

Marmorkrebs

(*Procambarus fallax f. virginalis*)

The marmorkrebs, also called the marbled crayfish, is a species that is thought to have been created during breeding of *P. fallax* in captivity for the purpose of the aquarium trade. There are no known indigenous populations of the marmorkrebs, however, it has been discovered in natural systems in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and the island of Madagascar. The marbled crayfish is unique in that the population is exclusively females and they reproduce via cloning. The marbled crayfish, if introduced, will be easily confused with other native species of crayfish in Ontario.

Masthead photo: Christoph Churcholl

Range

The marbled crayfish is capable of living in a wide variety of habitats such as rivers, lakes, swamps, drainage ditches, and fish ponds. It doesn't seem to differentiate between fast- or slow-moving water and substrate types. There are currently no known populations in the wild in Ontario.

To check marbled crayfish's current distribution, visit the EDDMapS Ontario website.

Impacts of Marbled Crayfish

- Due to marbled crayfish's ability to clone, the introduction of a single female could establish a new population.
- The marbled crayfish possesses the ability to degrade wetland habitat and fish populations, which has been observed in its introduced range.
- This species will reduce native crayfish populations through direct competition as well as through the potential spread of disease.
- Native vegetation has been observed to decline where marbled crayfish is present. By eating aquatic vegetation, they reduce spawning and nursery habitat for native fish.

To prevent the spread of marbled crayfish, avoid purchasing this species and never release your aquarium pets or plants into the wild. If you no longer want them, return them to the store where they were purchased.



Photo: Christoph Churcholl





Photo: Christoph Churcholl

How to Identify Marbled Crayfish

- Medium-sized crayfish
- Capable of reaching 13cm, but is usually less than 10cm
- Distinct marbled colour pattern, especially on the latter parts of the carapace
- Relatively small chelae (claws) in contrast to other native species



Photo: Christoph Churcholl

What You Can Do

- Learn how to identify marmorokreb and how to prevent accidentally spreading invasive species.
- If you want to use crayfish as bait, you may only use them in the waterbody in which they were caught. For more information on using crayfish as bait, check the Ontario Fishing Regulations.
- If you have any information about the release of species, such as the marbled crayfish, into Ontario's waters, report it immediately to the MNRF TIPS line at 1-877-847-7667 toll-free any time, or contact your local Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry office (ontario.ca/mnrfoffices) during regular business hours. You can also call Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-8477.
- If you find a marbled crayfish or other invasive species in the wild, please contact the toll-free Invading Species Hotline at 1-800-563-7711, or visit www.EDDMapS.org/Ontario to report a sighting.

Other Resources:

www.invadingspecies.com
www.Ontario.ca/invasivespecies
www.EDDMapS.org/Ontario

For More Information:

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