

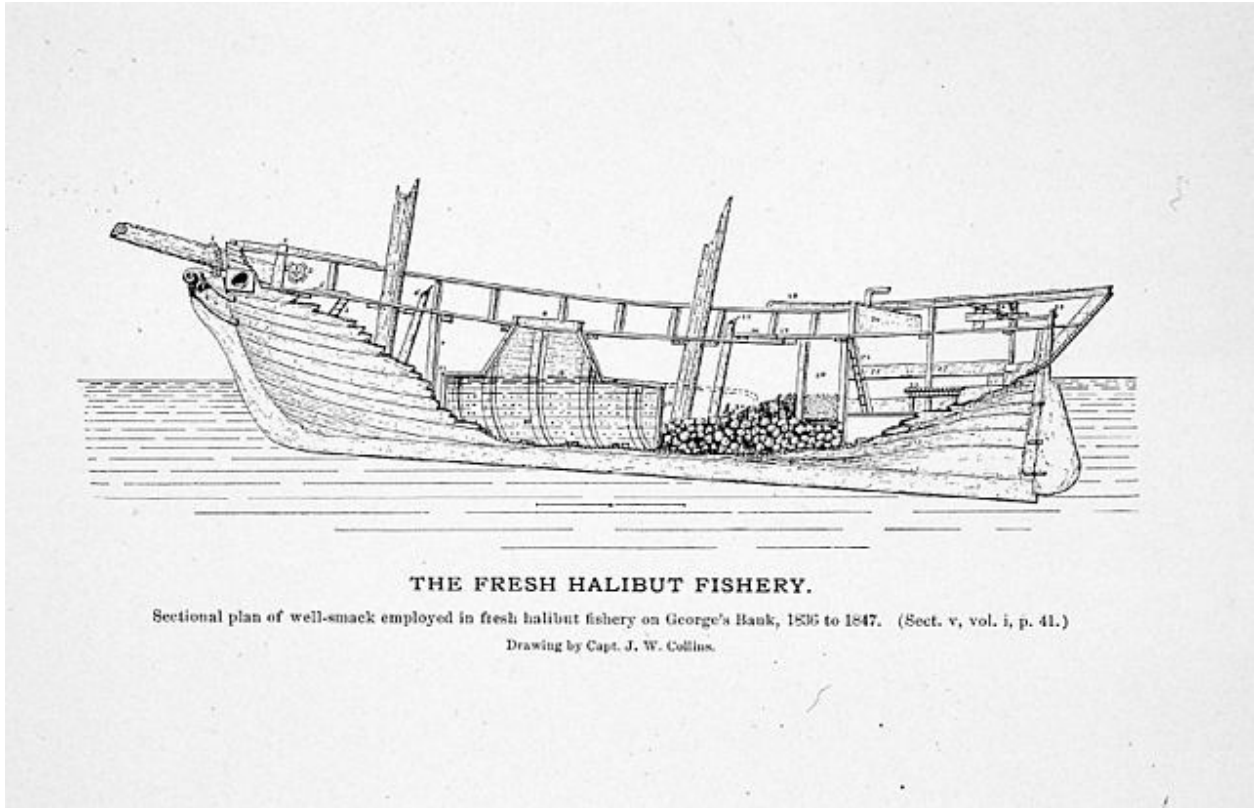
Lobster Mechanics

by Bluebird, August 2015

This week, the [artists of Peridot Green went on a retreat](#) to a tiny colonial lighthouse island on the coast of Maine. It was wonderful, magical, and productive. In celebration, this week's post is dedicated to fun facts about Maine's celebrated native, *Homarus americanus*.

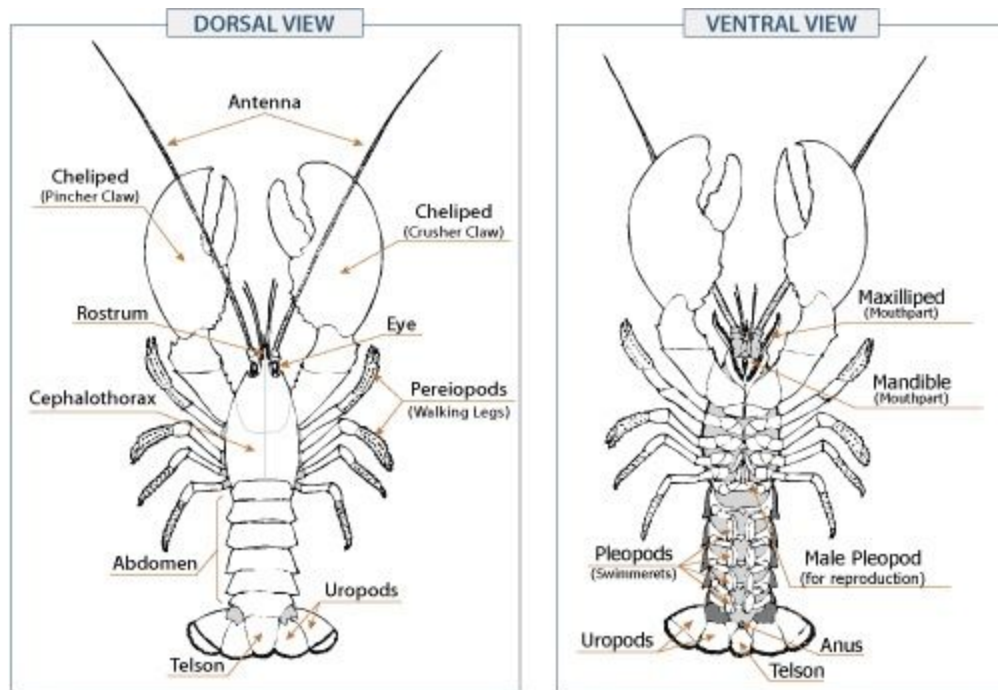


1. Well Smack



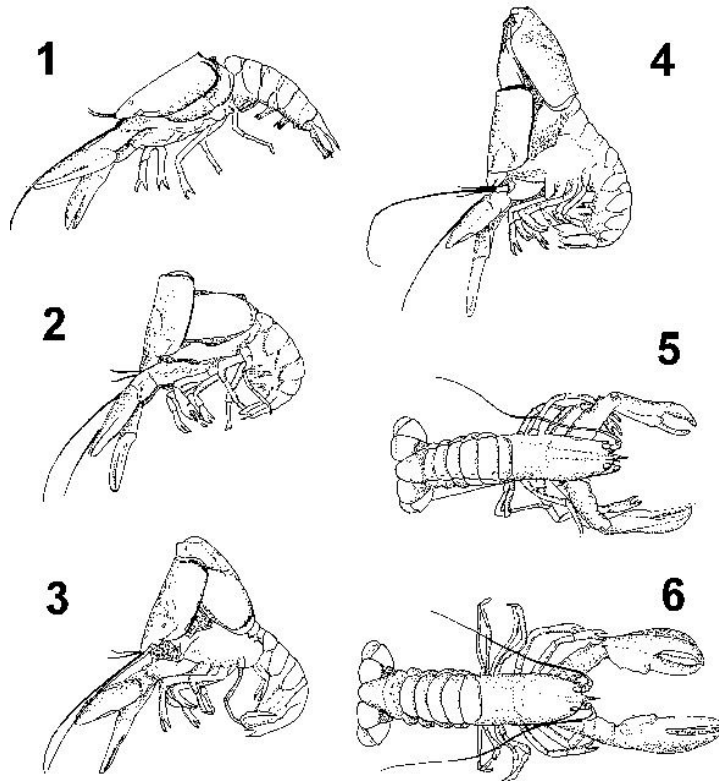
Lobstering is done on a type of fishing boat called a smack, modified with a midship well that circulates fresh seawater. ([DMR](#))

2. Crusher & Ripper



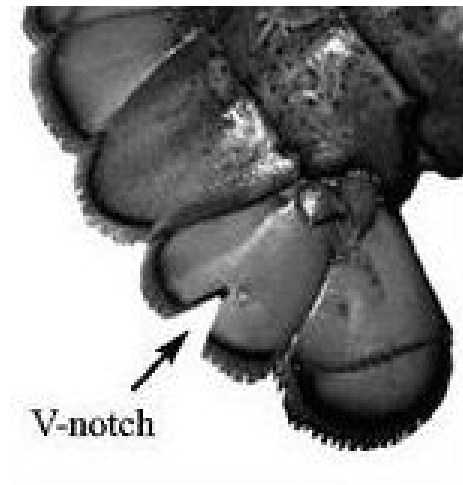
Lobsters have one claw for crushing hard shells, and one claw for ripping soft flesh. The claws can appear on either side; a lobster is said to be right-handed if the crusher appears on its right. ([SLGO](#))

3. Nudity



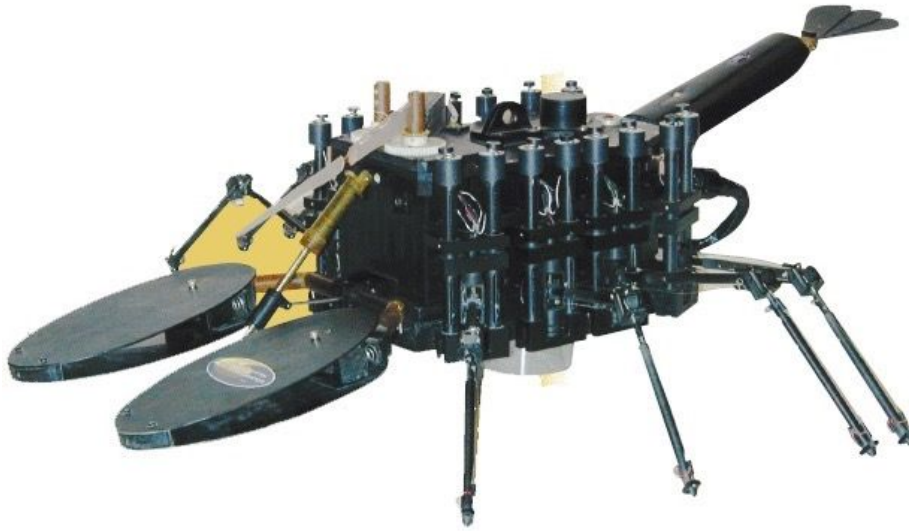
Lobsters have a complex and tender mating ritual, spending days dancing together in their den. She sheds her exoskeleton, making herself completely vulnerable. He touches her all over with his antennae, legs, and swimmerets. ([GMRI](#), [NPR](#))

4. V-Notch



If an egg-bearing lobster is caught, Maine regulations require she be marked with a v-notch and then released. A special tool is used to make a small notch in the tail flipper just right of center, signaling for future lobsterers to leave her in the wild and help keep the population stable. ([DMR](#))

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"Aggressive, territorial, secretive"

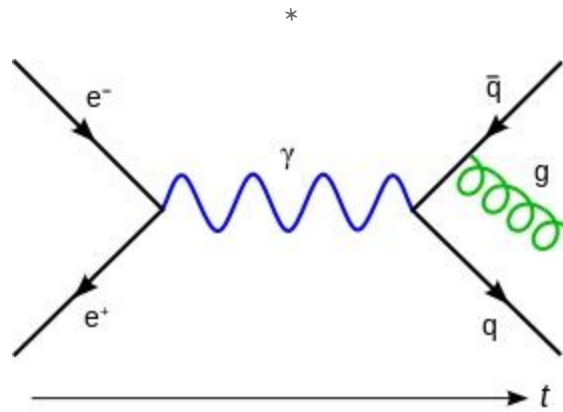
Aquadrones have been instrumental in observing lobster behavior. "It's amazing how much more you can learn when a lobster doesn't know it's being watched. They're very sensitive to human presence." Lobsters have inspired a line of military robots in return. ([GMRI](#))

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Hypnosis

"To hypnotize a lobster, stand it on its head with its claws laid out in front of it and its tail curled inward. Rub your hand up and down the carapace making sure to rub between the eyes. Eventually it may stand by itself." ([GMRI](#))



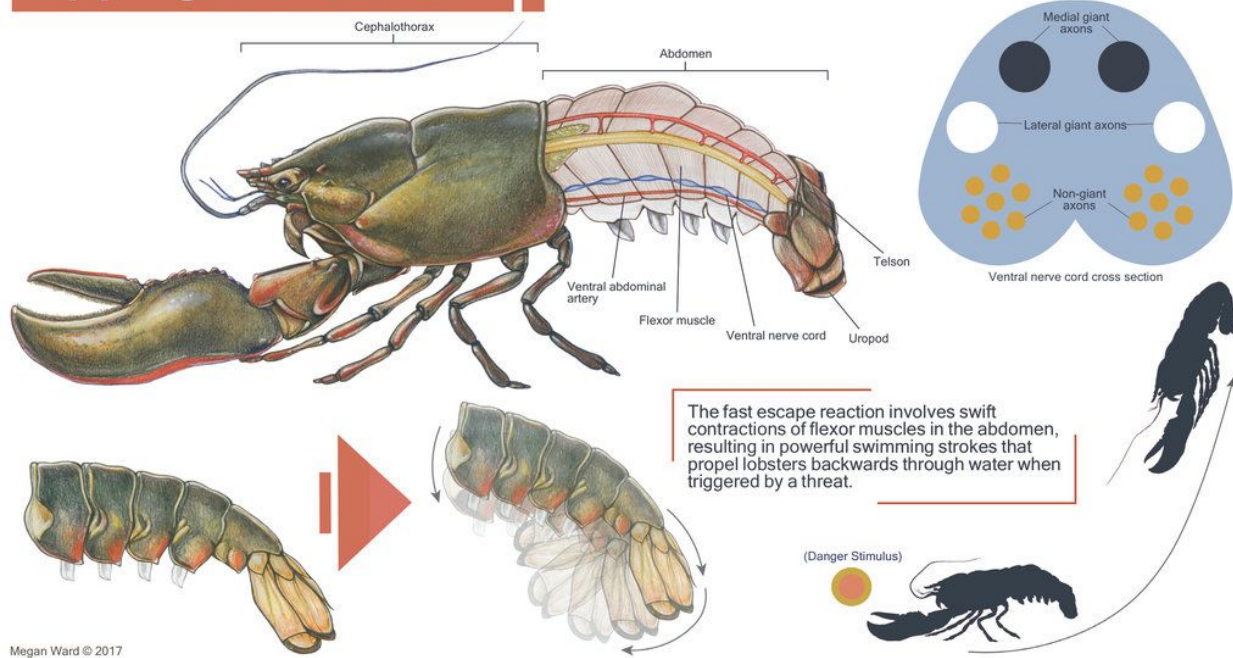
Thermochromatic

Lobsters are a range of green-blue-black colors until they're cooked, when they turn bright red. When the lobster is alive, its red astaxanthin pigment molecules are bound up in the crustacyanin protein molecules of its shell. These two molecules interfere with each other, shifting their quantum energy states, making the lobster appear black. The heat of boiling water releases the pigment from the protein, and the lobster turns red. ([Nature](#))

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Flipping for Freedom

Lobster Tail-Flip Escape Response



Caridoid Escape Reaction

When a lobster is taken by surprise, it will rapidly flex its abdomen, propelling itself backwards. ([Wikipedia](#))