

Not Wanted



Rusty Crayfish

Alias: *Orconectes rusticus*

Native: Ohio River basin.

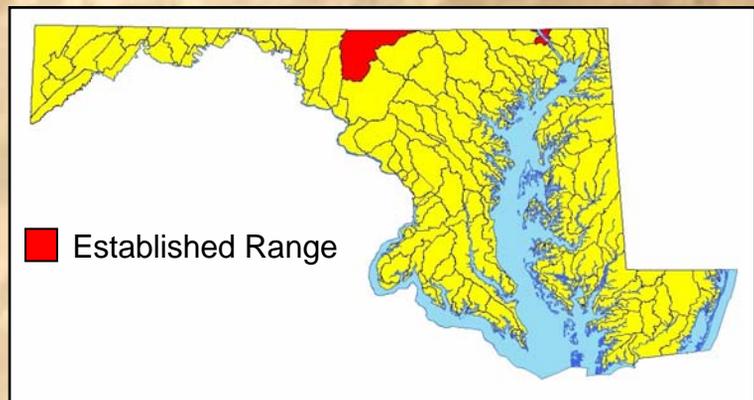
Size: About five inches in length, not including claws.

Description: Rusty crayfish is most readily recognized by dark, rust-colored spots found on both sides of the body just above the abdomen (tail). It also has large, smooth, robust claws. This species is found in lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers in shallow riffles or deep pools. It prefers areas that offer substantial habitat, such as logs, rocks, leaf litter, or other debris.

Impacts to Aquatic Ecosystem: Rusty crayfish have invaded 14 other states and portions of Canada where it has devastated local aquatic ecosystems. Invasions of this species have resulted in the displacement of native crayfish. Much like other non-native crayfish, this invader directly out-competes native crayfish for optimal habitat and shared food resources. It is known to reduce the abundance and diversity of aquatic vegetation, resulting in less habitat and spawning areas for fish and benthic invertebrates. Additionally, rusty crayfish can compete with native crayfishes and other species for food.

Means of Introduction: Rusty crayfish are popular as bait for game fish. Anglers may have unintentionally introduced rusty crayfish by dumping unused live bait into local watersheds.

Status in Maryland: Rusty crayfish has been found in the upper Monocacy River drainage and the Susquehanna River drainage above the Conowingo Dam.



Look-A-Likes: Rusty crayfish is the only crayfish in Maryland with rust-colored spots on each side of its body and large, smooth, robust claws.

Legal Standing: Prohibited from import, transport, sale, purchase, and possession in Maryland. *Special provisions for delivering specimens to authorities, visit www.dnr.state.md.us/invasives.

For more information on invasive species in Maryland visit www.dnr.state.md.us/invasives.

