



HAVE YOU SEEN THIS CRAYFISH?



The Spinycheek crayfish, a non-native species, has recently been found in Freshwater Lake within Cape Breton Highlands National Park. Native to some northeastern States, this is the first time it has been seen in Nova Scotia.

How Did it Get Here?

Since crayfish are often used for bait, it is possible that sport fishermen may have inadvertently introduced it. Another possibility is the release of aquarium pets. The introduction is believed to have occurred sometime after 2002.

The Problem

Even in relatively low numbers, crayfish can greatly affect aquatic plants, insects, mussels, snails and possibly fish. This is a concern since Freshwater Lake provides habitat for rare freshwater snails. Populations of crayfish can rapidly grow in absence of sufficient natural predators, potentially out-competing native fish species.

Resource Management

As a result, Freshwater Lake will be closed to fishing for the next few years to maximize natural predation. Other management options are being considered.

If you see crayfish in any other water bodies, please contact the warden office at (902) 285-2542.



Fresh Water Lake

In 2006, test trapping produced 44 crayfish, indicating that the species is reproducing at a significant rate.

