

# TEACHERS: Help Prevent the Spread of Invasive Red Swamp Crayfish



## Red swamp crayfish (*Procambarus clarkii*)

Not native to Michigan, red swamp crayfish can cause significant ecological damage and shoreline erosion with their burrowing abilities.

### Use crayfish in the classroom?

This invasive crayfish is common in biological supply kits provided to teachers for science lessons.

**This species should not be used alive in the classroom**

*If you use crayfish in your classroom:*

- Identify to make sure they aren't invasive
- If you think they might be invasive, take pictures of the crayfish
- Humanely dispose of the crayfish by placing them in a container and freezing for 24 hours, then place the container with the crayfish in the trash –  
**NEVER RELEASE ANY LIVE CRAYFISH!**
- **Contact and send pictures to [quebedeauxk@michigan.gov](mailto:quebedeauxk@michigan.gov)**

Dark wedge shape

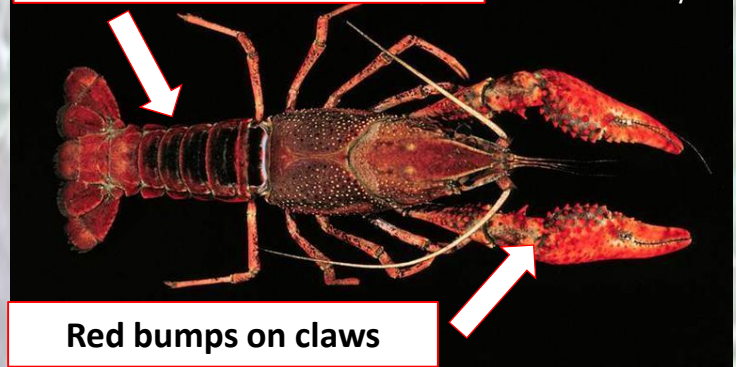


Photo credit:  
Chris Taylor

Red bumps on claws

### Identification tips

- Dark red raised bumps on claws
- Dark wedge shape on top of tail
- 2.2 – 6+ inches in length
- Hourglass shape on back must touch or almost touch in middle



Hourglass shape on back, touches in middle



**Protecting Michigan's natural resources through regulations**  
Red swamp crayfish have been prohibited in Michigan since 2015.

**It is illegal to possess these crayfish alive regardless of the purpose**