

Missouri Crayfish Finders: Crayfish Photo Guide



Background

Missouri is home to over 40 species of crayfish, including 26 Species of Conservation Concern. One of the biggest threats to native crayfish in Missouri is the spread of invasive crayfish.

The Missouri Crayfish Finders Project assists the Missouri Department of Conservation in:

- Tracking populations of invasive crayfish throughout the state
- Updating the known distribution of Missouri's diverse crayfish communities

Clear photos allow scientists to accurately identify crayfish species and ensure your observation becomes a valuable scientific record. This guide will show you how to take the photos needed for identification.

Scan the QR code here or visit the link below to upload your photos and contribute to the Missouri Crayfish Finders iNaturalist Project.

Project Link: <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/missouri-crayfish-finders>



Before you Begin

- A valid Missouri fishing permit is required to collect crayfish.
- Gently handle crayfish and keep them moist.
- Always return crayfish to where you found them.

Required Photos

1. Dorsal View (Top View)

Dorsal view showing overall body shape and coloration along with key features including the rostrum and areola.

Tips:

- Take photo from directly above
- Include the entire body



2. Ventral View (Bottom View)

Ventral view shows the underside of the crayfish including the base of the legs and the reproductive structures.

Tips:

- Capture full body from claws to tail fan



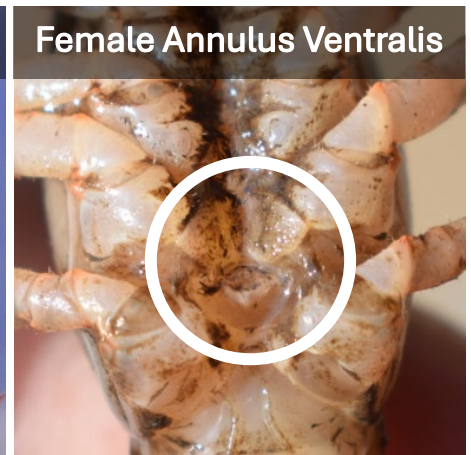
Helpful Extra Photos

Reproductive Structures

Close up of underside showing reproductive structures.

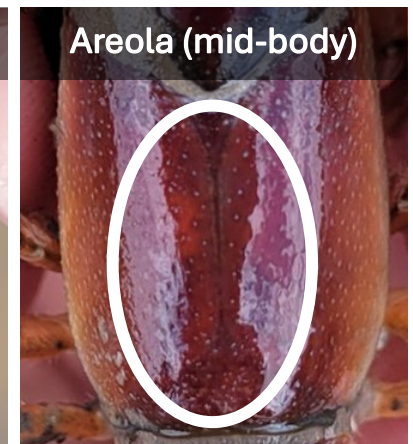
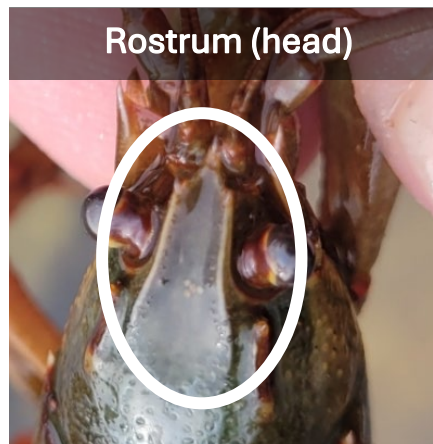
Tips:

- Focus on base of legs
- Side view of male gonopods are helpful



Rostrum and Areola

Close up of head (rostrum) and mid-body (areola).



Pincers (Claws)

Close up of claws showing shape and color.

Tips:

- Photograph both claws
- Include multiple angles



Tips for High-Quality Photos

- Use natural light
- Avoid shadows and glare
- Ensure images are in focus
- Take photos from multiple angles

Thank You for Being a Missouri Crayfish Finder!

Your photos play an important role in helping us track invasive crayfish and protect Missouri's native crayfish. Every photo you submit contributes valuable information that supports conservation across the state.

