

Chinese mitten crab (*Eriocheir sinensis*)

Synonyms:

- big sluiceway crab, Chinese freshwater edible crab, Chinese mittenhanded crab, Chinese mitten-handed crab, Chinese river crab, crabe chinois, mitten crab, river crab, Shanghai crab, villus crab
- *Eriocheir japonicas*, *E. leptognathus*, *E. rectus*

Consignments likely to come from: unknown

Use: may be used for human consumption

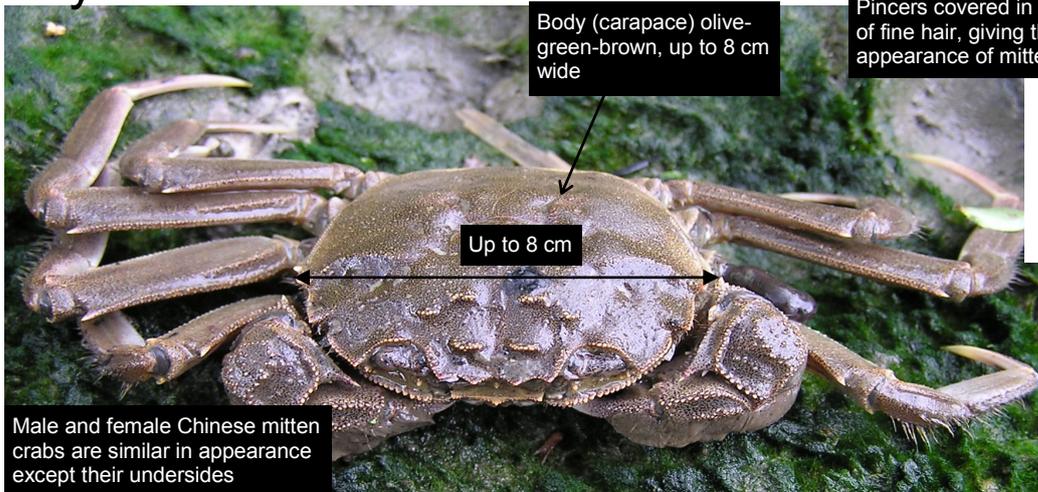
Identification difficulty: easy

Identification information:

- the only freshwater crab present in Britain
- body (carapace) olive-green-brown, up to 8cm wide
- pincers covered in a mat of fine hair resembling mittens
- legs long and hairy



Key ID Features

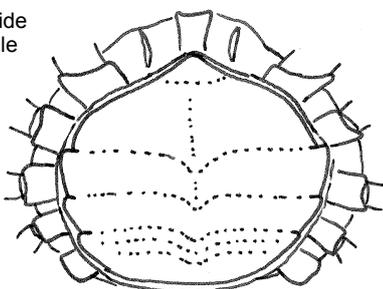


Pincers covered in a mat of fine hair, giving the appearance of mittens

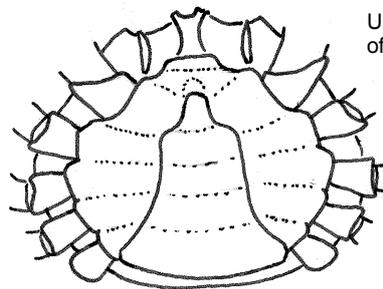


Legs long and hairy

Underside of female



Underside of male



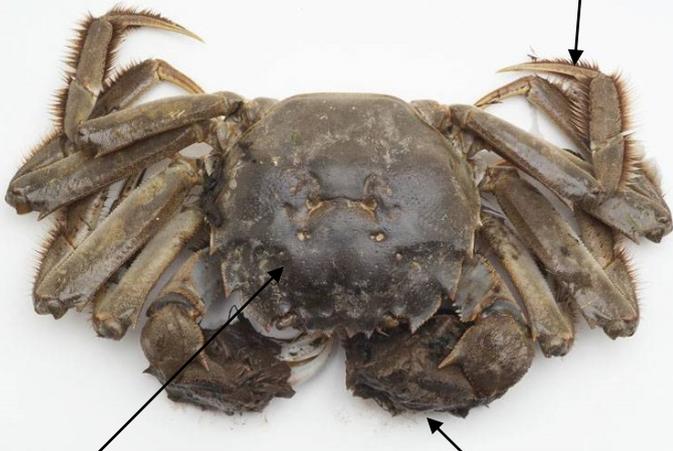
Similar species

Three other crab species are commonly imported to Britain but these are unlikely to be confused with Chinese mitten crab.

Eriocheir sinensis
(Chinese mitten crab)
for comparison

Body up to 8cm
across

Legs long
and hairy



Body (carapace) olive-
green-brown

Pincers covered in a mat
of fine hair, giving the
appearance of mittens

Metacarcinus magister
(Dungeness crab)

Body up to 25cm across,
usually under 20cm

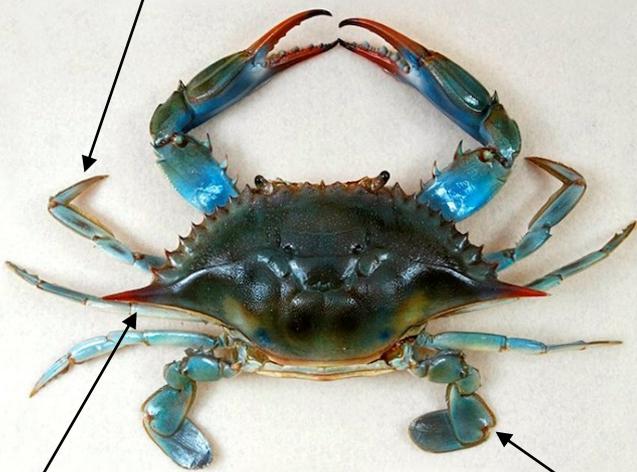


Body beige to light brown in
colour with blue edges

Callinectes sapidus
(Atlantic blue crab)

Legs blue, body greyish /
greenish brown

Body up to 27cm
across



Pair of long, pointed
spines at lateral edges
of body

Paddle shaped rear legs

Portunus pelagicus
(blue swimmer crab)

Vary in colour from dark
brown, blue and purple

Body up to 21cm
across



Paddle shaped rear legs