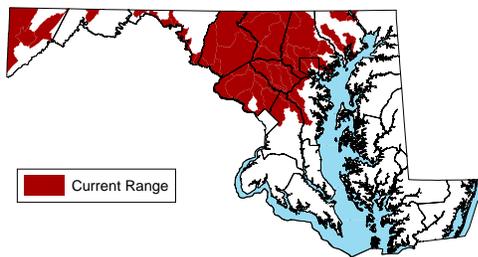


# Virile Crayfish

## *Orconectes virilis*

**Identification** Varies in color from brown to reddish-brown with green hues; Typically, its large claws are greenish and contain cream or yellow tubercles.

**Why is it a Problem?** This species is highly aggressive and competes with native species for food and habitat.



**Range/Habitat** Typically found in freshwater, in riffles or pools under large flat rocks or in leaf litter; known to occur in the Patapsco, Bush, Susquehanna, Potomac, Gunpowder, and Patuxent Rivers, the Washington metro area; also established in Deep Creek Lake.

**Similar Species** Can be distinguished from other species by its large body, a chestnut-brown saddle across its back, and claws with yellow tubercles.

**Control and Prevention** 1) Never release live, unused bait; 2) Do not transport live fish or crayfish from one body of water to another; 3) Educate others about the problems of bait bucket introductions and invasive species; 4) Learn how to identify virile crayfish

**Method of Introduction** The species was first reported from the Patapsco River in the late 1950s. More recently, release from bait buckets has hastened its spread.

**Legal Status** Prohibited from being removed from the waters of one watershed and introduced into the waters of another watershed.

**Want to know more? Check out [www.dnr.maryland.gov](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov) for more on invasive species in Maryland and what you can do about it.**