



BLUE CRAB

Callinectes sapidus

Description:

- ◇ olive to blue/green above
- ◇ claws bright blue underneath; females have red tipped claws
- ◇ shell twice as wide as it is long
- ◇ 9 marginal teeth; 9th is a long strong spine
- ◇ last pair of legs, called swimmerets, are paddle shaped

Size:

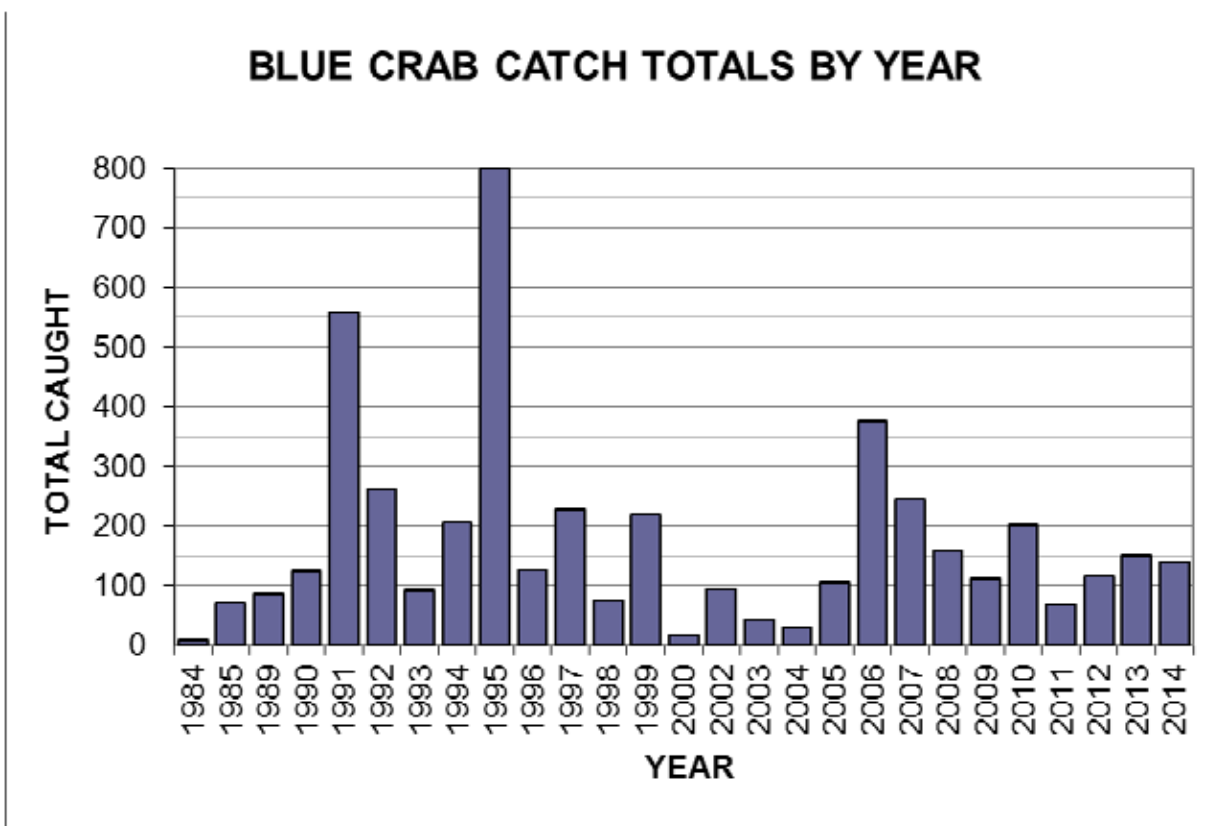
- ◇ up to 9 inches from tip to tip of longest spines

Range:

- ◇ Cape Cod, Massachusetts to Uruguay

Facts:

- ◇ important commercial species
- ◇ breed in salt water
- ◇ migrate to deeper waters in winter
- ◇ females only mate once in their lifetime
- ◇ average lifespan is 3 years



*blue crabs were not counted until 1984 and were only caught during the years shown

For more information about blue crabs, please check out this article:

Blue Claws: Crabbing in New Jersey

<http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/pdf/2001/digmar2.pdf>

NJ Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Bureau of Marine Fisheries
www.NJFishandWildlife.com