

11 Crustacea

Austropotamobius pallipes white-clawed crayfish

Current status WCA 5; globally threatened RDB (IUCN); Bern III; EC II, V.

Widespread distribution in Spain, France, Germany, Italy and as far east as the former Yugoslavia. However, numbers have declined due to the crayfish plague and distribution is more patchy. The UK represents the northern and western limits of distribution and it is found throughout East Wales, England and Ireland. Numbers have declined, particularly in the south, predominantly due to the crayfish plague. It prefers clear, hard, alkaline water that is well oxygenated and locations without too much sediment. These include small streams, brooks, rivers, lakes, reservoirs and water filled quarries. Crevices in rocks, gaps, between stones, submerged plants and tree roots are important for its survival.

Threats Pollution; intensive river works; disease – particularly crayfish plague; introduction of non-native crayfish species, most notably the signal crayfish *Pacifastacus leniusculus*.