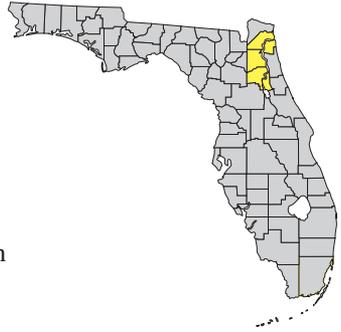


BLACK CREEK CRAYFISH

Procambarus pictus

Order:	Decapoda
Family:	Cambaridae
FNAI Ranks:	G2/S2
U.S. Status:	None
FL Status:	Species of Special Concern



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Description: A medium-sized (to 3 in. = 75 mm) crayfish with a distinctive pattern of yellowish to white spots and stripes on a dark brown to black carapace, and a rust-colored abdomen with dark cross-bands. The color pattern quickly fades in preserved specimens. The following structural features may help to identify such specimens: rostrum (forward projection of shell in front of eyes) with lateral spines, areola (rear portion of carapace) broad with 7 - 10 punctations in narrowest part, palm of chela (claw) never bearded but with a row of about 10 small bumps, and ridges behind eyes terminating forward in sharp spines.

Similar Species: Its unique color pattern readily distinguishes this species from all other Florida crayfishes, including the co-occurring *Procambarus fallax*, *P. paeninsulanus*, and *P. talpoides*. Preserved specimens are more difficult to distinguish from other crayfishes and require close examination of structural features by an expert.

Habitat: Small, relatively swift, sand-bottomed, tannic-stained streams, often emanating from sandhills and flowing through or from swampy

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terrain. Crayfish hide during the day in submerged vegetation, roots, and detritus, but can often be seen crawling along the stream bottom at night.

Seasonal Occurrence: The species occupies the same streams year-round but may be somewhat less active when water temperatures are lower during winter. Reproductive males have been observed January - September, and females with eggs June - September. Young begin hatching in July and mature by the following spring.

Florida Distribution: Restricted to a few small stream systems in Clay, Duval, and Putnam counties in the northeastern part of the state. Most known localities are within the Black and Rice creek drainages.

Range-wide Distribution: Same as Florida distribution.

Conservation Status: Populations inhabit headwater streams in the Black Creek drainage on both the Camp Blanding Training Site (Florida Department of Military Affairs) and Jennings State Forest, but many other localities occur on private lands that are threatened by the effects of expanding urbanization, mining, and silviculture.

Protection and Management: *P. pictus* is susceptible to pollution, changes in water temperature, siltation, and other changes in water quality. Protection of inhabited headwater and secondary streams, especially within the Black and Rice creek drainages, is therefore critical to the species' survival.

Selected References: Brody 1990, Deyrup and Franz (eds.) 1994, Franz and Franz 1979, Hobbs 1942.