

# Common Crabs found in the rockpools around the Thanet coast

## A) Shore Crab (*Carcinus maenas*)

Certainly the most common crab found on our shore. Usually 'olive-green' in colour although this may be variable – particularly when young, and darker when old. Crabs shed their hard outside shell in order to grow.

## B) Velvet Swimming or Devil Crab (*Necora puber*)

Easily identified by the red eyes and flattened paddles on the back legs. The shell & legs sometimes have a blue tinge and the shell is covered in a fine pelt of small bristles. Be very careful – as this quarrelsome species will not hesitate to nip the unwary. Similar in size to the Shore Crab, but looks more athletic.

## C) Edible Crab (*Cancer pagurus*)

Readily identified by its red colour, "pie crust" shell and the black tips to its claws. This species can grow larger than the previous two crabs, although often found as young specimens on our shore. It is a powerful chunky animal - treat it with respect, as a nip can be a painful experience.

## D) Broad clawed Porcelain Crab (*Porcellana platycheles*)

Very small and delicate, hence the common name. Normally lives hiding under rocks relying on its superb camouflage to avoid being someone's dinner. This crab is only about the size of a thumbnail!

## E) Spider Crab (*Macropodia sp*)

Small and dainty crab equipped with long very spindly legs. Can cover itself with fragments of weed to aid camouflage, lives in weedy rock pools.

Arrows show important features to aid in recognition.

Images & text by Lester Hovenden, Coastal Warden

North East Kent



Marine Protected Area



The North East Kent Coast is one of the best sites in Europe for wintering birds, and marine life of the chalk caves, reef and sandy bays.

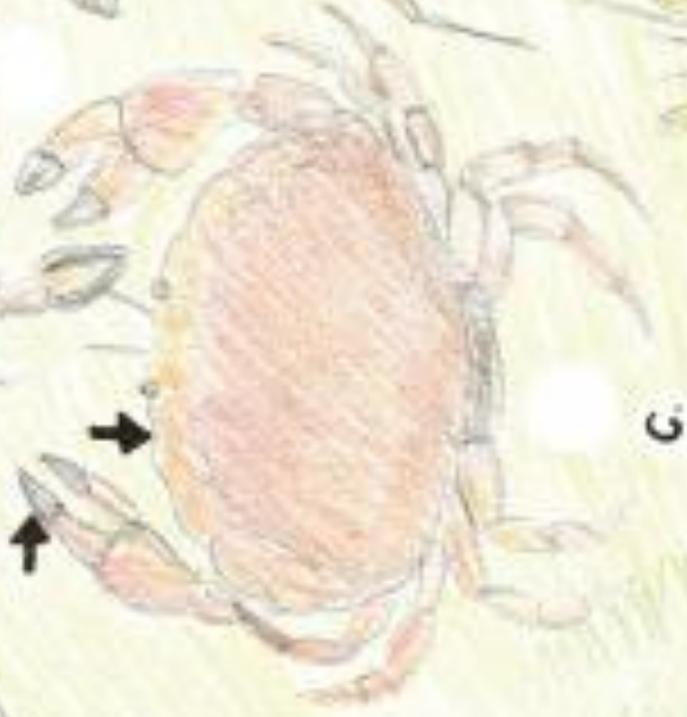
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