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Geographical range

Species of the Day: Purple Marsh Crab

The **Purple Marsh Crab**, *Afriethelphusa monodosa*, is listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This species was first collected in 1947 in Guinea, West Africa, and not seen again until 2005 when a small population was found living in holes in marshy, waterlogged farmland in the Upper Guinea forest in northwest Guinea.

This unusual long-legged purple crab is a semi-terrestrial air-breather, that forages at night and spends the day hiding in waterlogged burrows. It is one of only five rare species of freshwater crabs that belong to an evolutionarily important lineage of freshwater crabs, all of which are endemic to the Upper Guinea rain forests of West Africa.

The continued survival of the Purple Marsh Crab requires the protection of patches of swamp and year-round wetland habitat that are increasingly being converted into farmland. Unfortunately, habitat disturbance and deforestation for agriculture in Guinea and elsewhere in the Upper Guinea forest, and the fact that this species is not found in a protected area, raises questions about the long-term survival of this species.

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