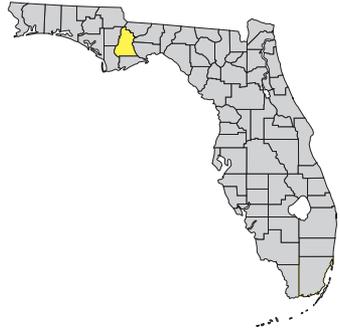


## FIRE-BACK CRAYFISH

### *Cambarus pyronotus*

<b>Order:</b>	Decapoda
<b>Family:</b>	Cambaridae
<b>FNAI Ranks:</b>	G2/S2
<b>U.S. Status:</b>	None
<b>FL Status:</b>	None



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**Description:** Their bright orange-red to scarlet bodies unequivocally identify the adults of this species, which measure 3 - 4 in. (76 - 102 mm), excluding the claws; juveniles are dull pinkish-red, the intensity of color increasing with age. Though not likely to be seen at the surface, the presence of this species is revealed by the mud ball chimneys it constructs during burrow excavation. Chimneys and mud balls are proportional to crayfish size, with the tallest chimneys topping 6 in. (152 mm).

**Similar Species:** No other Florida crayfish within the Apalachicola River basin is vivid red or orange over its entire body. However, several other crayfish species construct similar burrows along streams in this region, so the presence of mud chimneys alone is not sufficient to confirm this species' occurrence.

**Habitat:** Builds complex burrows at the edges of small seepage streams that lie at the bottoms of steep ravines; the ravine slopes generally support a mixed-hardwood slope forest, formerly surmounted by sandhill vegetation but now largely replaced by sand pine plantations.

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**Seasonal Occurrence:** Crayfish remain in their burrows year-round, although they may plug them with mud during some periods, perhaps more so in winter. Females reproduce in spring, with young apparently leaving the maternal burrow during the summer.

**Florida Distribution:** Very narrowly restricted to a series of small ravine tributaries along the eastern bank of the upper Apalachicola River in northern Liberty County, between Bristol and Chattahoochee.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Same as Florida distribution.

**Conservation Status:** Several inhabited streams are on lands owned by The Nature Conservancy and the State of Florida (Torreya State Park); most of the remainder are on private timber lands that have been proposed for state purchase.

**Protection and Management:** Protect inhabited streams from pollution, siltation, and impoundment. Chief management needs are protection of surrounding slope forests from erosion and restoration of sandhill vegetation that formerly occupied the hilltops.

**Selected References:** Bouchard 1978, Deyrup and Franz (eds.) 1994, Jackson and Franz 1999.