

Rapana venosa

Rapa Whelk,
Veined Rapa Whelk

Invasive to Maine

Coastal
Rocky Intertidal, Docks, and Beaches

Shell Aperture (Opening)



Goerge Chernilevsky, www.commons.wikimedia.org



Look for a large aperture (opening) that is deep orange with small teeth along the outer lip.

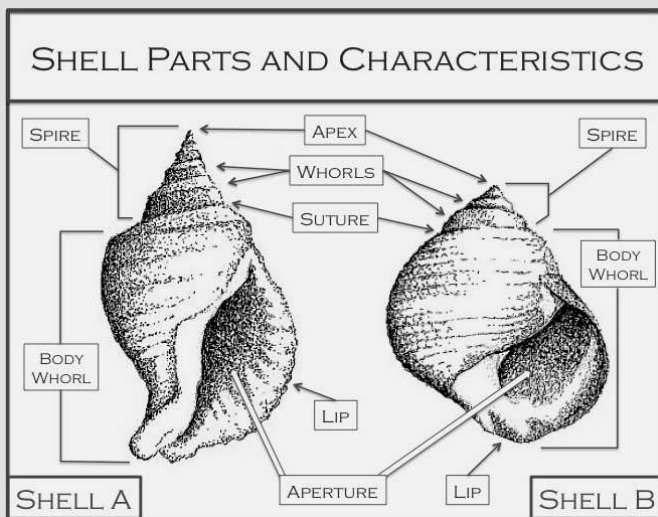
Full View



Goerge Chernilevsky, www.commons.wikimedia.org



Look for a whelk with a rounded and heavily-ribbed grey to reddish-brown shell with a short spire (spiraled end). The spire is short like shell B, but the body looks like shell A.



Shell Spire (Spiraled End)



US Geological Survey, www.forestryimages.org



Look for a thick shell that is up to 16 cm long with a round shape and a short spire. Knobs on the shell get smaller and closer together towards the apex (tip).

Color Variations



US Geological Survey, www.forestryimages.org



Look for the shell of the Rapa Whelk to be grey to light brown with dark veins (stripes or patches) running from the top to the bottom of the shell.

Similar Species

The Rapa Whelk is much larger than any native intertidal snail (there is one native species, the New England Neptune, that lives in deep water and grows to 20 cm). The Rapa Whelk is shaped more like a softball. The Neptune Whelk is shaped more like a cone.

Fun Fact

The Rapa Whelk is a very aggressive predator and eats large amounts of commercially-valuable oysters and other shellfish. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science offers a \$5 bounty for live Rapa Whelks found in the Chesapeake Bay.

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