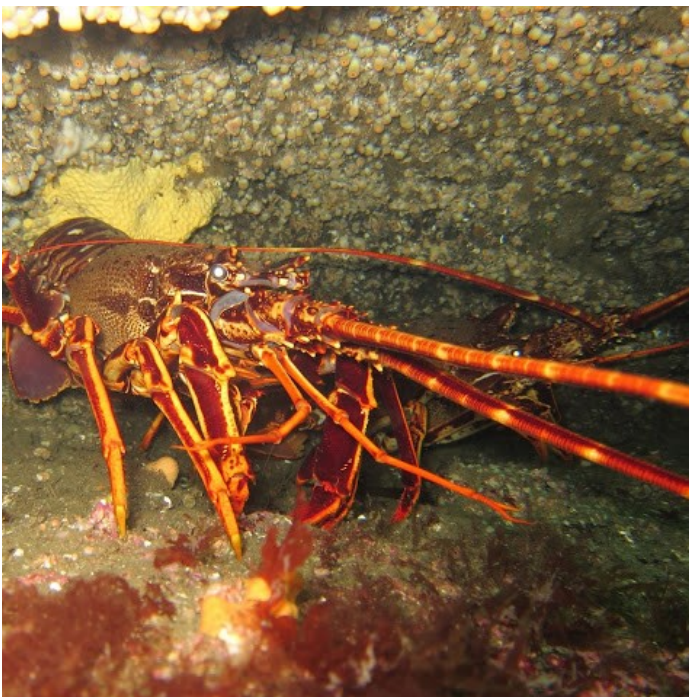


Crayfish (*Palinurus elephas*)

Malacostraca (Arthropoda:Decapoda)



Large spiny lobster the crayfish has extremely long antenna, a well developed tail fan (above) but lacks the large chelae (claws) of the European lobster (*Homarus gammarus*). Found on rocky exposed shores the only species at *P. elephas* could be confused with is the European lobster. However *P. elephas* is much larger in size and lacks chelae on the first three pairs of legs.

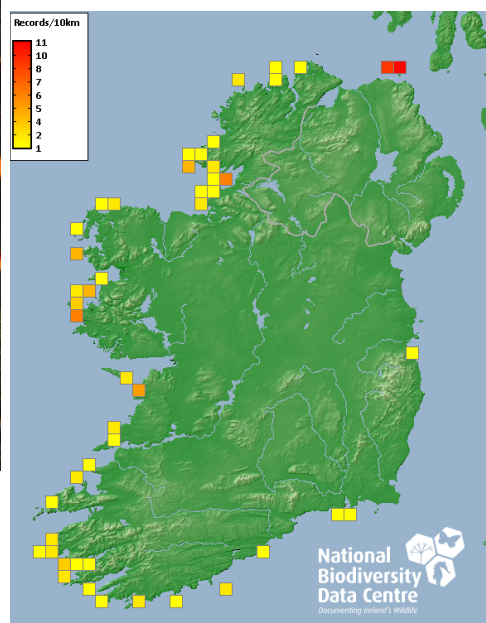


Species is only found at 3 sites in Northern Ireland and records in Ireland are scattered. While possibly slightly under recorded this species has a scattered distribution and is relatively rare. Recorded on the east coast for the first time in 2017.

Arthropoda->Crustacea->Malacostraca->Decapoda

IUCN Red List Categorisation: Vulnerable

Scattered distribution on Irish coasts, with only one record from the east coast, this species was once far more common on Irish coasts. Landings in Irish waters have decreased since 1959 from 279 tonnes to just 20 tonnes in 2011² though 120 boats in Irish waters are thought to fish this species on a part time basis². Estimated to have undergone a decline of between 30 and 50% in population globally between 1987 and 2014 this species is classified as vulnerable on the IUCN Red List¹. This species population is thought to be continuing to decline in Irish waters.



1. Goñi, R. 2014. *Palinurus elephas*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2014
2. Tully, O. 2011. Crayfish minimum landing size. Irish Seas Fisheries Board. Marine Institute, Ireland.

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