

Carcinus maenas European shore crab

MARINE PEST GUIDE



Photo: Michael Marmach

3 blunt central spines

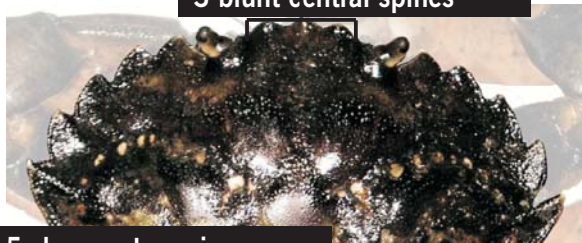


Photo: Andreas Wagner

5 sharp outer spines

Identifying features

- Width of carapace (shell) up to 8 cm.
- **3 blunt spines** between the eyes.
- **5 sharp spines** behind each eye on edges of carapace.
- Carapace usually green, occasionally tinted red/orange.
- Carapace roughly triangular.
- **No swimming** legs (paddles).
- Generally not aggressive when handled.

Where are they found?

- Inhabits sheltered rocky shores.
- Found in the intertidal and shallow subtidal.
- Found in crevices, spaces under boulders, or buried in sand between rocks.

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0800 80 99 66



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- Width of shell up to 8 cm.
- Green, sometimes tinted orange.
- 3 blunt spines between eyes.
- 5 spines behind each eye.
- No swimming paddles.

What looks similar to it?

Three common New Zealand native crabs of similar size occur in similar habitats.

BUT all three native species are distinguishable from the European shore crab by colour or physical characters.

If you think you have seen this crab

- Note the location and if possible collect a sample and freeze it in a plastic bag.
- Contact Biosecurity New Zealand on 0800 80 99 66.

Ovalipes catharus Common swimming crab



NZ NATIVE

- Width of shell up to 15 cm.
- Pale pinkish-brown colour.
- Pointed spines between eyes.
- 5 spines behind each eye.
- Rear leg pair for swimming (paddles).

Hemigrapsus sexdentatus Common or Purple rock crab



NZ NATIVE

- Width of shell up to 6 cm.
- Purple or grey/red colour.
- No spines between eyes.
- 3 spines behind each eye.
- No swimming paddles.

Leptograpsus variegatus Large shore crab



NZ NATIVE

- Width of shell up to 6.5 cm.
- Purple-brown colour.
- No spines between eyes.
- Lines angled in from notched edges of shell.
- No swimming paddles.

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