



crayfish

Procambarus gracilis

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Malacostraca
Order: Decapoda
Family:

FEATURES

Procambarus gracilis has large claws with many bumps. The adult has a bright red thorax and abdomen and is reddish-brown elsewhere. Young are reddish-brown overall.

BEHAVIORS

Procambarus gracilis digs burrows in low, poorly drained land which is covered with grasses or other prairie plants. Since so little prairie remains in the state today, this crayfish is most often found near ditches. *Procambarus gracilis* spends most of the year underground in a burrow that may reach over six feet deep. This burrow often is below the water table and is water-filled. On moist nights or during periods of heavy rainfall, *Procambarus gracilis* may be found walking about on the soil's surface. This crayfish may live for three or four years. Females with young attached have been found in Illinois in March, April and October.

HABITATS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bottomland forests | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rivers & streams |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lakes, ponds & reservoirs | <input type="checkbox"/> swamps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lake Michigan | <input type="checkbox"/> temp water supplies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> marshes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> wet prairies & fens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> peatlands | |

ILLINOIS STATUS

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> common | <input type="checkbox"/> endangered | <input type="checkbox"/> threatened |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> native | <input type="checkbox"/> exotic | |

ILLINOIS RANGE

northern 2/3

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999. *Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume I: Aquatic Habitats* CD-ROM.