

# RED CLAW CRAYFISH

*Cherax quadricarinatus*  
Parastacidae, the freshwater crayfish family

## FACTSHEET INFORMATION

### Summary of Invasiveness

- The red claw crayfish has a wide tolerance for environmental extremes, a rapid growth rate, and relatively large adult size which allows it to outcompete native species.
- *C. quadricarinatus* has the potential to transmit disease and parasites to humans and other species.
- The red claw crayfish is a tropical species in its native range, however it has been proven to survive low winter temperatures.

### Diagnostic Characteristics

- Blue, mottled with beige and red on joints and body.
- Red patches laterally on abdomen.
- Smooth, straight, and narrow claws with red patch.
- Omnivorous.
- Widely tolerant of many habitats.
- Adult size up to 35 cm long, seldom longer.

### Introduction and Movement

- Native to Australia; introduced into the U.S. in the 1990's through aquaculture.
- Difficult, if not impossible to contain, the red claw crayfish has often escaped aquaculture facilities.
- *C. quadricarinatus* is capable of travelling over land from one waterbody to another.
- The hardiness and conspicuous coloration of this species has made it popular in the aquarium trade throughout the world.

### Prevention Strategy

- To prevent accidental introductions, ensure that all watercraft, wading gear, and other water related equipment are clean, drained, and dry between use in each waterbody.
- Use of live bait is prohibited in Idaho.
- Never release any animal or plant into the wild.
- Be aware that most species of crayfish will travel over land and may easily escape ponds and water gardens.
- Always Remember:

**DON'T LET IT LOOSE**  
**CLEAN & DRAIN & DRY**

#### Sources

- CABI Invasive Species Compendium: <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/89135>.

