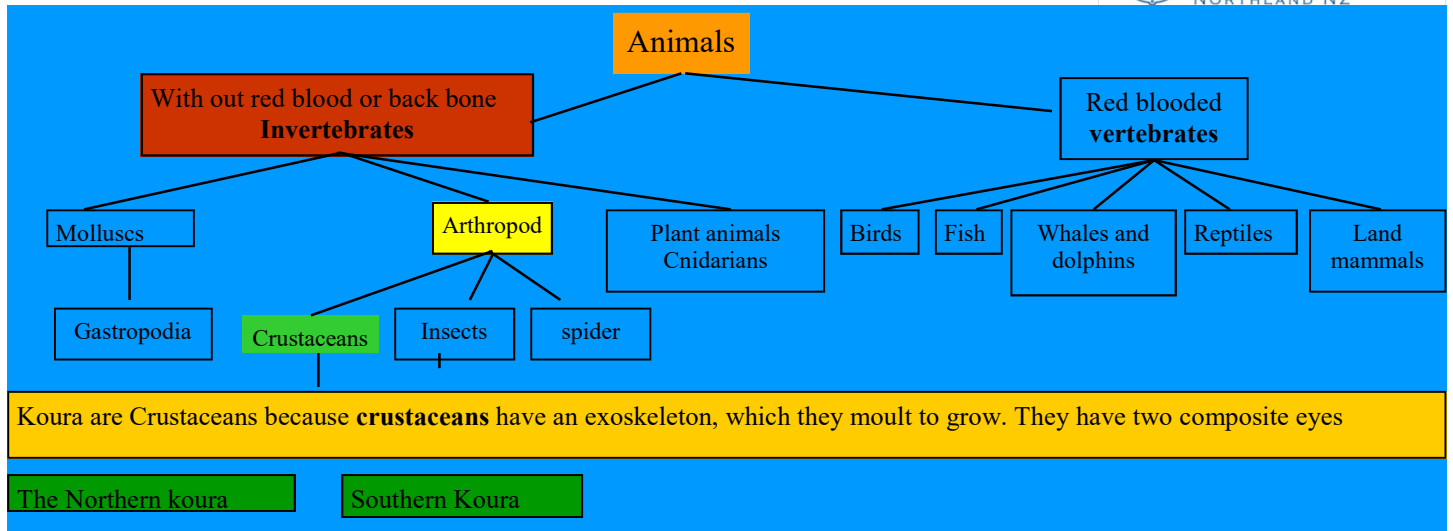


Fresh Water Cray fish—Koura

To be used with the Tangihua lions lodge program

What are Crustaceans



Koura are Crustaceans because **crustaceans** have an exoskeleton, which they moult to grow. They have two composite eyes

The Northern koura

Southern Koura

All Crustaceans ?
have these
Characteristics

What do you think?

Just circle the answer

Body parts?

2

3

Legs?

6

8

More!

Eyes?

6 simple ones

8 simple ones

Usually 2 but

sometimes 5

Mouthparts?

3 pairs

1 pair with fangs and

poison

Wings?



Show where the

Antenna are

Composite eyes

Claws

Abdomen

Hard shell

Walking legs

Tail

Telson or uropod for propul-
sion

Where do Koura Live ?

Who eats Koura?

When do Koura come out ?

Where do Koura keep their eggs?

How many legs do Koura have and what are they used for

.....

What happens if a koura loses its leg?

Koura

To be used with the Tangihua lions lodge program



Paranephrops planifrons - North island fresh water crayfish

Koura (fresh water crayfish) are common in the Tangihua's living in the streams, lakes and ponds, and even in swamps They prefer to shelter between stones on gravelly bottoms. Koura will burrow well down into swamps that dry out over summer, to wait until the water returns.

Koura reach lengths of about 70 mm. Their first pair of legs are pincers used for both attack and defence, scavenging food and warding off predators or other koura. The other four pairs of well-developed walking legs are used for most movement,. When alarmed, koura flick their tail forwards violently to propel themselves backwards at speed.

Feeding

Koura is a scavenger that feeds on leftovers that float by in the water or settle on the bottom; old leaves, small insects such as Invertebrates including aquatic snails , chironomids , and mayflies are favourites. It does not go hunting for its food. Once food is caught in the pincers it is torn up, pushed into its mouth to be ground up and separated by a filter system that lets only fine pieces pass through to the small stomach to be digested.

Shed their shells

Koura like all crustaceans moult their exoskeletons in order to increase in size

nocturnal

Koura are nocturnal, during daytime they find shelter under rocks, debris such as cans and bottles, and vegetation

Replace their limbs

When one limb is lost the koura will divert energy for overall growth to restoring the lost limb.

Reproduction

They can be sexed by looking at their underside: males have a pair of gonads that protrude from the base of the fourth pair of legs, while females have holes at the base of the second pair of legs.

The female carries between 20–200 eggs under the side flaps of her abdomen. They take 3–4 months to hatch. Over this time male sperm production corresponds with females reproductively. Once hatched juvenile koura cling to their mother's abdomen using their pincers to attach until they have reached a length of 4–10 mm. At this stage they resemble adult koura in appearance.

The total breeding length time from peak egg laying to the release of juveniles is estimated to be 28 weeks for the autumn–winter period and 19–20 weeks in spring–summer breeding groups.

Predators and cannibalism

Eels, and other Koura are the major aquatic predators. Other predators include rats, kingfishers, shags, stoats and kiwi.

Cannibalism in koura is most likely to occur when koura are sick or moulting. Cannibalism can be a greater problem in high density situations where competition for shelter and territory is greatest. Juvenile koura can be consumed whole by larger koura.

Threats and conservation

Although still common and not under threat they are preyed on by rats, possums ,cats and mustelids. Good pest control will ensure their future.