

INVASIVE SPECIES FACT SHEET



Wikipedia photo

Common Name: Red swamp crayfish/crawfish/crawdada, Louisiana red swamp, red crayfish, mudbug

Species: *Procambarus clarkii*

Family: *Cambaridae*

Order: *Decapoda*

Class: *Malacostraca*

Origin: Southern United States and northeastern Mexico.

Size: Adults up to five inches.

Description: A medium to large crayfish that can be red, black or brown in color with bright red bumps (tubercles) covering the body and long, narrow claws.

Ecology: Found in lakes, ponds, drainage ditches, streams and rivers with slow currents. Prefers mud or sand substrates, but can use most aquatic environments. During times of drought or cold, crayfish create burrows in earthen banks ranging from 24 to 40 inches long.

Status: Prohibited in Oregon

Interesting facts: The red swamp crayfish is the most invasive crayfish in the world. It is unaffected by newt toxins, while Oregon's native signal crayfish is susceptible. A genetic mutation may turn the body or claws blue, however the red tubercles remain.

Impact: Aggressively competes with Oregon's native signal crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*) for food and resources. Red swamp crayfish feed on plants, tadpoles, snails, and insect and newt larvae. Burrowing activities cause bank destabilization and increased water turbidity. If overcrowding or excessive drought occurs, they are capable of overland travel to other water sources.

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Introduction: Path is unknown but by 1999, they were being found in Willamette Valley wetlands.

Lifespan: Two to three years on average, some have been known to exceed six years in age.

Reproduction: Breeding occurs in fall; eggs are laid in spring to early summer. Females burrow into soft sediment and lay their eggs. Large females can lay as many as 650 eggs at a time.

Action: Report sightings of red swamp crayfish to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program. Do not return any red swamp crayfish alive to the water.



Wikipedia photo



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