

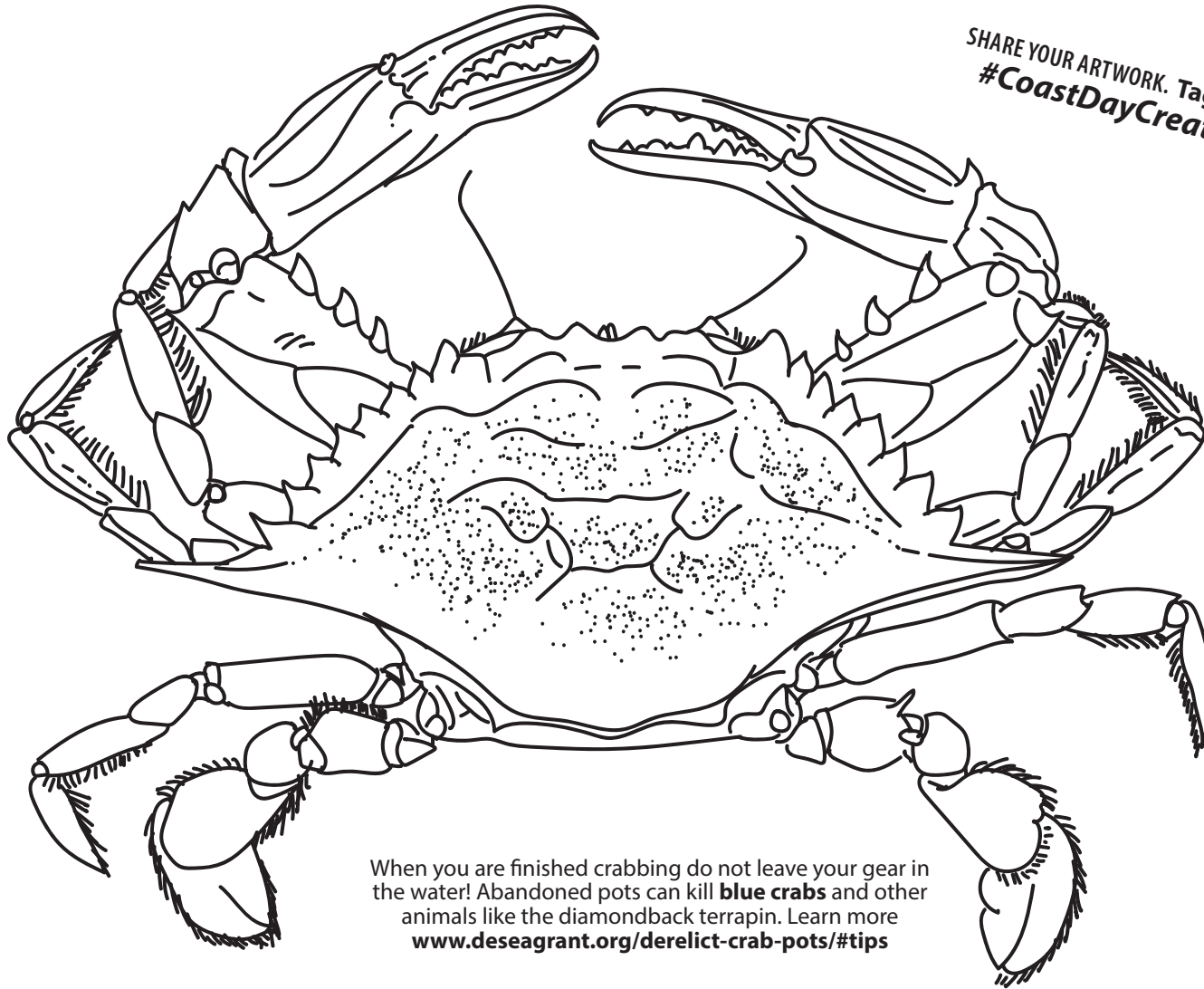
# Blue Crab

**SCIENTIFIC NAME:**  
*Callinectes sapidus*

**Life Span:** 3 to 4 years

**Size:** Up to 9 inches across the carapace (shell). Approximately 1/3 pound (at maturity)

**Range:** New England/Mid-Atlantic, Southeast



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When you are finished crabbing do not leave your gear in the water! Abandoned pots can kill **blue crabs** and other animals like the diamondback terrapin. Learn more [www.deseagrant.org/derelict-crab-pots/#tips](http://www.deseagrant.org/derelict-crab-pots/#tips)

## Fun Facts:

The **Blue Crab** uses its claws to catch and eat a variety of food, from sea lettuce to clams. While the tips of the male's claws are greenish blue, the female's claw tips are red—some people say she “paints her nails.” Female blue crabs may produce up to 9 million eggs each year! When they hatch, the baby crabs look like tiny dots, and they move along at the mercy of ocean currents. When they have grown to about the size of a match tip, the larval crabs use flood tides to move from the ocean into bays and marshes to live. **Blue crabs** support one of the most valuable fisheries along the U.S. Atlantic coast. Crabbers typically use fresh, oily bait such as bluefish in their crab pots to catch blue crabs. Steamed **blue crabs** are a favorite summertime treat for many coastal residents.

**What is the minimum size limit for keeping your catch?**

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