



Mitten Crab WATCH

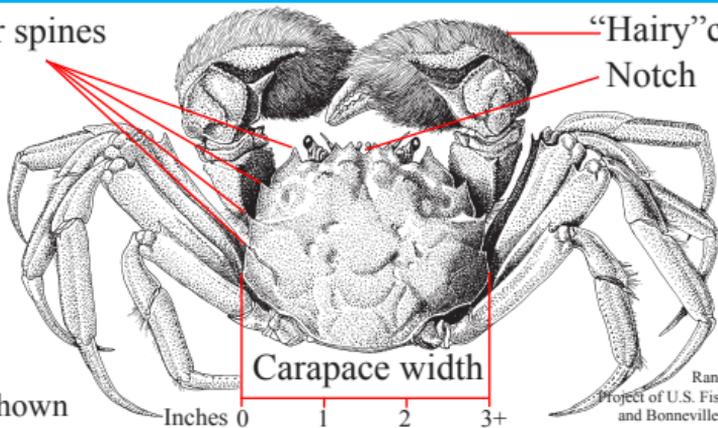
How to Identify a Mitten Crab

- Only crab in fresh waters of North America
- Claws equal in size and “hairy” (juveniles may not have “hairy” claws)
- Four lateral carapace spines (last one smaller); notch between eyes
- Carapace up to 4 inches (100mm) wide; light brown to olive green in color

Four spines

“Hairy” claws

Notch



Carapace width

Inches 0 1 2 3+

* Adult Shown

Illustration:
Randall D. Babb, for FWS
Project of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
and Bonneville Power Administration

The Mitten Crab

Mitten crabs may pose a serious threat to the freshwater, estuarine and marine ecosystems and economy of the West Coast. First discovered in San Francisco Bay in 1992, they spread to the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers where massive migrations clog fish screens and hamper water delivery. One mitten crab was found in the Columbia River in 1997. Mitten crab burrows weaken levees and increase bank erosion. They can eat salmon, trout, and sturgeon eggs and may threaten successful spawning. Juvenile crabs also damage rice fields. These crabs can carry the oriental lung fluke, a threat to human health. Native to Asia, mitten crabs live in freshwater but migrate to saltwater to reproduce and are easy to identify because they have hairy claws (other identification traits on back of card). Often, recreational anglers or commercial fishermen are the first to discover the mitten crab because they commonly steal bait from anglers or are caught in commercial nets.

Your help is vital to report new sightings and to prevent their spread.

If you catch a mitten crab,

- Do not throw it back alive!
- Preserve it in rubbing alcohol or freeze it.
- Note the precise location where the crab was found.
- Contact your local natural resource management agency:

In Alaska, call the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (907-262-9863);
in British Columbia, call Fisheries and Oceans (604-666-6529);
in Washington, call the WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (360-902-2200);
in Oregon, call OR Invasive Species Hotline (866-468-2337, toll free);
in California, call CA Mitten Crab Hotline (888-321-8913, toll free).

REMINDER: Know the rules!

Mitten crab specimens are needed to confirm sightings, but many jurisdictions have different possession and transport rules. Contact your local natural resources agency for instructions. Never transport live mitten crab.