



Oregon Sea Grant Extension  
Sustainable Tourism &  
Outdoor Recreation Program

# Interpretative Fact Sheet Dungeness Crab (*Metacarcinus magister*)



The following short article is from the [Oregon Coast 101 Species](#) collection used by the Guide and Outfitter Recognized Professional (GORP) training program. These articles are intended to provide interesting facts you can share with your clientele and add value to your services.

An Interpretive Fact Sheet has been written about each species. We are currently uploading these blogs and creating the links.

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# Dungeness crab (Cancer magister)

 [tourism.oregonstate.edu/dungeness-crab-cancer-magister/](https://tourism.oregonstate.edu/dungeness-crab-cancer-magister/)

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The Dungeness crab is an important species on the West Coast, where it thrives in chilly Pacific Ocean waters. This species is a major driver for the fishing economies in California, Oregon, and Washington.

These crustaceans have eight walking legs and two claws and prefer sandy bottom habitats in the intertidal zones to a depth of approximately 750 feet.



Dungeness crab (Cancer magister)

## History

Dungeness crab have been harvested commercially on the West Coast since the mid-1800s when San Francisco fishermen began the fishery. For more than 100 years, the fishery has been regulated by size, sex, and season in order to preserve this important resource.

The commercial Dungeness crab season typically begins in early December and continues through the spring. Recreational crabbing is a popular, year-round activity on the Oregon Coast.

## Regulations

Just make sure you're aware of the regulations next time you head to the beach or the docks. Knowing how to play will help ensure this animal continues to provide a delicious food source and an important economic opportunity for coastal communities in the region.

Many coastal bait and tackle shops along the coast will help you get set up for an enjoying crabbing experience!