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The Egg Masses of the Moon Snail

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The Egg Masses of the Moon Snail
Lunatia heros

Every living thing between high tide and low is a colonist who meets his sea of troubles day by day in a quiet but effective manner.

— N.J. Berrill and Jacquelyn Berrill, *1001 Questions Answered about the Seashore*

At low tide, long trails
wind through the sand flats.
The enormous foot
of the moon snail glides
rapidly through soft

sand, never breaking
the surface, in search
of clams. Such deftness,
a flood through its pale,
pulsing, salty flesh.

The moon egg cases,
extruded from the
mantle cavity—
one continuous
gelatinous sheet—

resemble rubber
plungers plumbers use
to open clogged drains.
Sand cements mucous;
each one contains half

a million larvae.
You can find dislodged
egg masses, green-gray,
at low tide, detached
clergyman's collars

errant and wasted.