

Invasive Species Alert

MARbled CRAYFISH (PROCAMBARUS VIRGINALIS) PROHIBITED IN MICHIGAN

IDENTIFICATION:

- A medium-sized crayfish, ranging from 4 to 5 inches in length.
- A marbled color pattern most visible on its carapace or back.
- Coloring is generally olive to dark brown but can range from tan to reddish to blue.
- Claws are slender or narrow.



HABITAT: Marbled crayfish have been found in streams, rivers, ditches, ponds, wetlands and retention basins.

They can migrate across land and survive drought conditions by burrowing into the soil.

NATIVE RANGE: Since the marbled crayfish originated in the pet trade, it does not exist anywhere as a wild native population. Since its discovery in the 1990's, marbled crayfish have established wild populations in Germany, Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, the UK, Japan and Madagascar.

U.S. DISTRIBUTION: Marbled crayfish have not been detected in the wild in the U.S.

MICHIGAN DISTRIBUTION: Marbled crayfish have not been detected in the wild in Michigan.

LOCAL CONCERN: The marbled crayfish reproduces through self-cloning: all individuals are female and can lay up to 700 unfertilized eggs that develop into genetically identical offspring. With rapid reproduction and aggressive behavior, marbled crayfish dominate habitats and out-compete native crayfish and fish. Burrowing can destabilize banks and shorelines.



MEANS OF INTRODUCTION AND SPREAD: Marbled crayfish are widely available in the aquarium trade, creating high risk through release of unwanted pets.

THIS SPECIES IS ON MICHIGAN'S INVASIVE SPECIES WATCH LIST: Report it at MISIN.MSU.edu or download the MISIN smartphone app and report it from your phone.

Photos courtesy of Ranja Adriantsoa (top) and Mari-Liis Komets (bottom).