



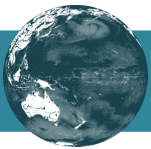
# Chinese Mitten Crab

*Eriocheir sinensis* H. Milne Edwards, 1853

## KEY FEATURES



- Medium-sized crab with a square carapace, longer than wide, typically 5–7 cm wide, carapace markedly convex and uneven
- Males produce a prominent mitten-like covering on the claws, with hairs both on inner and outer surfaces, or only on the outer surface (always naked and smooth in other *Eriocheir* species)
- Catadromous, with larvae most often developing in saline water above 15 but much of their life is spent in freshwater up rivers, leading to a wide salinity tolerance
- Adults can survive in temperatures from 4°C to 32°C but successful development of larvae only occurs above 12°C

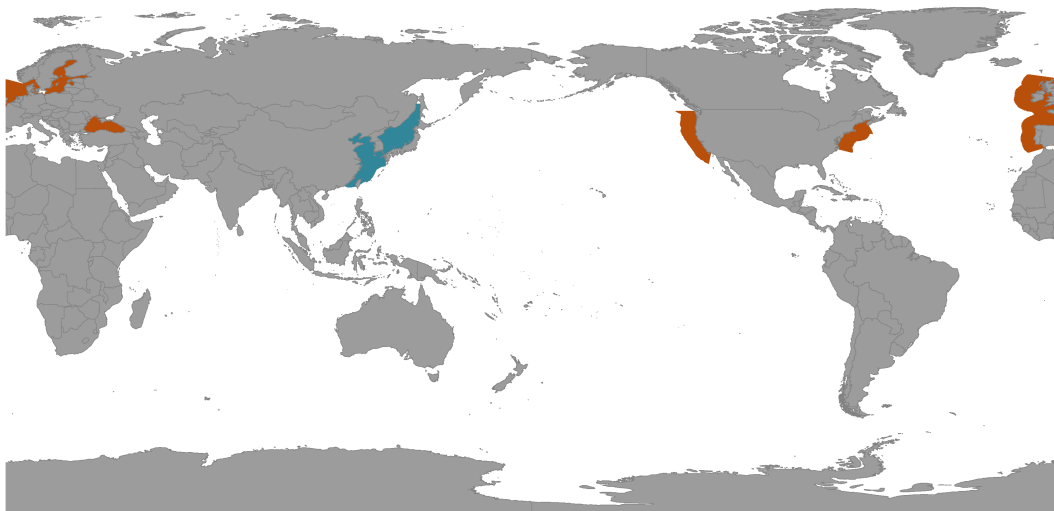


## PATHWAY

✓ ballast water

✓ biofouling

- Native
- Cryptogenic
- Non-indigenous





# Chinese Mitten Crab

*Eriocheir sinensis* H. Milne Edwards, 1853

## IMPACTS



**Environmental impacts**

Impacts freshwater and estuarine ecosystems. Has an opportunistic diet that includes algae, detritus, and a range of invertebrates. Populations may reach high densities upon introduction and their burrows in intertidal areas of streams have caused major erosion



**Human health impacts**

Intermittent host to the oriental lung fluke *Paragonimus westermani*, which causes shortness of breath, a chronic cough, and chest pain. Transferred to humans when consuming raw or insufficiently cooked mitten crabs



**Social & cultural impacts**

Adults have become a major nuisance to anglers as they take a variety of bait and destroy fishing equipment



**Economic impacts**

Cost of impact in German waters, between 1912 and 2006, has been estimated at EUR 80 million. Crabs feed on fish trapped in aquaculture ponds, they block water intakes in irrigation schemes, and they steal bait and damage fishing gear, impacting both commercial and recreational fishing

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- Larval duration 43 to 90 days, surviving successfully in a vessel ballast tanks; adult crabs have been found in the sea chest of a vessel that travelled from China to Germany
- Could be confused with other crab species of genus *Eriocheir*

## DISTRIBUTION

**Native range** Temperate and tropical waters between East Russia, to South China, including Japan and Taiwan

**Non-indigenous range** Mediterranean Sea, Baltic Sea, North, Northeast and West Atlantic, California

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

**Images** Top: from [Tang et al. \(2020\)](#), bottom : Christian Fischer [\(CC BY-SA 3.0\)](#)

**References** [Hewitt et al. 2011](#), [Tang et al. \(2020\)](#), [Rudnick et al. \(2000\)](#)