

Invasive Species Alert

Chinese Mitten Crab

(*Eriocheir sinensis*)

Not detected in Michigan

Identification:

- Brownish-orange to greenish-brown
- Claws are covered in hairs
- Convex and uneven shell reaches the size of an adult palm
- Notch between eyes, 4 spines on each side of the carapace

Habitat: This crab is a catadromous species, meaning it is born in a marine environment, migrates to freshwater to live, and migrates back to a marine system to breed. Within freshwater, they can be found in rivers, streams, estuaries, or bays that are abundant in aquatic vegetation.



Dave Kelch, Ohio Sea Grant, Bugwood.org



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Diet: These voracious eaters consume detritus, aquatic plants, algae, benthic invertebrates, and salmon/trout/sturgeon eggs.

Native Range: Pacific coast of China and Korea

Local Concern: The appetite of the mitten crab can completely alter a food web and may allow them to out-compete native crabs, crayfish, and mussels for resources. Burrowing activity significantly decreases stream bank stability and increases erosion. Mitten crab can consume fishing bait, damage or consume catch, damage fishing

nets, and clog pumps, screens, and water intake structures. They are also an intermediate host of the Oriental lung fluke, which has not been found in any mitten crabs collected in the U.S.

U.S. Distribution: Chinese mitten crab have been reported in Chesapeake Bay, San Francisco Bay, Delaware Bay, Hudson River, Columbia River, and Mississippi River, but the only established population is currently in San Francisco Bay, California.

Means of Introduction: Ballast water and possibly intentional release

Report this species at www.misin.msu.edu or download the MISIN smartphone app and report it from your phone