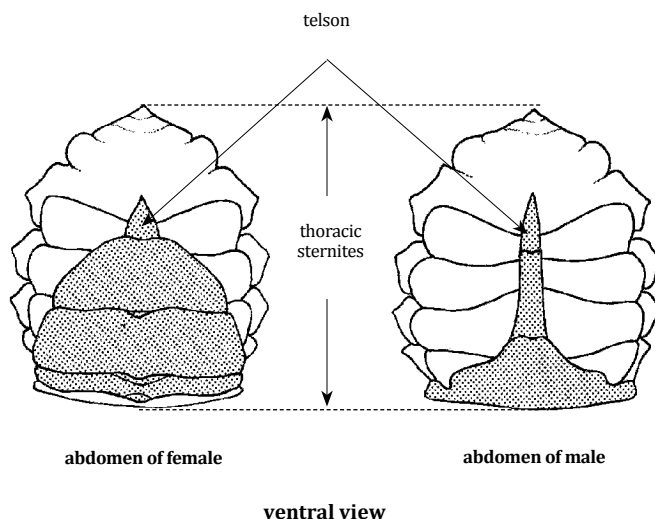
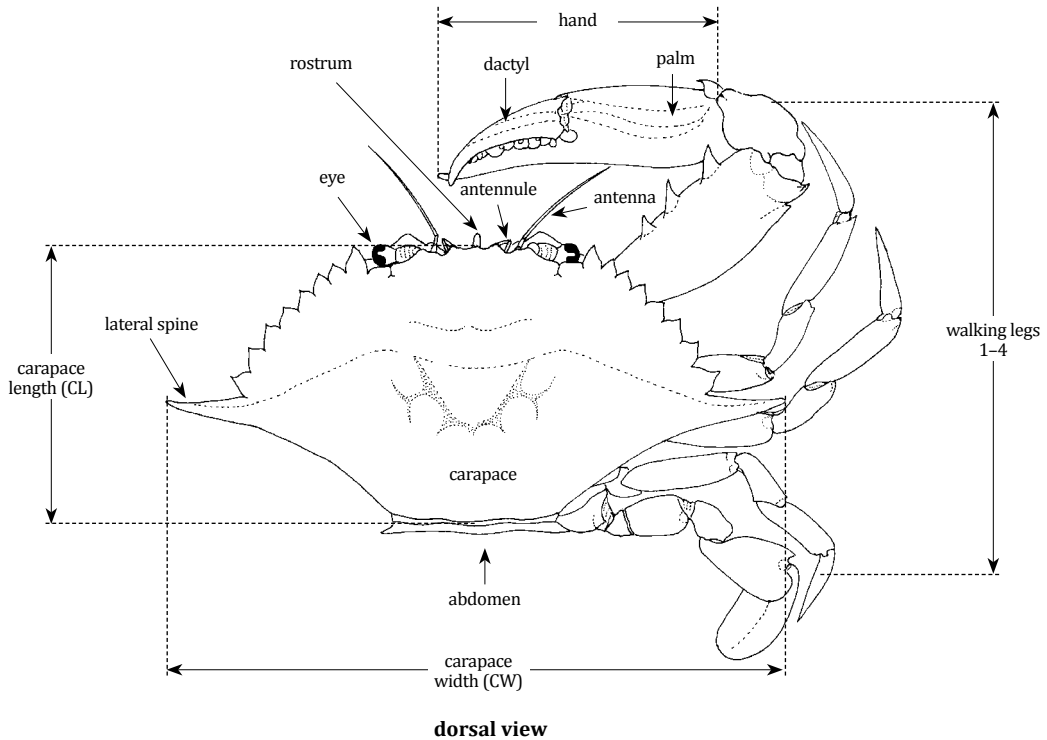


CRABS

Many species of crabs occur in Kenya, but only a few species are considered important to fisheries. Three species, all belonging to the family Portunidae, have been included in the Guide to Species: *Scylla serrata* (Forsskål, 1755), *Portunus pelagicus* (Linnaeus, 1766) and *Thalamita crenata* (H. Milne-Edwards, 1834). *Scylla serrata* is the largest of the three crabs and is the most preferred for consumption (Provenzano, 1985).

TECHNICAL TERMS AND MEASUREMENTS



PORTUNIDAE

Swimming crabs

Portunus pelagicus (Linnaeus, 1758)

FAO names: Blue swimming crab (En)
Etrille bleue (Fr)

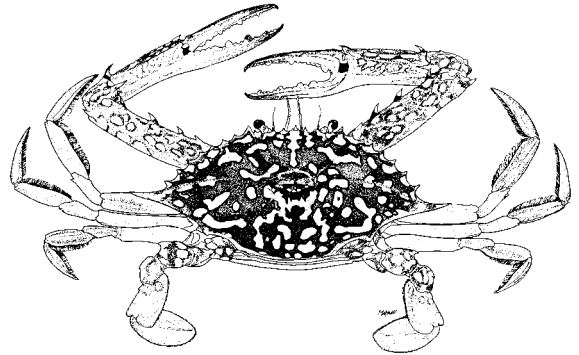
Local name(s): N: Kaa kiukizi/Mswete; S: Kaa (M/K).

Habitat: Very abundant in sub-littoral mud or sand substrates from 5 m to 30 m; enters estuaries and lagoons seasonally in large numbers.

Fisheries: Traps, Spears, Set nets, Baited sticks, Bottom trawls.

Distinctive Characters: Carapace rough to granulose with regions discernible; front with 4 acutely triangular teeth; 9 teeth on each anterolateral margin; chelae elongate (more in males than in females) with conical tooth at the base of fingers; 3 spines on the inner margin of the merus; legs laterally flattened to varying degrees, last 2 segments of last pair paddle-like.

Colour: Males coloured with blue markings, females dull green.



Size: To 17 cm (CW), 7.6 (CL)

Scylla serrata (Forsskål, 1775)

FAO names: Indo-Pacific swamp crab (En)
Crabe de palétuviers (Fr)

Local name(s): N: Kaa mondokoko/Kaa domodo; S: Kaa (M/K).

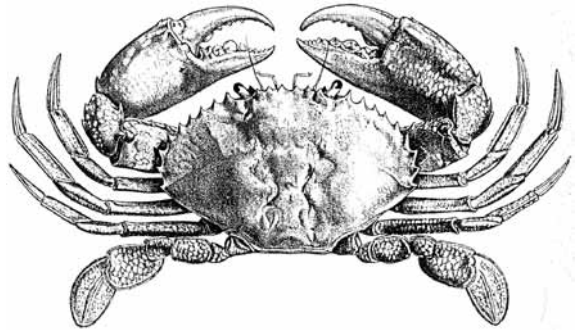
Habitat: Shallow coastal waters with soft substrates; enters mangrove forests to moult and mate. Maximum depth 20 m.

Fisheries: Baited sticks, Set nets, Bottom trawls.

Remarks: Burrows in soft muddy bottoms, emerging at sunset; migrates to offshore during spawning periods (up to 50 km).

Distinctive Characters: Nine spines on either side of the eyes; stout swimming legs at the rear part of the body.

Colour: Greyish-green to purple-brown with small white spots.



Size: To 22 cm (CW), 14 cm (CL)

Thalamita crenata (H. Milne-Edwards, 1834)

FAO names: Crenate swimming crab (En)

Local name(s): N: Kaa kijiwe/Gonda; S: Kaa (M/K).

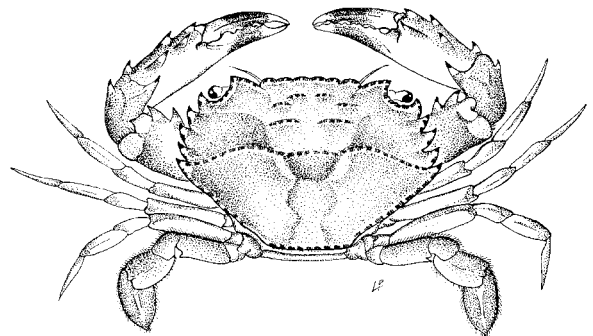
Habitat: Eulittoral in mud areas such as mangroves.

Fisheries: Baited sticks, Scoop nets.

Remarks: Of little interest to fisheries on the account of their small sizes; eaten by local people, flesh excellent.

Distinctive Characters: Surface of carapace smooth, ridges low but distinct; front with 6 equal-sized, rounded lobes.

Colour: Dark to olive green overall.



Size: To 8 cm (CW)