

Red swamp crayfish

Prohibited aquatic animal

Look. Report. Protect. 13 25 23



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia commons

- It is illegal to import, keep, breed or sell red swamp crayfish in Queensland.
- Will out-compete native crayfish species if released into the Australian environment.
- Can carry and spread the crayfish plague disease (*Aphanomyces astaci*), also prohibited matter.
- Can decimate native species populations, impacting crayfish and yabby fishing industries.
- Early detection and reporting helps protect Queensland's natural environment.

Description

Red swamp crayfish (*Procambarus clarkii*) is an aquatic species of cambarid freshwater crayfish, native to northern Mexico and southeastern United States. It can range in length from 5–12 cm and can weigh up to 50 grams. They are typically dark red in the wild, although will appear light red if aquarium kept. Their claws and head are elongated, and small spines may be present on the sides of its carapace below the head. Rows of bright red bumps on the front and side of the first leg are characteristic to the species. Red swamp crayfish can be found in warm fresh-water rivers and creeks.

Biosecurity risk

Red swamp crayfish are prohibited aquatic animals under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. **In Queensland it is illegal to sell red swamp crayfish on Gumtree, Ebay, Facebook or any marketplace.** Prohibited species must be reported immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

Red swamp crayfish can out-compete our native species for food and habitat. They have the potential to severely impact native crayfish through competition and spread of the crayfish plague. Red swamp crayfish can also have impacts on the fishing industry through the reduction of native species crayfish and yabby populations.

What should I do?

If you think you have seen a red swamp crayfish, report it immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or scan the QR code to access our reporting web page. Until an authorised officer contacts you, please take reasonable and practical steps to prevent red swamp crayfish from escaping.

More information

Contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or visit biosecurity.qld.gov.au.

