

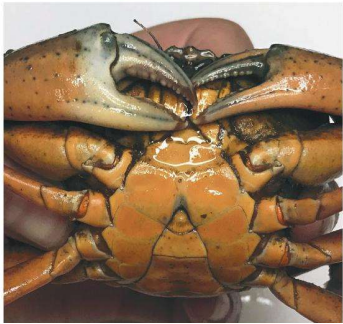


INVASIVE EUROPEAN GREEN CRAB IDENTIFICATION GUIDE



European green crab, or EGC hereafter, is an effective invasive species that established on Lummi Reservation tidelands in 2018. The species has had devastating impacts on East Coast ecosystems, ravaging through critical eelgrass bed habitats and successfully outcompeting other native species.

EGC are such successful invaders because of their high reproduction rate, resiliency, and competition with other species. The species has taken a strong hold within Lummi Sea Pond, but Lummi Natural Resources (LNR) department has proactively responded with partners to slow the invasion and prevent it from spreading. EGC show extensive coloration variability among individuals and can be easily misidentified with similar native crab species.



EGC can appear as a variety of different colors, from dark orange and yellow to green and teal. Their top side is typically dark green with yellow, orange, or green spots, but can appear a much lighter or darker shade depending on their age.

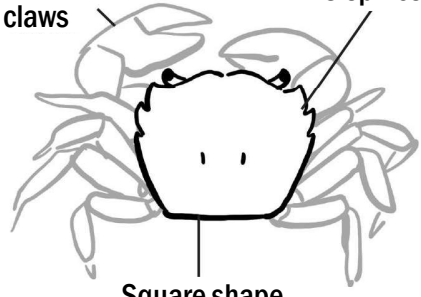
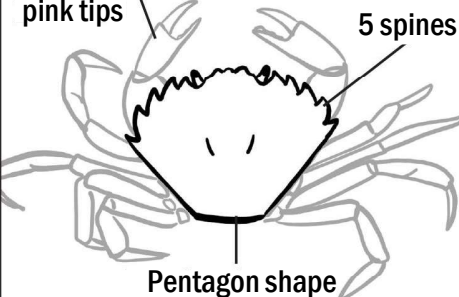
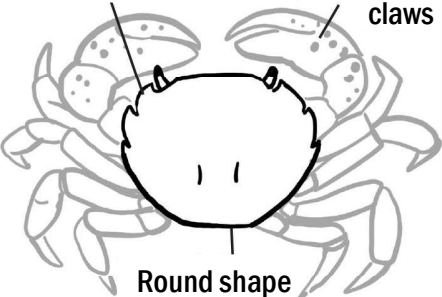
See how other native crab species that are commonly misidentified as EGC compare:

Adult EGC



Hairy helmet crabs (right) are often mistaken for EGC (left) because of their similar shape, color, habitat, and number of spines. Hairy helmet crabs are mostly yellow and brown, covered in small hair, and have 6 spines on either side of their carapace.

Juvenile EGC

Hairy shore crab	European green crab	Purple shore crab
<p>Large white claws</p> <p>3 spines</p>  <p>Square shape</p>	<p>Thin blue/green claws white or pink tips</p> <p>5 spines</p>  <p>Pentagon shape</p>	<p>3 spines</p> <p>Large spotted claws</p>  <p>Round shape</p>



Why are EGC so bad?

EGC can have detrimental impacts on native species and local fisheries. They eat softshell clam, compete with juvenile Dungeness crabs, and uproot seagrass beds, which are critical habitat for many species, including juvenile salmon.

Can you eat them?

They are edible and harvested on the east coast of the U.S., but they are currently listed as a prohibited species – meaning that it's illegal to possess, sell, or transport them in Washington.

What to do if you think you've found an EGC?



Take a picture of the crab and send it to Bobbie Buzzell at BobbieB@lummi-nsn.gov or 564-213-6666. Please leave it where you found it.

For more information about EGC or Lummi Natural Resources, scan this QR code.