

# Burrowing by Chinese mitten crabs

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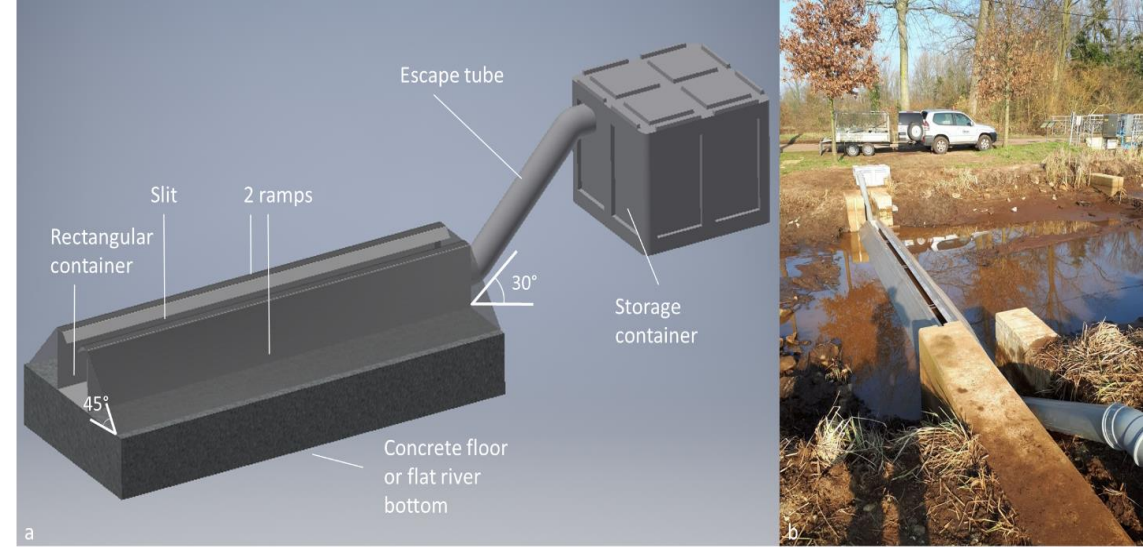


# Chinese mitten crab

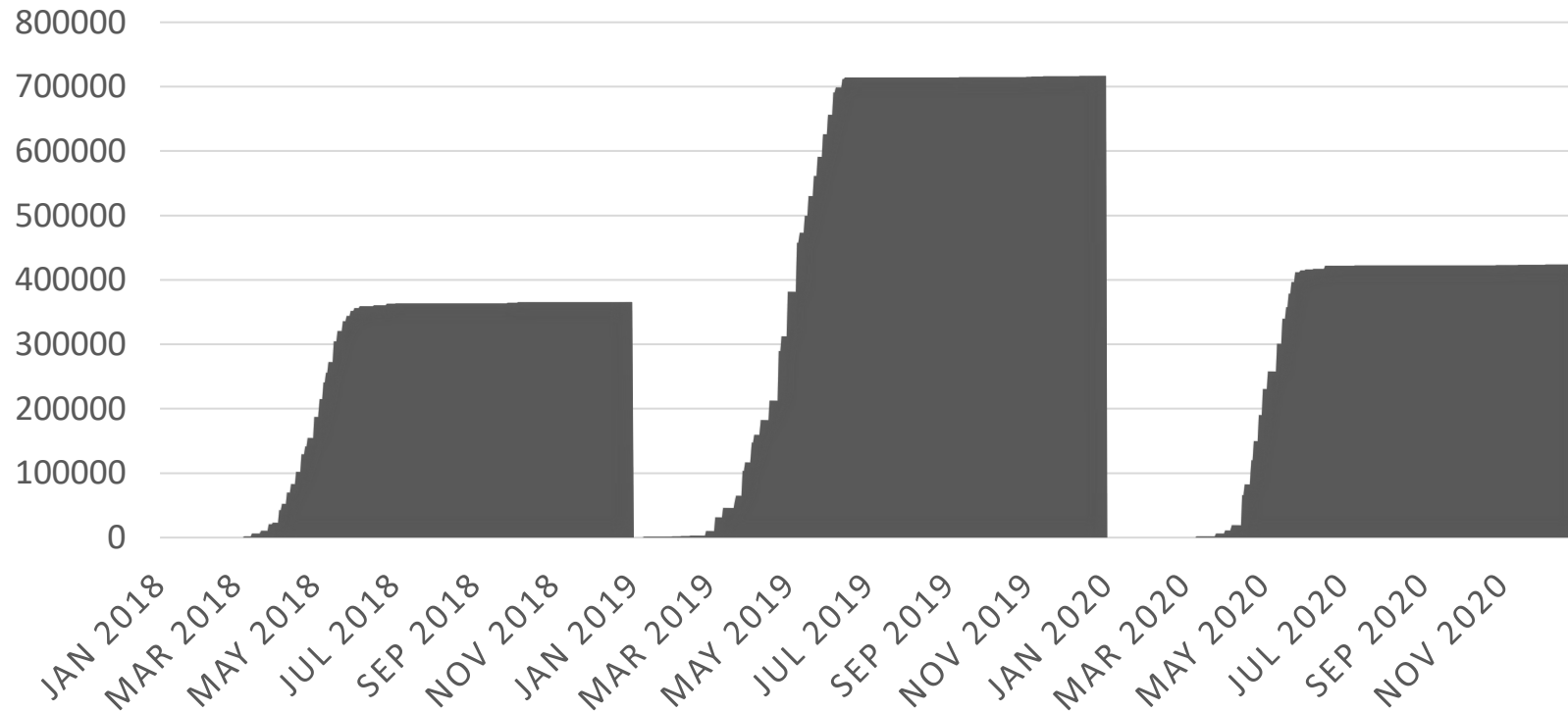
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- Invasive alien species of Union concern
- Present in EU since 1912
- BE: recently: large population!

# Chinese mitten crab



## NUMBER OF CRABS (CUMULATIVE)



# Burrowing by CMC

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- Juvenile crabs
- Tidal areas

Why?

- Molting
- Desiccation
- Predation



**>> What is the effect of Chinese mitten crab burrows on river bank erosion?**

# Comparison with invasive crayfish

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e.g. spiny cheek crayfish and red swamp crayfish

Associated with:

- accelerated lateral erosion
- slumping of bank

In general:

- Larger openings
- Lower burrow densities
- Less complex morphology



Dike Leopoldkanaal

# Burrowing in tidal marsh by CMC

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Lippenbroek burrow densities:

- Average: 25/m<sup>2</sup> creek bank
- Up to 100/m<sup>2</sup> creek bank



Bergenmeersen

# Burrowing in tidal marsh by CMC

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Burrows are highly interconnected



# Burrowing in tidal marsh by CMC

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First results Lippenbroek:

- $12 \pm 6$  burrows connected
- $0.65 \pm 0.33$  m<sup>2</sup> within creek bank



# Questions, comments or collaboration?

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