



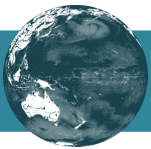
# Atlantic blue crab

*Callinectes sapidus* Rathbun, 1896

## KEY FEATURES



- Large, omnivorous crab, with greyish or greenish brown carapace and blue legs, males usually bigger than females and have blue tipped claw while females have orange claws
- Carapace up to 27 cm across, much shorter than wide, with a pair of long, pointed spines at the lateral edges of the carapace and eight smaller spines in front of these
- Fifth pair of legs are flattened, paddle-like, adapted for swimming
- Lives in estuaries and on the coast from low tide down to 35 m on muddy and sandy sea floors, under a wide range of chemical and physical environmental conditions
- Important commercial and recreational fishery for human consumption in native habitat

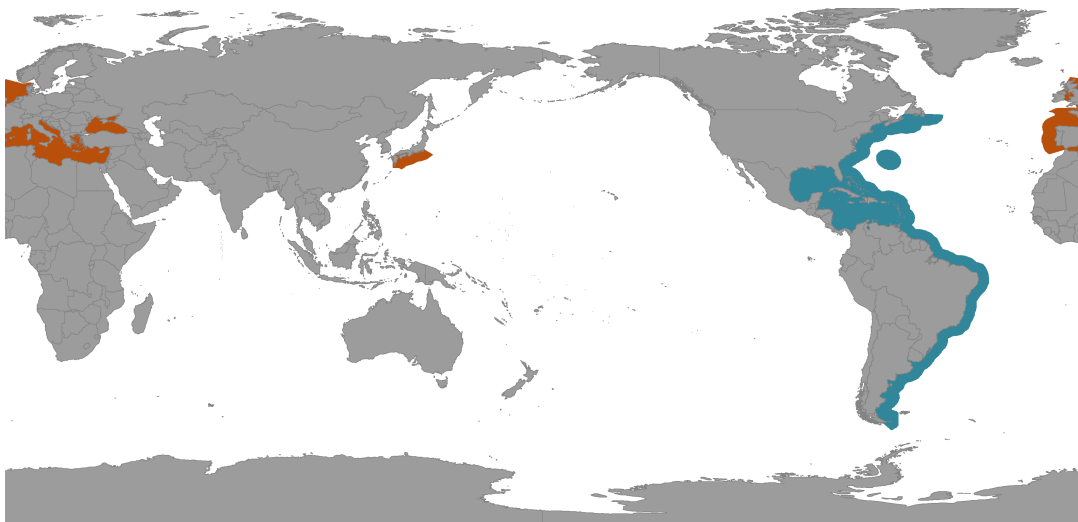


## PATHWAY

✓ Ballast water

✓ Biofouling

- Native
- Cryptogenic
- Non-indigenous





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## IMPACTS



Environmental impacts

Competition with native crabs occurs in Mediterranean populations but little information of impacts has been recorded in non-native habitats



Human health impacts

May accumulate algal toxins, potentially posing a risk for consumption by humans



Social & cultural impacts

None known



Economic impacts

Feeds predominantly on juvenile clams, mussels, and oysters; thus, commercial populations of these will be at risk. It has also been known to feed on fish caught in nets and to damage fishing equipment

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- Females mate in the upper reaches of estuaries, then move to the mouth of the estuary or nearshore coastal waters to spawn
- Produces huge numbers of offspring (usually one to two million, but up to eight million eggs per female) that grow quickly and rapidly become sexually mature
- It could also be other *Callinectes* species, especially in its native range

## DISTRIBUTION

**Native range** Native to the Western Atlantic, from Nova Scotia to Argentina

**Non-indigenous range** North Sea and East Atlantic from Norway to Portugal. Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Japan

## CREDITS AND REFERENCES (click reference for more information)

**Images** Top: G. Stasolla from [Innocenti and Stasolla \(2014\) \(CC BY-4.0\)](#), bottom: Sean Krieg ([CC BY-SA 4.0](#)),

**References** [Nehring et al. \(2008\)](#), [Williams \(1974\)](#), [Innocenti and Stasolla \(2014\)](#), [Mancinelli et al. 2021](#), [Vasconcelos et al. \(2019\)](#), [Jensen \(2010\)](#)

