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On the existence of *Cherax rotundus* in the Severn area, south-eastern Queensland.

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Abstract.

Since its original description in 1941, the taxonomic status of *Cherax rotundus* has been the source of much debate. The type locality, situated within the inland drainages of southern Queensland, has failed to yield any further specimens, and has been considered by subsequent workers to be erroneous. Crayfish specimens with some similar traits have been located in coastal drainages of central New South Wales, and from inland drainages near the border between New South Wales and Victoria. However, there is also some disagreement as to the status of these two taxa, and the insufficient detail about the original, southern Queensland locality precludes resolution of this intriguing species group. In this study, we attempt to clarify some of the long-standing confusion about the species, the type material, the type locality and the collector of the type material. Local historical and anecdotal information about the collector and the type locality lends some support to the validity of the original museum label. After conducting a broad survey of watercourses in the region we have failed to find any specimens, but determined some possible areas where sampling should be intensified in future research. Without any justification to doubt the museum label other than a failure to find further specimens we recommend that, until such time as conclusive data suggests otherwise: (i) the original type locality for *C. rotundus* be upheld, and (ii) specimens from the two southern localities represent two distinct taxa. In other words, the best available information at present suggests that *C. rotundus* Clark has not been recorded in the wild since its original discovery around 70 years ago.

Key Words: *Cherax destructor*, *Cherax rotundus*, crayfish, morphology, yabby, Severn River, Severnlea.

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