

Carcinus maenas

Green Crab,
European Shore Crab

Invasive to Maine

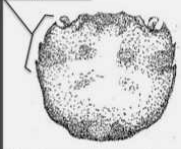

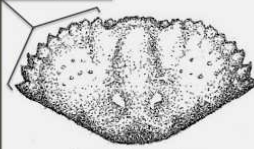
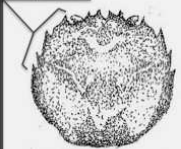
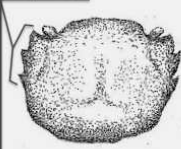
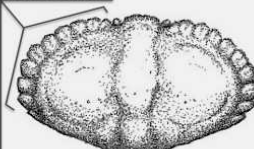
Coastal
Rocky Intertidal

Carapace (Shell)



Vital Signs User *cjt*, Biddeford High School

Look for a carapace (shell) that is up to 10 cm wide and has FIVE spines on the outside of each eye. The shell is shaped like a pentagon (5 sides). Hint: Green has five letters and the green crab has five spines.

INVASIVE SPECIES (LESS THAN SIX SPINES)		NATIVE SPECIES (MORE THAN SIX SPINES)
3 spines  Hemigrapsus sanguineus	5 spines  Carcinus maenas	8-10 spines  Cancer irroratus
4 spines  Eriocheir sinensis	3 spines  Hemigrapsus penicillatus	8-10 spines  Cancer borealis

Additional



Vital Signs user *Purple hippos I*

The green crab can be many different colors. Only 5% of adults are green. It is important to look at the shape of the shell, not the color, when identifying this species.

Full View



Julia Beatty, Yarmouth High School

Look for an aggressive crab with a pentagon-shaped shell. They can be green, brown, or red.

Legs and Claws



Vital Signs User *cjt*, Biddeford High School

Look for claws that are thin and have sharp tips. Watch out, they are fast!

Similar Species

All other invasive crabs in Maine have square-shaped shells. The adult native species in Maine are larger than the invasives and have more than 6 spines on the outside of each eye. If you find a crab with fewer than 6 spines you have found a non-native species!

Did You Know?

The green crab is quicker than most crabs. It is also better at opening the shells of mussels and clams. One adult green crab can eat up to 40 clams a day and can even eat other crabs as large as itself.