

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!



PACIFIC SALMON
FOUNDATION



There are many types of crabs that are green in colour,
but only the **European Green Crab** has 5 spines.

BC's diverse and productive salt marshes and estuaries now face a potentially destructive invader. The European Green Crab (*Carcinus maenas*) is considered one of the world's worst invasive species. It can alter shoreline ecosystems and negatively impact economically and culturally important species and habitats including eelgrass beds that provide food and cover for juvenile salmon.

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How to Identify European Green Crabs:

- ▶ 5 spines (or marginal teeth) to the outside of each eye
- ▶ Up to 10 cm across the carapace (or back shell)
- ▶ Wider at front than back of the carapace
- ▶ Although often referred to as "green crab," colour is not its distinguishing feature. The actual colour can vary from dark mottled green to orange.

Biology and preferred habitats

European Green Crabs prefer sheltered areas such as lagoons, braided estuarine channels, and bays with saltmarsh or eelgrass vegetation. The preferred substrate is mud/sand however there are instances in BC where the Green Crabs have been found on gravel beaches. Preferred prey is bivalves, small crabs, and polychaete worms. Green Crabs can negatively affect eelgrass beds in search of prey items.

Not to be confused with our native crabs:



Kelp Crab

Hairy Helmet Crab

Hairy Shore Crab



DFO Pacific Region AIS Program is currently partnering with the Pacific Salmon Foundation to provide up-to-date maps, links to education and outreach materials and background on the DFO Salish Sea Early Detection Monitoring Network.

The Pacific Salmon Foundation has a keen interest in the European Green Crabs as this invasive species has the potential to adversely impact eelgrass beds. Eelgrass beds are critical habitat for rearing salmonids.

To see the most current confirmed sightings map and for more information on the DFO European Green Crab Monitoring Network go to: www.sogdatacentre.ca/biota/aquatic-invasive-species

For additional information regarding the invasive European Green Crab and other marine Aquatic Invasive Species visit the DFO website www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/ais-eae/index-eng.html

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

REPORT – If you think you have found a European Green Crab, please email a photo, date of observation and the location to: DFO.AISPacific-EAEPacific.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Help stop the spread of invasive species

Please ensure you are not transporting the European Green Crab from one area to another by remembering to practice:



- plants, animals and mud from your boat and gear
- all water from your boat and gear onto land
- all parts of your boat and gear completely

www.CleanDrainDry.ca



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