

Procambarus echinatus

No Common Name

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DESCRIPTION

Taxonomy and Basic Description

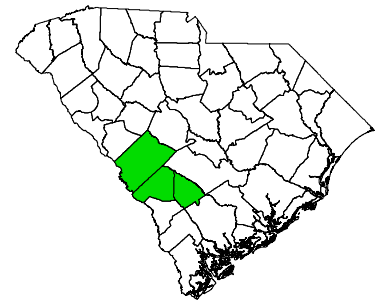
This is a large species. The holotypic male measured 64 cm in carapace length, which is roughly equal to 128 mm (5.1 inches) in total length. The carapace of *Procambarus echinatus* is olive-green dorsally, fading ventrally to creamy white with ridges edged in black. The abdomen is greenish with a bright blue caudal section bearing red and reddish-purple markings. The chelae are reddish black with white tubercles. There are well-developed spines on the carapace and chelae. This species exhibits large amounts of variation between individuals in the number of spines and the size ratios of various body parts (Hobbs 1956b).

Status

NatureServe (2004) identifies the rank of *P. echinatus* as vulnerable (S3) in South Carolina.

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND SIZE

P. echinatus is endemic to South Carolina and known only from the headwaters of the Edisto and the Salkahatchie/Combahee River drainages. It has been recorded in Aiken, Bamberg and Barnwell counties (Eversole 1995). In an extensive survey during 1988 and 1989, Eversole (1995) found that the species had a restricted distribution but was abundant at some sites.



HABITAT AND NATURAL COMMUNITY REQUIREMENTS

P. echinatus is known to inhabit good quality, fast-flowing dark water streams, usually with sandy substrates. It is often found in grass beds dominated by *Sparganium* and *Sarurus* or from submerged roots along stream banks (Eversole 1995).

CHALLENGES

The restricted distribution of *P. echinatus* and its apparent dependence on good water quality streams warrant considerable protection both for the species and its habitat. Current surveys indicate that this species has a very limited distribution. Therefore, updated surveys are necessary to better determine its status. Additionally, the rarity of *P. echinatus* indicates that its status should be reviewed in South Carolina.

CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

There are no significant conservation accomplishments for *P. echinatus* at this time.

CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct research to determine the range, population densities and habitat associations for *P. echinatus*.
- Based on surveys, investigate the need to assign special concern status for *P. echinatus* in South Carolina.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Collection of data that better describes the range, population densities and habitat associations for *P. echinatus* may be considered a measure of success.