

Waccamaw Crayfish

Procambarus braswelli

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DESCRIPTION

Taxonomy and Basic Description

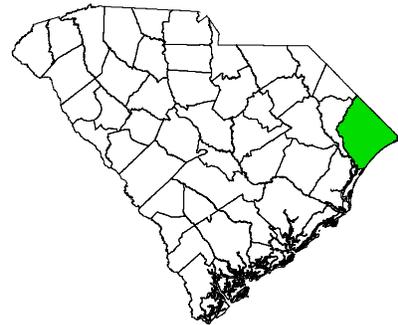
The Waccamaw Crayfish is cylindrical in shape with a tan, brown, or gray strongly mottled pattern. Its chelae have a row of serrate tubercles (NCWRC 2005). It is very similar to the Cedar Creek Crayfish (*Procambarus chacei*) and is possibly a junior synonym of that species (W. Poly, pers. obs.).

Status

The Waccamaw Crayfish is listed as a species of special concern in North Carolina. It has a South Carolina heritage trust status state ranking of imperiled to vulnerable (S2/S3) and a global ranking of imperiled to vulnerable (G2/G3). NatureServe (2011) does not identify a ranking for this species in South Carolina; more survey work in the Waccamaw basin is needed before it can be accurately ranked. The species was considered to be vulnerable by Taylor et al. (2007).

POPULATION SIZE AND DISTRIBUTION

This species has only been confirmed at three sites in Horry County, South Carolina. An additional specimen from Marion County was tentatively identified as the Waccamaw Crayfish. The species' primary range is in the Waccamaw River Basin in North Carolina, although it has also been found in the Lumber-Little Pee Dee River Basin, also in North Carolina (J. Cooper, NC State Museum of Natural Sciences, pers. comm.).



HABITAT AND NATURAL COMMUNITY REQUIREMENTS

The Waccamaw Crayfish tends to inhabit clear, sand-bottomed streams flowing through swampy areas (NCWRC 2005).

CHALLENGES

The Waccamaw Crayfish is located in the portion of South Carolina for which we have the least amount of information on crayfish; therefore, it may be more widespread than we currently

believe because of incomplete survey work. However, because the distribution of the Waccamaw Crayfish appears restricted to the Waccamaw and Lumber-Little Pee Dee River Basins, it is a species worthy of protection even if we do discover that it occurs in additional locations within these basins.

CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

There are no significant conservation accomplishments specifically for the Waccamaw Crayfish at this time. (However, refer to the Cedar Creek Crayfish, *Procambarus chacei*, species account for additional information).

CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct research to determine the range, population densities, and habitat associations for the Waccamaw Crayfish.
- Determine the taxonomic status of this species relative to the Cedar Creek Crayfish, *Procambarus chacei*.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The collection of data that better describes the range, population densities, and habitat associations for the Waccamaw Crayfish may be considered a measure of success.

LITERATURE CITED

NatureServe. 2011. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>.

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC). The Crayfishes of North Carolina. Accessed March 2005. http://www.ncwildlife.org/pg07_wildlifeSpeciesCon/nccrayfishes/nc_crayfishes.html.

Taylor, C.A., G.A. Schuster, J.E. Cooper, R.J. DiStefano, A.G. Eversole, P. Hamr, H.H. Hobbs III, H.W. Robison, C.E. Skelton, and R.F. Thoma 2007. Reassessment of the Conservation Status of Crayfishes of the United States and Canada after 10+ Years of Increased Awareness. *Fisheries*. 32(8):372–389.