

Current Status

Main biological surveys of NSW & Victoria are completed

Minor specific surveys underway

Draft paper written

Due for publication early 2010

Project: 100040

The Swamp Yabby *Cherax* sp nov. a new species of freshwater crayfish from the Murray Drainage Basin, Australia.

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Abstract

The Swamp Yabby *Cherax* sp. nov. is described from the Murray Drainage Basin of New South Wales and Victoria. This species is generally restricted to the marginal or ephemeral areas below 350m a.s.l., spending the majority of its life within its muddy burrow system. It is widely distributed with high population densities yet rarely seen as it is a species that avoids permanent water and only occasionally is captured by fishermen during flood events when their burrow systems are flooded over. This species coexists in close proximity to *Cherax destructor* but displays heightened aggression to *C. destructor*. Additionally, further south and west *C. sp* is found in association with *Engaeus* species. This new species is easily distinguished from *C. destructor* by a broad rostrum, the broad shape of the propodus/chelae, the deep punctations on the lateral propodal edge and ventral propodal setation. Additionally, it can be distinguished from this and all other *Cherax* species by the marginal mesal basal spines on the dactylus.

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