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## BRIEF NOTE

**PROCAMBARUS (SCAPULICAMBARUS) CLARKII (GIRARD, 1852):  
THE RED SWAMP CRAYFISH IN OHIO<sup>1</sup>**

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Populations of *Procambarus (Scapulicambarus) clarkii* have been found at 3 areas in Ohio (fig. 1). The crayfish is known to occur at 2 of the 4 State Fish Hatcheries. Specimens have also been collected at several sites around the western end of Sandusky Bay (fig. 2).

<sup>1</sup>Manuscript received 11 February 1983 and in revised form 18 July 1983 (#83-3).

In Erie County, specimens have been collected at: (1) Resthaven Wildlife Area outlet stream at Wahl Rd.; (2) the village of White's Landing.

In Sandusky County, specimens have been collected from: (3) Raccoon Creek at Riley Twp. Rd. #250; (4) a roadside ditch along St. Rt. #6 at the Ohio Turnpike (Interstate #80-90).

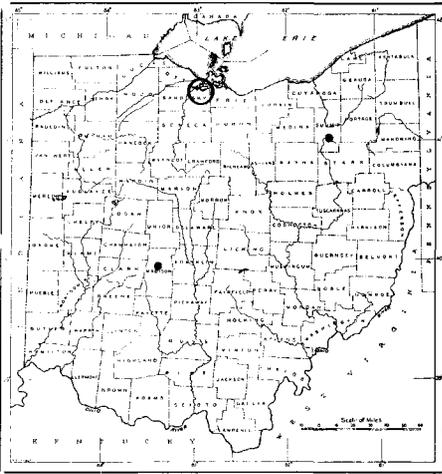


FIGURE 1. Areas in Ohio where *Procambarus* (*S.*) *clarkii* is known to occur.

In Ottawa County, specimens have been collected from: (5) roadside ditch at Jct. St. Rt. #53 and Bay Twp. Rd. #114; (6) ponds at Winous Points Shooting Club; (7) Sandusky Bay at east end of Portage Twp. Rd. #118; (8) lagoon at the south end of Portage Twp. Rd. #235; (9) roadside ditch at Jct. Bay Twp. Rd. #27 and County Rd. #12. This site is adjacent to the entrance to Little Portage Wildlife Area and is in the Portage River drainage. All others are in the Sandusky River drainage.

Dr. Roy Stein of Ohio State University and Dr. Jay V. Huner of Southern University, Louisiana, have both seen *P. (S.) clarkii* at the London State Fish Hatchery, Madison County (pers. comm.).

A single specimen has been received from Doug Henley of the Akron State Fish Hatchery, Summit County. Mr. Henley (pers. comm.) does not think the population is large due to the drainage routine used for the ponds at the hatchery. It is not known if the crayfish has dispersed from the hatchery. Written attempts to contact the other 2 hatcheries have been unsuccessful.

My collections of *P. (S.) clarkii* in northern Ohio show that the crayfish is

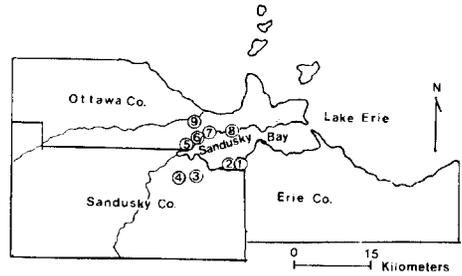


FIGURE 2. Sites where *Procambarus* (*S.*) *clarkii* has been collected in north central Ohio.

capable of occupying a variety of habitats. Raccoon Creek is a clear, flowing stream with some undercut banks and large rocks piled along the bank under the bridge. *P. (S.) clarkii* was collected from the rocks and from the undercut banks. At Winous Point Shooting Club, all specimens were seined from ponds. *P. (S.) clarkii* is a tertiary burrower (Huner and Barr 1980) and in those sites that had become dry, specimens were found in simple, vertical burrows.

How *P. (S.) clarkii* got into Ohio is unknown. It occurs naturally as far north and east as southern Illinois (Hobbs 1974). It is believed its presence in Ohio has resulted from introductions and not from extension of its range. This conclusion is supported by the disjunct distribution of the known Ohio populations. Tim Nagel, London State Fish Hatchery (pers. comm.) believes the crayfish was brought to the hatchery along with minnows purchased in Arkansas. Bait dealers wanting a crayfish whose reproductive cycle resulted in saleable size soft crayfish in spring may have introduced the animal (Homer Dillon, Parkman, Ohio, pers. comm.). It is also postulated that live fish haulers, looking for a paying load for their trip to Ohio, sold crayfish from southern states to Ohio bait dealers (Merwin Chambers, Fremont, Ohio, pers. comm.).

It is hoped that the distribution of *P. (S.) clarkii* and its effect on the flora and fauna of Ohio will be monitored closely since this crayfish has become a pest in

some places where it has been introduced (Huner and Barr 1980).

All specimens have been deposited at the Ohio State University Museum of Zoology except for a first form male which was sent to the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C., and a first form male and a female which I have retained.

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#### LITERATURE CITED

- Hobbs, H. H., Jr. 1974 A checklist of the North and Middle American crayfishes (Decapoda: Astacidae and Cambaridae). Smithsonian Contrib. Zool. No. 166, 161 p.
- Huner, Jay V. and J. E. Barr 1980 Red Swamp Crawfish: Biology and exploitation. Sea Grant Publ. No. LSU-T-80-001, 148 p.