

# Crayfish Ecology

## Synopsis

3rd—6th, upper

\*\* Please have your students wear their own rubber boots if possible. If not, we have rubber boots to share with children and adults.



### Summary

*Everybody's favorite aquatic omnivore, the crayfish, provides hours of fun as students take to the streams to identify suitable habitat, meet its fellow water dwellers and search for this sometimes elusive animal, along with macroinvertebrates. Students measure and sex crayfish to contribute data to the HNC Crayfish Database.*

### MN Academic Standards

supported during HNC program. More standards can be supported with pre- and post lesson activities.

#### *Science*

- 1.4.2.1.1 ~ animal survival needs
- 1.4.2.1.2 ~ habitats provide needs
- 1.4.3.1.1 ~ animal life cycles
- 3.4.3.2.1 ~ generational traits
- 5.4.2.1.1 ~ MN natural systems

### Authenticity

Students measure and determine the sex of crayfish to contribute data to the HNC Crayfish Database.

### Goals & Objectives

#### **This program will:**

- Introduce crayfish as a unique species
- Provide opportunities for catching, observing and stewardship of live animals
- Involve students in authentic data collection

#### **Students will be able to:**

- Measure and determine the sex of crayfish
- Identify macroinvertebrates using observational skills and field guides/i.d. sheets
- Record accurate data

### Activities

#### **In the classroom:**

- Discuss what makes a crayfish unique, what they eat, where they live, and how they go about daily life.
- Discuss how to know the sex of a crayfish and how to record information on our data sheets.

#### **In the field:**

- Visit Tischer Creek or a pond in Hartley Park. Use buckets, dip nets, and i.d. sheets to figure out who is living in the pond.
- Use measuring tapes and i.d. sheets to measure and determine sex of crayfish.

### Bad Weather Alternative

- Observe aquatic macroinvertebrates using microscopes and magnifying glasses (HNC educators will catch critters before your arrival).
- Diagram the detailed anatomy of crayfish and play a trivia game about their natural history.
- Discuss rusty crayfish as an invasive species and their impact on native crayfish and other native species.