

Ringed crayfish - *Orconectes neglectus*

Abundance: Unknown

Status: NSSU

NatureServe: G5 SNR

Population Status: Unknown

Limiting Factor: Unknown

Comment: None

Introduction

The ringed crayfish (*Orconectes neglectus*) is olive or red in color with characteristic black or brown rings near the end of their pincers (Pflieger 1996). The subspecies *O. n. neglectus* is olive in color with a black stripe down the lateral edge of the abdomen. The claws of this subspecies have orange tips with black rings. Adult crayfish are 3 to 9.7 cm (1.2 to 3.8 inches) in length. The ringed crayfish is native to the central United States from Nebraska to Oklahoma and Missouri to Wyoming (NatureServe 2009). Within the native range, the crayfish is considered imperiled (Colorado and Kansas) to apparently secure (Arkansas). The ringed crayfish was introduced in Oregon and New York. The ringed crayfish makes burrows under rocks in streams (Pflieger 1996). This species tends to remain in burrows during the day, but comes out at night to feed on algae and coarse benthic organic matter (Pflieger 1996; Evans-White et al. 2001). Breeding can occur from late fall to spring and eggs are typically laid in late spring to early summer (Pflieger 1996). Individuals live 2.5 years on average but can live up to 5 years. In Wyoming, a subspecies of the ringed crayfish (*Orconectes neglectus neglectus*) was collected from Crystal Lake Reservoir on the headwaters of Crow Creek in the South Platte River drainage near Cheyenne (Hubert 1988) in its native range (Williams 1954).

Habitat

The ringed crayfish lives in small to large permanent streams that have clear water and rocky substrate. The crayfish may be found in both riffle and pool habitats that are free of fine sediments.

Problems

h None.

Conservation Actions

h None.

Monitoring/Research

None.

Recent Developments

In 2009, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department personnel completed new statewide collections of crayfish to expand upon and update the survey by Hubert (1988). Hubert (2010) found the ringed crayfish in Crystal and Granite Reservoirs in the South Platte River drainages.

References

- Hubert, W. 1988. Survey of Wyoming crayfishes. *The Great Basin Naturalist* 48:370-372.
- Pflieger, W.L. 1996. *The Crayfishes of Missouri*. Missouri Department of Conservation, Jefferson City, Missouri.
- NatureServe. 2009. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application] Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: January 14, 2010).
- Williams, A. B. 1954. An explanation for the distribution of a North American crayfish. *Ecology* 35:573-575.
- Evans-White, M., W. K. Dodds, L. J. Gray, and K. M. Fritz. 2001. A comparison of the trophic ecology of the crayfishes (*Orconectes nais* (Faxon) and *Orconectes neglectus* (Faxon)) and the central stoneroller minnow (*Campostoma anomalum* (Rafinesque)): omnivory in a tallgrass prairie stream. *Hydrobiologia* 462:131-144.
- Hubert, W. A. 2010. Survey of Wyoming crayfishes: 2007-2009. Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Cheyenne.

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SOURCE: Digital maps of ranges for Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need: April 2010. Wyoming Game and Fish Department. A range map is unavailable for the taxa because distribution and ecology are poorly known in Wyoming.