

New England Crabs



Green Crab

Scientific name: *Carcinus maenas*

Physical Description: Green, red or brown in color, 3.5-4 inches in size, five spines on each side of their carapace.

Life span: 4-7 years

Habitat: All types of marine and estuarine habitats (mud, sand, vegetation).

Arrival: Traveled from Europe to North America through ballast water in the 1800s.

Fun fact: Known as the cockroach of the sea.



Fiddler Crabs

Scientific name: *Uca pugnax*

Physical description: Dark green, brown or blue in color, Carapace is up to 1 inch in size, Males have large front claw while females do not.

Life span: Up to 2 years

Habitat: Muddy burrows, brackish water, and ocean beaches.

Arrival: Recently found in Great Marsh. Moved north from southern waters.

Fun fact: Movement of feeding resembles the motion of someone moving a bow across a fiddle.



The Portly Spider Crab

Scientific name: *Libinia emarginata*

Physical Description: Triangular carapace about 4 inches in size, various shades of brown, long legs (spanning 12 inches), normally covered in spines and debris.

Life span: 3-6 years

Habitat: Found in various marine habitats from shallow coasts to deep sea.

Arrival: Native to New England waters.

Fun Fact: Usually walks forward rather than sideways



Asian Shore Crab

Scientific name: *Hemigrapsus sanguineus*

Physical appearance: Square carapace ranging in color: green, purple, orange, red and brown, 1.5-2 inches in size. Has three spines of each side of carapace.

Life span: 3-5 years

Habitat: Shallow, hard bottom intertidal and subtidal zones.

Arrival: Arrived to North Atlantic coast in late 1980s from Western Pacific waters.

Fun Fact: Female crabs can produce up to 200,000 eggs per breeding season.



Rock Crabs

Scientific name: *Cancer irroratus*

Physical description: Carapace is yellowish in color, often with red, purple and brown coloration, 2-4 inches in size, 9 spines on each side of eye.

Life span: Up to 8 years

Habitat: intertidal to sub-tidal zones

Arrival: Native to North Atlantic coast.

Fun fact: This crab is commonly used for food.



Jonah Crab

Scientific name: *Cancer borealis*

Physical description: Red and tan in color, rough round carapace normally 3.5-4 inches in size (can be as large as 9 inches!)

Life span: Unknown.

Habitat: Rocky ocean shores or soft silt ocean floors.

Arrival: Native to the North Atlantic coast

Fun Fact: Originally these crabs were seen as a nuisance species, and only caught on accident as bycatch. Now many people like to eat them!



Lady Crab

Scientific name: *Ovalipes ocellatus*

Physical description: Carapace is yellow-gray or light purple with leopardlike clusters, 3-4 inches in size, has 3-5 spines on each side of the carapace.

Life span: Unknown

Habitat: Sandy or muddy bottoms in shallow water.

Arrival: Native to North Atlantic coast

Fun fact: The last pair of legs are modified paddles used for swimming.



Toad Crab

Scientific name: *Hyas araneus*

Physical description: Triangular and narrow shells, redish to green in color, about 3.5 inches in size.

Life span: Unknown

Habitat: Subtropical zones, mostly within rocky and muddy bottoms

Arrival: Native to Arctic and Atlantic Ocean, Baltic, Barents and North Sea.

Fun fact: Can live at great depths (over 5,000 feet!)



Green crab image: <http://planetanimalzone.blogspot.com/2012/05/greeb-crab-in-habitat.html>

Fiddler crab image: <http://itec-edu.org/bocas-del-toro-ecosystems/male-fiddler-crab/>

Spider crab image: <http://focusonnature.laserfiche.com/Weblink8/splash/Pictures/animals.html>

Asian shore crab image: <http://www.rimeis.org/species/images/hemi.jpg>

Rock crab image: <http://feedthedatamonster.com/home/2013/9/2/whats-in-my-local-tide-pool>

Jonah Crab image: <http://www.bio.gc.ca/science/research-recherche/fisheries-pecheries/managed-gere/jonah-nordique-eng.php>

Lady crab image: http://barnegatshellfish.org/lady_crab.htm

Toad crab image: http://www.snipview.com/q/Hyas_araneus