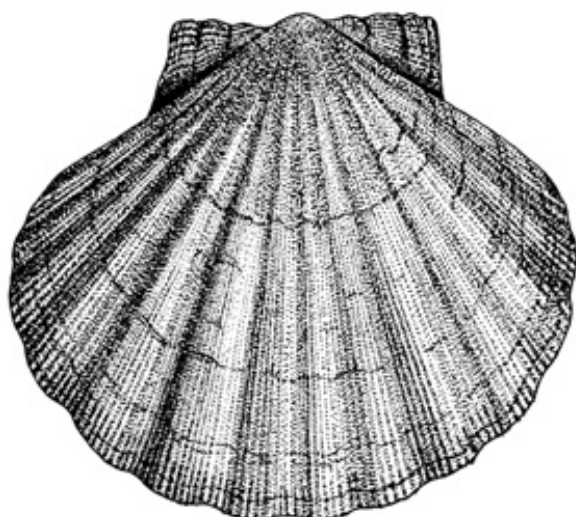




Species Fact Sheets

Pecten maximus (Linnaeus, 1758)



Pecten maximus: [\(click for more\)](#)



Pecten maximus: [\(click for more\)](#)

Synonyms

- *Chlamys maximus* Linnaeus, 1758, (original description).
- *Pecten vulgaris* da Costa, 1776

FAO Names

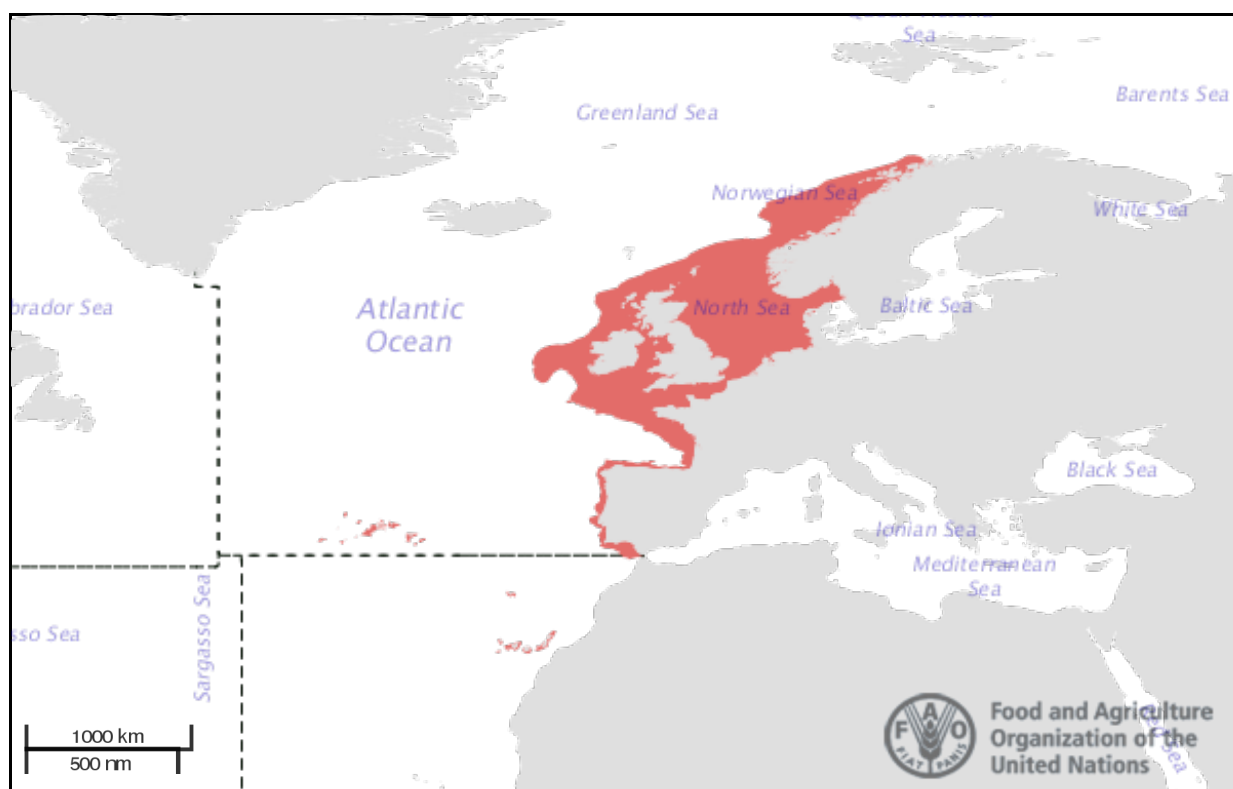
En - Great Atlantic scallop, Fr - Coquille St-Jacques atlantique, Sp - Vieira(=Concha de Santiago).

3Alpha Code: SCE Taxonomic Code: 3160800309

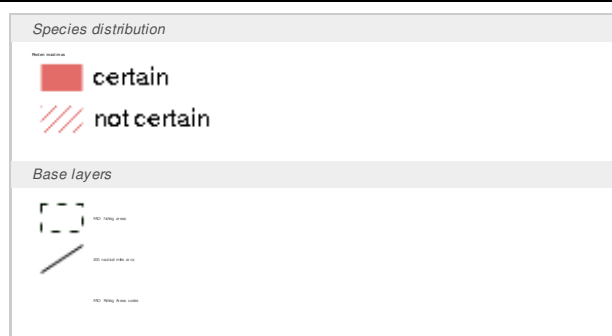
Diagnostic Features

Shell solid, equilateral, ears equal; inequivalve, right (lower) valve convex, slightly overlapping the left (upper) valve which is flat; almost circular in outline; very large specimens measure 15,24 cm in length. Ears prominent occupying at least half the width of the shell; byssal notch in the right anterior ear slight, not serrated. Sculpture of 12 to 17 broad radiating ribs and numerous concentric lines. Growth stages clear. Ears with a few thin ribs radiating from the beaks. Margin crenulate where indented by the radiating ribs. Left valve red-brown, right valve white, cream or shades of light brown with pink, red or pale yellow tints; both may carry zigzag patterns and may be adorned with bands and spots of red, pink or bright yellow.

Geographical Distribution



Launch the Aquatic Species Distribution map viewer



Eastern Atlantic Ocean, from Norway south to Spain. Also around the Azores, Madeira and the Canaries.

Habitat and Biology

Lives on sand and gravel bottoms but it can be found in mud as well, from the extreme low tide down to 250 m (in literature to 1846 m). The young molluscs live attached with their byssus to a hard substrate, but when they become adult the shells are free-swimming. They spend most of the time resting on the lower (right or convex) valve in self-dug depressions in the bottom, so that the upper (left or flat) valve is parallel to the sea-floor. Sand, mud, gravel or living organism cover the upper valve so that only the margin of the shell (with all tentacles and eyes) remains visible; most active during the day. When disturbed the animal retracts with a quick movement into its valves and becomes virtually undetectable.

Size

Maximum 17 cm in diameter; common 10 to 15 cm.

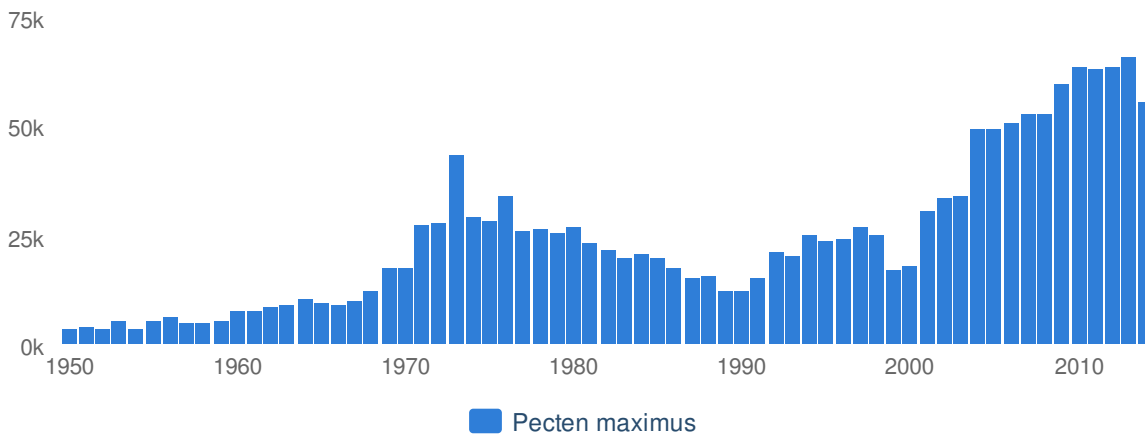
Interest to Fisheries

The total catch reported for this species to FAO for 1999 was 35 411 t. The countries with the largest catches were UK (19 108 t) and France (12 745 t).

Pecten maximus are fished in large numbers: the meat is considered as excellent and a luxury product. In France, the species is protected and the professional fishermen are obliged to respect severe regulations.

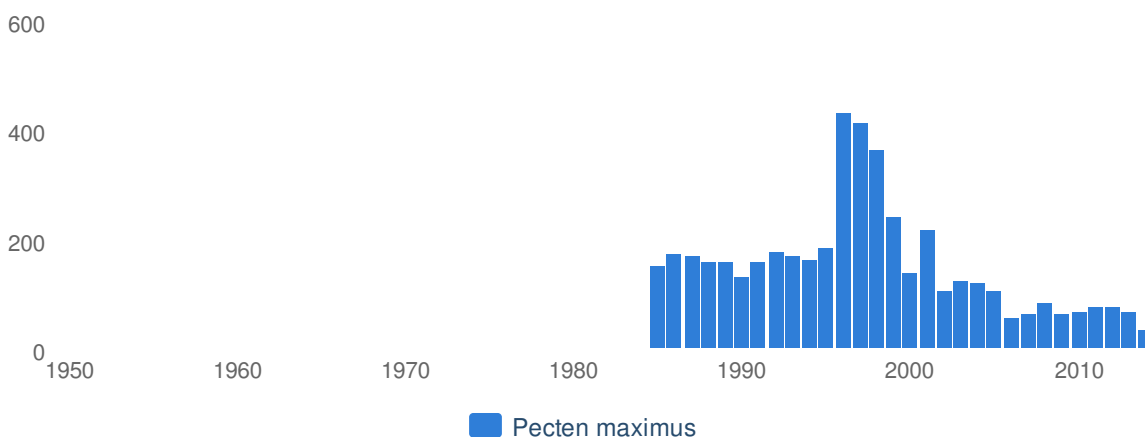
Global Capture Production for species (tonnes)

Source: [FAO FishStat](#)



Global Aquaculture Production for species (tonnes)

Source: [FAO FishStat](#)



Local Names

English : Scallop , St. James' shell .

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