National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Parks of New York Harbor Education Center

Reference Guide for Crabs and Coastal Organisms

INVASIVE

Asian Shore Crab
Hemigrapsus sanguineus

Striped legs. Males have fleshy bulb-like structure at base of moveable finger of claw.

INVASIVE

Chinese Mitten Crab
Eriocheir sinensis

Hairy front claws with white tips.
If you see this, report to Ranger immediately!

INVASIVE

Green Crab
Carcinus maenas

Black/green body with hairy back legs. Has five marginal teeth on each side of eyes.

Lady (or Calico) Crab
Ovalipes occelatus

Pink shell is covered with orange/brown spots and has paddle-like legs on back.

Mud Crab
Panopeus herbstii

Color of body may vary from green-blue, black, or olive-brown. Has two black claws with white tips.

Rock Crab
Cancer irroratus

Red/purple fan-shaped shell. Has nine smooth edged teeth to the sides of each eye, and three small teeth between eyes.

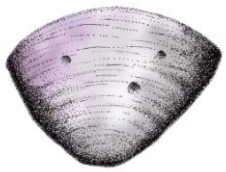
(Long Nose) Spider Crab
Libinia dubia

Brown, with long legs and with six spikes down the median line of the carapace. [1]

[1] Similar to the Portly Spider Crab (*Libinia emarginata*) which has nine spikes, not six, down the carapace.

Illustrations by: AGillustration.com and Ranger Meghan Heuser Gateway NRA

Amethyst Gemclam
Gemma gemma



Shell may be glossy smooth or have concentric rings. Very small, only about 1/8" long.

Amphipod
Gammarus sp.

Mostly white; <2" with two antennae. Legs vary in size. Body is laterally compressed (flattened side to side).

Atlantic Jackknife ("Razor Clam")
Ensis directus

Long, smooth hard shell; one rounded end.[2]

Atlantic Ribbed Mussel
Geukensia demissa

Beige/black ribbed shell with radial markings.

Blue Mussel
Mytilus edulis

Black/Blue and smooth shell with radial markings.

Common Periwinkle
Littorina littorea

Sharply pointed, with dark spiral bands. Can grow to 1 ½" long.

Eastern Mud Whelk ("Mudsnail")
Nassarius obsoleta

Black spiral shell, white tip (apex). Oval opening (aperture).

Long-clawed Hermit Crab
Pagurus longicarpus

Long narrow claws. One claw larger than other. Exoskeleton covers half the body.

Polychaete Worm

Species have hair-like structures (setae) that branch out from a segmented body.[3]

Northern Quahog
Mercenaria mercenaria

Hard, heavy shell with rings on the exterior. Inside usually has a bright purple edge.

Slippersnail
Crepidula fornicata

Purple/White, resembles a slipper. May be found in stacks.

Northern Rock Barnacle
Semibalanus balanoides

Round, with opening on top. Forms dense aggregations attached to living/non-living things.

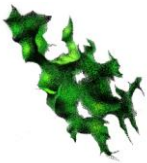
Bladderwrack
Fucus vesiculosus

Yellow/deep green; bulbs at the ends.

Irish Moss
Chondrus crispus

Purplish/red; near rocks; 7-10" tall.

Sea Lettuce
Ulva rigida



Green/dark green; resembles lettuce; floats in water.

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[2] There is an actual species called a "Razor Clam", but the term Razor Clam designates clams in the family, *Solenidae*.
[3] There are many different species of polychate worms, and body forms differ among them.