shellfish Safety Hotline

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.



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



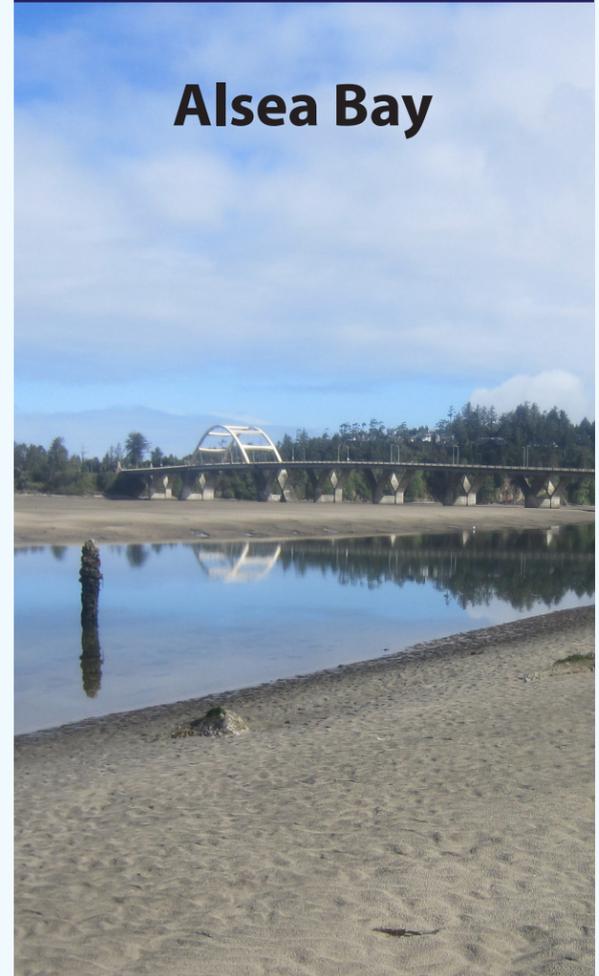
Alsea Bay Study Areas

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.

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.

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.

Alsea Bay



*Front cover photo- Waldport Bridge, Alsea Bay