Marine Mollusks Dichotomous Key
(for Specimens 1-12)

1a. The body of the shell has a whorl or spiral appearance........................................Go to #2
1b. The body of the shell does not have a whorl or spiral appearance................................Go to #7

2a. The body of the shell is decorated with nodes or spines..........................................Go to #3
2b. The body of the shell is smooth and not decorated with nodes or spines...............Go to #5

3b. The shell spirals towards the left (is left-handed).......................................................Lightning Whelk
3b. The shell spirals towards the right (is right-handed)..................................................Go to #4

4a. The shell has a number of spiny vertical ridges that run the length of the shell........Apple Murex
4b. The shell does not have spiny vertical ridges that run the length of the shell........Florida Fighting Conch

5a. The shell is spherically shaped (shaped like a ball)....................................................Atlantic Moon Snail
5b. The shell is not spherically shaped.............................................................................Go to #6

6a. There are numerous, widely-spaced brown lines spiraling up shell surface..............Banded Tulip
6b. There are no brown lines spiraling up shell surface.......................................................Lettered Olive

7a. The shell has concentric growth lines radiating from the hinge line.........................Go to #8
7b. The shell does not have concentric growth lines.......................................................Go to #9

8a. The shell has a distinctive yellow band along the inside edge....................................Buttercup Lucine
8b. The shell does not have a distinctive yellow band along the inside edge.....................Quahog

9a. The shell has ears along its hinge line......................................................................Calico Scallop
9b. The shell does not have ears along its hinge line.........................................................Go to #10

10a. The shell is rather flat, with digit-like ribs...............................................................Kitten’s Paw
10b. The shell is not flat, and doesn’t have digit-like ribs................................................Go to #11

11a. The shell has small spines along its ribs....................................................................Prickly Cockle
11b. The shell does not have small spines along its ribs..................................................Giant Atlantic Cockle