

Differences between marine and freshwater crabs

Crabs living in freshwater and marine environments have different life cycles, which helps them survive in the different environments. Their differences in clutch size lie in various factors, such as their habitats, biology, and reproductive strategies, said Assistant Professor Darren Yeo from the National University of Singapore.

MARINE CRABS



EGGS

Marine crabs produce very large numbers of small eggs, which hatch into tiny larvae that drift in the sea as plankton.



LARVAL STAGES

The crab goes through several larval stages before eventually metamorphosing into juvenile crabs. They are prone to predation during these stages.

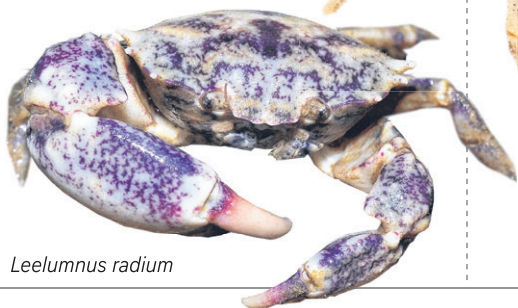
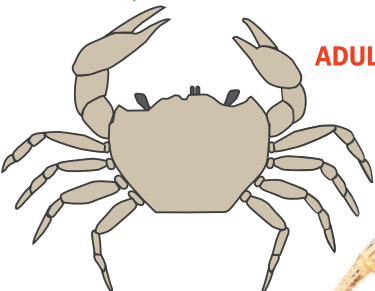


CRABLET

At this stage, the baby crab resembles the adult.



ADULT

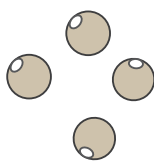


Leelumnus radium

FRESHWATER CRAB (*JOHORA SINGAPORENSIS*)

EGGS

Each clutch from a freshwater crab usually consists of a few hundred eggs, which are larger than eggs from a marine crab. For the family of freshwater crabs that *Johora singaporensis* belongs to, the eggs are generally 2–3mm in diameter and eggs are generally carried for one to two months before hatching.



CRABLETS

Females of freshwater species such as *Johora singaporensis* carry their eggs under the abdomen until they hatch directly into crablets that look like miniature versions of the adults. They remain in inland fresh waters since they do not get swept down to sea as drifting larvae.



Johora singaporensis

ADULT

Keeping its young close is one way to ensure that more crablets grow to reach maturity and are not eaten by predators.

