

*Orconectes rusticus*  
**Rusty Crayfish**

Cambaridae, the freshwater  
crayfish family



**Diagnostic Characteristics**

- Dark brown body with rusty spots on sides of carapace
- Claws are grayish-green to reddish-brown with black bands on tips
- When claws are closed there is an oval gap in the middle
- Claws are smooth

**Background**

- Native to Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, and Michigan; introduced into new areas as discarded live bait
- Competes with and displaces native crayfish
- Can thrive in very high densities
- Prey on threatened bivalves
- Introduction leads to declines in aquatic vegetation
- Require more food compared to similar species due to its high metabolism

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