

Swimming Crabs

Sand Crab (Blue Swimmer)

Portunus Pelagicus

Identifying Features

- Each side of the carapace has 9 sharp spines, the last long and projecting laterally
- The dorsal surface is colour variable – generally mottled blue in males and mottled brown in females
- The first pair of legs is much longer than the second and with prominent slender claws
- The tips of the posterior legs are broadly flattened (disc-shaped)
- The carapace is more broader than long
- The abdomen is short and tucked under the carapace



Size

Recorded to nearly 22cm in carapace width and over 1kg

Habitat

Coastal marine, occurs in bays, estuaries, and intertidal depths of about 60m. Prefers muddy or sandy bottoms but also found on rubble, seagrass and seaweed

Fishery

There are commercial and recreational controls on Sand Crabs. Crabs are caught using traps (mostly cylindrical), dillies and entangling devices, and as trawl by catch.

Females (known as jennies) may spawn several times per season and can produce up to two million eggs per batch. The taking of female sand crabs is prohibited in Queensland.

Sand Crabs are usually marketed cooked whole or as crab meat.