

Littorina obtusata

Smooth Periwinkle

Native to Maine

Coastal
Rocky Intertidal, Docks, and Beaches

Shell Aperture (Opening)



VS user manyeyes



Look for a tear-shaped aperture (opening).

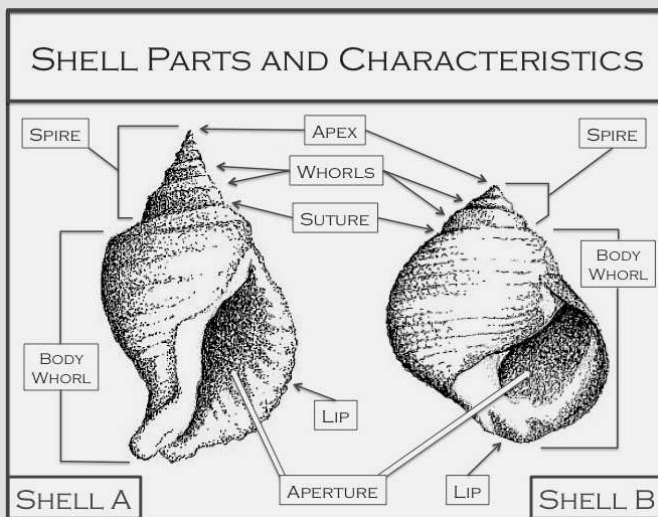
Full View



Ken-ichi Ueda, www.flickr.com



Look in the lower intertidal zone for a periwinkle with a smooth, round shell up to 1.3 cm, and a flat spire (spiraled end). The spire is even shorter than shell B in the diagram!



Shell Spire (Spiraled End)



Field Studies Council, www.theseashore.org.uk



Look for a shell with a flat spire (spiraled end) and a flat apex (tip). The whorls are smooth with very shallow ridges (sutures) between each whorl. Use the diagram to help you.

Color Variations



Eirian Evans, www.geograph.org.uk



The shell of the Smooth Periwinkle can be many different colors ranging from olive green to yellow to banded or checkered.

Similar Species

No other periwinkle species in Maine has as flat a spire as the smooth periwinkle. It also has a thinner shell than other Maine periwinkles.

Did You Know?

The Smooth Periwinkle has gills (like a fish). It "breathes" oxygen in the water and must stay in the lower intertidal zone where it is more often covered by water. It can look a lot like the vesicles (bladders) on Bladder Wrack or Knotted Wrack and is often found hiding there!