



## NOTICE TO THE WILDLIFE IMPORT/EXPORT COMMUNITY



October 20, 2021

### **Subject: Seashells**

**Background:** Collecting seashells has been a hobby for thousands of years. Online purchases have made it easier to buy and swap shells. There are a few things to know about seashells before taking on this activity.

- Seashells typically originate from a foreign country, and thus are considered imports.
- All seashells are considered wildlife and must be declared to [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) whether they are protected or non-protected.
- All seashells must also be declared whether they are used for noncommercial or commercial purposes. Noncommercial purposes include personal collection and use. Commercial purposes include trade or barter, or the actual or intended transfer in the pursuit of gain or profit.
- Each shipment of seashells, whether commercial or noncommercial, imported is required to enter the U.S. through a Service designated [port](#), unless otherwise authorized by the Service.
- Undeclared seashells or seashells found in violation of U.S. or international wildlife laws and regulations may be subject to law enforcement action, including seizure and possible monetary penalties. Seized wildlife, including seashells, is subject to administrative forfeiture proceedings.
- If you have any questions, you can contact the closest [Wildlife Inspection Office](#).

### **Action:**

Importers bringing in shipments of seashells that are not declared are subject to enforcement action by the Service, including seizure of goods and possible monetary penalties.

### **Contact:**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Office of Law Enforcement  
703-358-1949; 703-358-2271 (fax)  
[lawenforcement@fws.gov](mailto:lawenforcement@fws.gov) (e-mail)