

Invasive Species Alert

YABBY

(CHERAX DESTRUCTOR)

PROHIBITED IN MICHIGAN

IDENTIFICATION:

- Smooth carapace.
- Colors vary from olive-green to brown, but are sometimes red, yellow, or black.
- Crayfish have two enlarged front claws, four pairs of walking legs, followed by four pairs of swimmerets (small swimming legs).

HABITAT: Appear to prefer muddy or silted substrates in water with moderate levels of turbidity. Like other crayfish species, yabby dig burrows. Some burrows can reach depths of up to two meters. This can compromise the integrity of dam walls, causing problems for farmers.

DIET: These somewhat opportunistic omnivores feed primarily on rotting vegetation, but will settle for almost anything it comes across, including other yabby crayfish on occasion.

NATIVE RANGE: Australia.

U.S. DISTRIBUTION: Not established in the U.S. but available through the pet trade.



LOCAL CONCERN: Life history traits such as rapid growth rate, high spawning frequency, extended breeding period with multiple spawning events, and attainment of maturity at age one help facilitate establishment and proliferation in a new habitat.

POTENTIAL MEANS OF INTRODUCTION: Aquaculture and aquarium trade.

Photos courtesy of agriculture.vic.gov.au (top) and Chameleon (bottom).