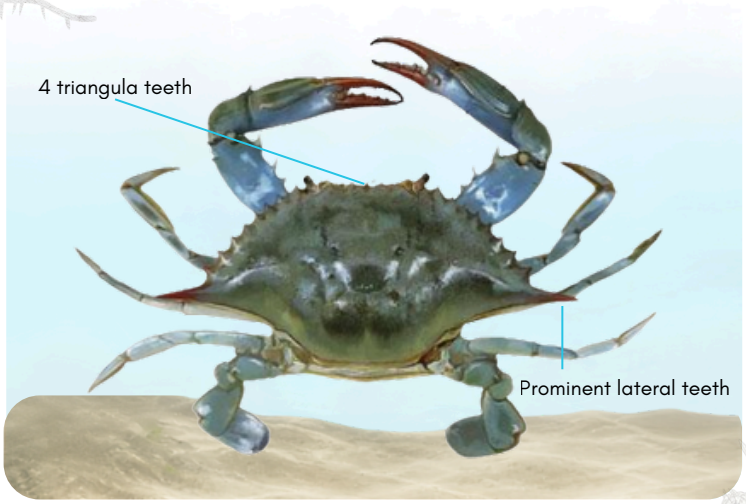
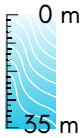
ALIEN-OCCICAT

Blue crab - *Callinectes sapidus*





Omnivorous

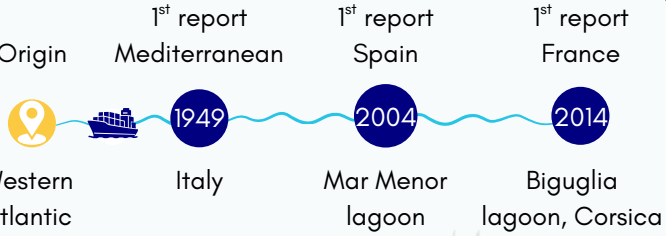
20 cm

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

Carapace : Smooth and oval with blue-green **lateral spines**

Claws : Asymmetrical (one large claw for crushing and one small claw for grasping), **bright blue** in males, **reddish-orange** in females

ITS HISTORY

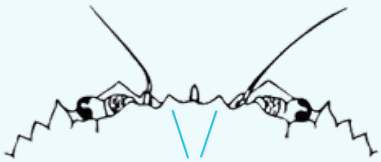


Introduction via ships' ballast water

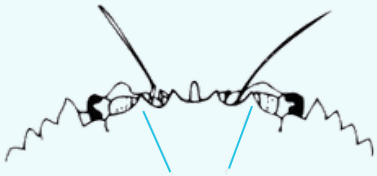
SIMILAR SPECIES

Blue swimming crab *Portunus segnis*

Mediterranean non-indigenous species



2 triangular teeth. *Portunus segnis*



4 triangular teeth. *Callinectes sapidus*

ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

The American blue crab is **aggressive** toward other species and **competes** with native crabs for food and space. Economically, this species, which is commercially **harvested** in its native range, is beginning to be fished in the Mediterranean, particularly in Spain. However, its expansion is causing **economic losses** for fishermen as it damages fishing gear and preys on commercial species.

FUN FACTS

- Capable of laying **2 million eggs** per year
- Can travel **15 km** in a single day
- High culinary interest

Report your observation

MINKA

BioObs

Sources (details page "Credits"): Goulletquer (2016); Mancinelli et al. (2017); Nehring et al. (2011); Prado et al. (2025); Prager et al. (1990)

Illustrations: Juan VARELA (IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation, MedMIS, Date 22/05/26); Image : https://minka-sdg.org/

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