


# THE GREEN CRAB INVASION



An underwater photograph showing a dense field of green seagrass at the bottom, with sunlight filtering through the clear blue water above. A single, long, thin seagrass blade is prominently featured in the foreground, extending diagonally from the bottom left towards the upper right.

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# Harry



Harry is a very little rock crab and guess where he lives? He lives under the sea in a beautiful spot called North Harbour in Newfoundland and Labrador.

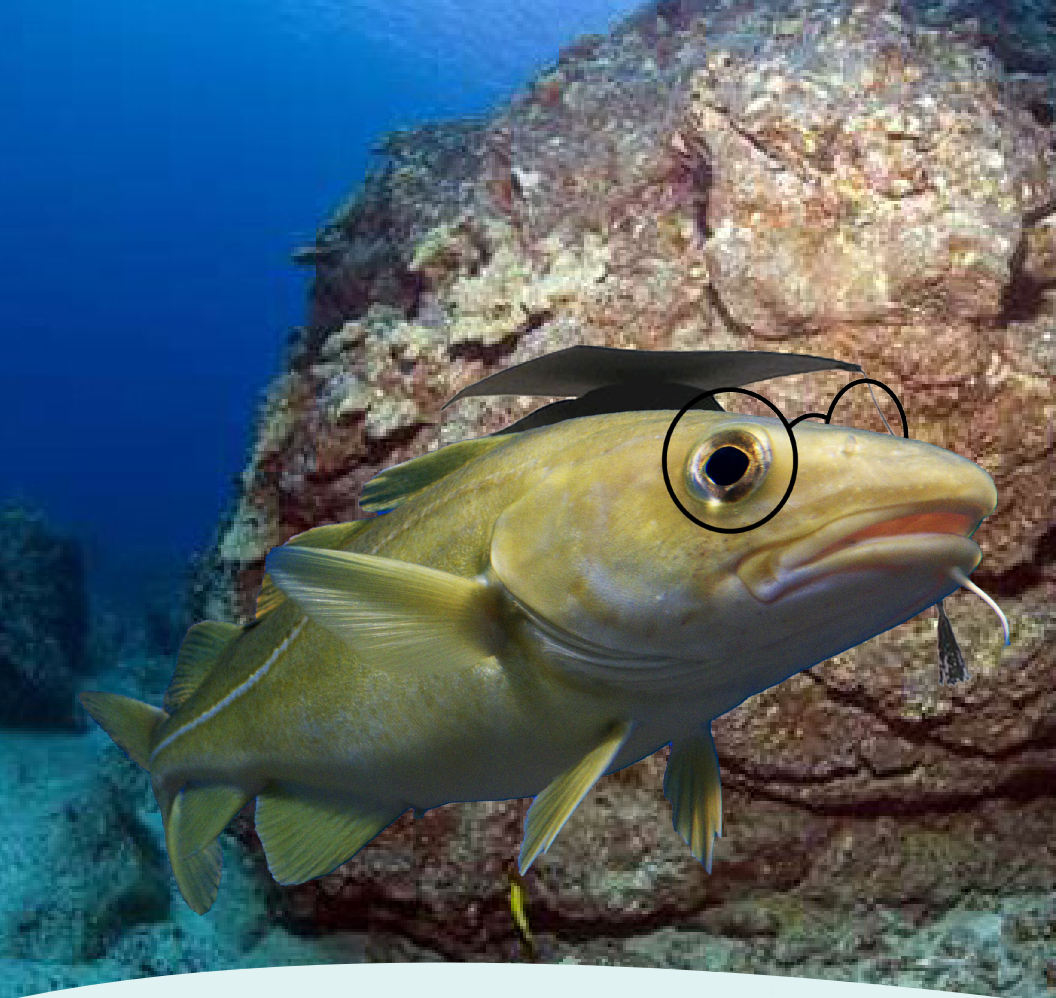
Harry lives with his family under a small gray rock surrounded by eel grass. When the sun shines down through the water, it is aqua blue. That is Harry's favourite colour.



Some crabs can be very grumpy and, well, crabby, but not Harry. Harry is very gentle and likes to collect sea shells with his two best friends, a cod fish named Harriet and a lobster named Harold.

Each morning, Harry, Harriet and Harold go to school on the big flat rock called the Meeting Rock.





On this morning their teacher, a very old and large cod, Miss Iris, was upset.

“Children, quiet down. I need you to listen carefully. The green crabs have invaded North Harbour,” said Miss Iris.

“Oh no, not green crabs,” Harry thought. “They are the crabbiest crabs in the ocean. They eat everything they can find and refuse to share. When they move into a harbour, everyone else has to move out or starve.”



“You must go home and stay close to your families until help arrives,” Miss Iris commanded.

Luckily, Harry, Harriet, and Harold all lived close together. However, they had to go through Split Rock Alley to get home and that is when it happened. Standing before them with a menacing gleam in his eye was a green crab.





Harriet and Harold hid behind Harry. This was not a great idea considering Harry was the smallest of all three of them. Harry stood firm and said in the bravest voice he could manage, "Hello, I'm Harry."

"Give me your lunches," shouted the green crab. Harry, Harriet, and Harold all had worms for their lunches. They gave the green crab the worms. The green crab gobbled down their worms and without even saying thanks, scurried away.

Harry, Harriet, and Harold all thought that was very, very rude.



When they got to their neighborhood it was chaos. There were green crabs everywhere and they were taking everyone's lunches. What could they do? Who could help them?

Suddenly, a big human hand came down into the water and scooped up one of the green crabs. Then another human hand came down and scooped up another green crab. As Harry, Harriet, and Harold tried to hide, a human hand came down and scooped up Harry.





Harry felt himself being pulled up and out of the water. Suddenly he was looking at a human face. He heard a loud voice saying, "Oh, sorry to bother you little rock crab. We are only collecting green crab."

Harry looked out in amazement. The beach was covered with people. They all had buckets and they were removing the green crab. The people were saving his home.



Gently, gently, Harry felt himself being returned to his rock. Quickly he went to find his friends and watched as one by one the green crab were plucked out of his neighbourhood. Tomorrow they would be able to eat their worms in peace, without worrying about anyone stealing their lunches.

Everyone needs a helping hand now and then, especially those who live under the sea.

~The End~



# EUROPEAN GREEN CRAB



Last seen destroying eel grass habitat, fighting with rock crabs, and stealing other animals food.

This crab can be distinguished from the good guys by the five pointed spines on the outside of each eye and the three small rounded spines between the eyes.

Approach with caution, extremely aggressive and fast.

If you see this marine invader, please call:

**1-855-862-1815**

**Reward: Being an Ocean Hero**



**Aquatic invasive species (AIS)** are non-native aquatic plants or animals that, once introduced to an area, can cause harm to ecosystems, native species, and the economy. Once established, these species may become almost impossible to eradicate and have implications for local fisheries, aquaculture operations, recreational activities, and even infrastructure. Seven AIS are found in Newfoundland and Labrador waters, including the European green crab (*Carcinus maenas*), which is considered one of the top **100 worst invasive species** in the world.

Aggressive and territorial, green crab can dramatically reduce populations of native species due to successful competition for resources and its voracious predation on juveniles (clams, mussels, scallops, oysters, other crustaceans, and even some fish). Green crab is credited with damaging shellfish fisheries elsewhere in the world and can even threaten shore birds who share a similar diet. It can destroy habitats such as eelgrass beds (nurseries for species such as cod and lobster) as it burrows and digs into the substrate, cutting the eelgrass roots. Add in a lack of natural predators and ability to reproduce rapidly, and green crab quickly becomes a threat to coastal ecosystems and the communities they support.



# Did you know?

Green crab has been called “**cockroach of the sea**” because of its ability to survive such extremes as:

- living out of water for up to a week
- surviving in fresh water for short periods of time
- tolerating 0-30°C temperatures



## **Interesting fact**

Green crab can rotate its claws over its back to defend against predators attacking from behind.

## **European green crab**

**Size:** carapace width up to 10cm

**Colour:** range from bright green to brown or red

**Life span:** four to seven years

**Spawning:** up to 185,000 eggs per female each year

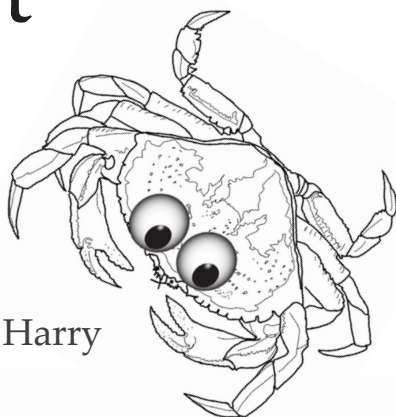
**Prey:** mainly molluscs, worms, and other crustaceans

**Habitat:** protected and semi-protected marine and estuarine habitats, with mud, sand, or rock substrate

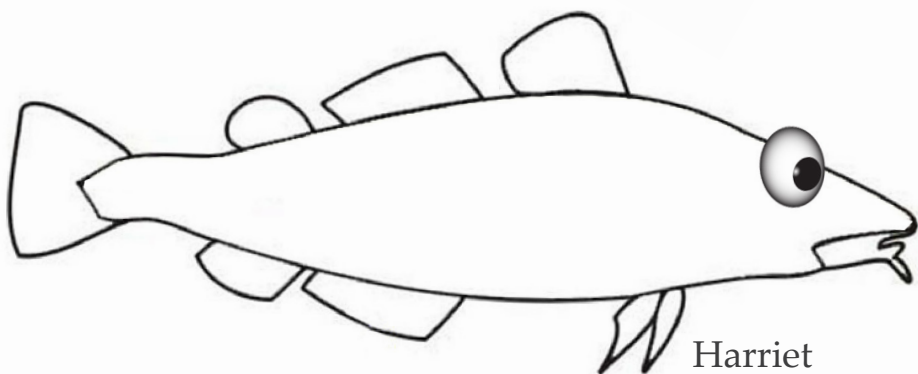
**Similar species:** rock crab



# Three best friends.



Harry



Harriet



Harold





Harry, Harriet, and Harold live under the sea in a beautiful spot called North Harbour in Newfoundland and Labrador. One day, the bullies of the sea, the European green crab invade their home. Who will save them?



Newfoundland  
Labrador