

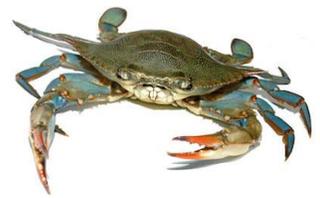


Links to Agriculture
Crabs, Horseshoe Crabs, & Oysters in the Bay



Have you ever seen the Chesapeake Bay? The Bay is a body of water called an **estuary**, where fresh water from rivers and salt water from the ocean come together. The Bay is a special place. It is home to more than 3,600 different kinds of plants and animals. Three of the things that live in the Bay are blue crabs, horseshoe crabs, and oysters.

The blue crab is one of the most popular animals in the Bay. Crabs have an **exoskeleton** that comes off as they grow, and a new shell forms. You can tell a male crab from a female crab because the tips of the female's claws are red like painted fingernails! Blue crabs walk and swim sideways!



A horseshoe crab is actually not a crab. It is more like a scorpion or spider. They also have an **exoskeleton**. Horseshoe crabs are one of the oldest species on Earth. Horseshoe crabs have special blue blood that scientists and doctors can use to help sick people.



Oysters are especially important to the Bay. Did you know that oysters clean the water? They have a soft body with two hard shells that can open and close. They take in water and **filter** the algae out for food. Some oysters make pearls. This happens when a grain of sand gets caught inside the oyster's shell. It will make **nacre** to cover the sand and over time it will become a pearl!



How Well Did You Read?

Circle the word or words that complete the sentence.

1. The tips of a female crab's claws are _____.

blue red green

2. Horseshoe crabs have _____ blood.

blue red green

3. Some oysters make _____.

sand shells pearls

4. I would like to learn more about _____.

blue crabs horseshoe crabs oysters

Just for Fun!

Crabs walk and swim sideways. Try walking like a crab!

1. Lie on your back.
2. Push up with your arms and legs.
3. Try walking sideways like a crab. Can you switch directions?





Chesapeake Bay Art



Make a Handprint Crab

Materials: paper, red or blue paint, markers

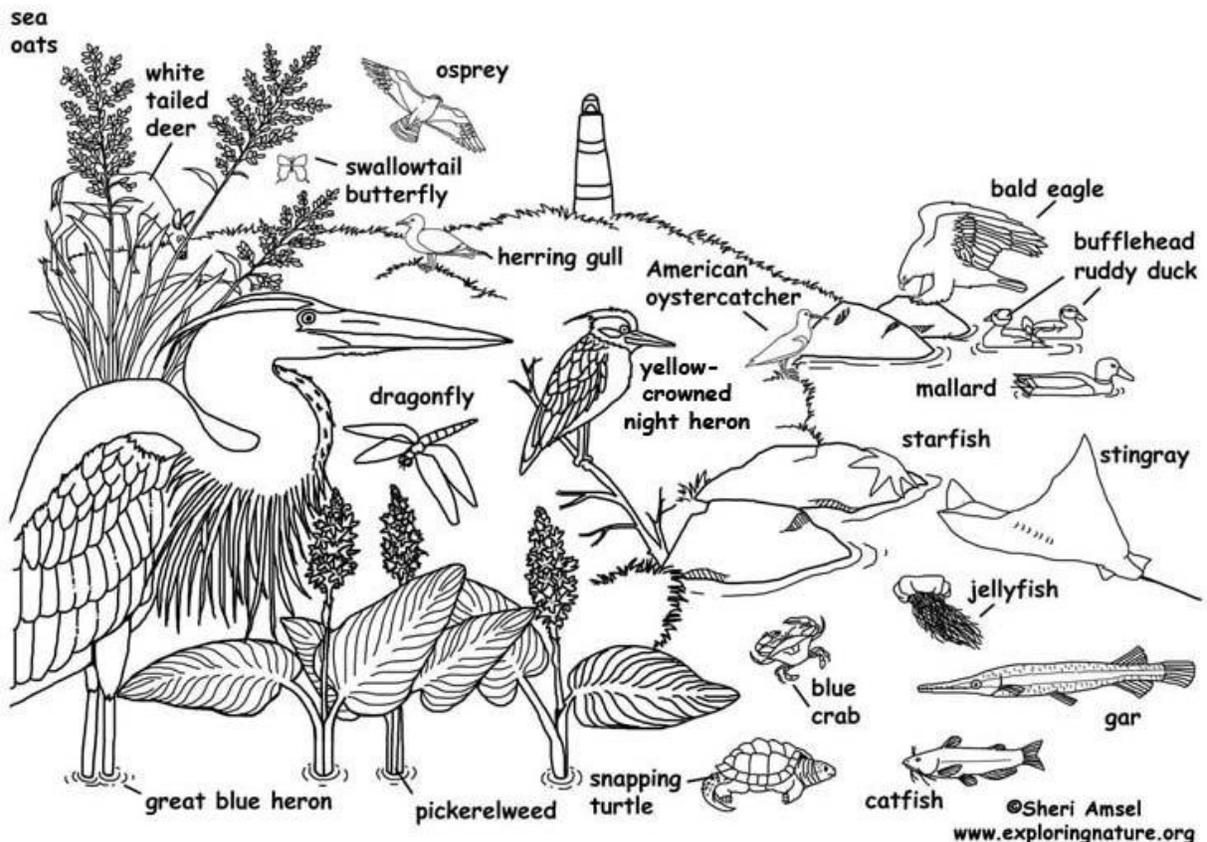
Directions:

1. Cover your hands in paint.
2. Press each hand firmly on the paper with your thumbs pointing up.
3. Let the paint dry, and then add details with the markers.



Color the Animals of the Chesapeake Bay

Here are some of the other animals that live in or near the Bay!



Bay Animal Trivia

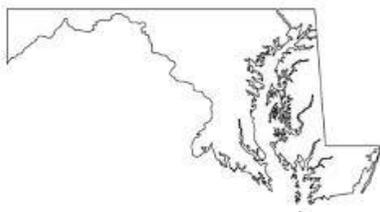
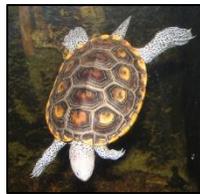
- Female crabs can lay millions of eggs at one time.
- Horseshoe crabs have been on earth more than 220 million years – longer than dinosaurs!
- The largest oysters can grow up to three feet long, but most oysters grow to be only a few inches long.

Did You Know...?

The Chesapeake Bay is 200 miles long and between 4 to 30 miles wide. It is shallow with an average depth of 21 feet. The deepest part of the Bay is called "The Hole" and it is 174 feet deep. That's about the same as 9 giraffes tall!

The Chesapeake Bay has over 11,000 miles of shoreline (the place where water meets the land), including its creeks – that's more than the entire west coast of the United States!

This shoreline is home to many animals and plants including the great blue heron and Maryland's state reptile, the diamondback terrapin



Joke Time

Why did the crab eat all the seaweed?



Joke Answer:

Because he was shellfish!



For more agricultural education lessons and resources, visit:
www.maefonline.com