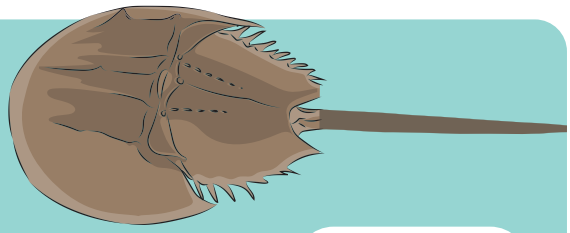
ATLANTIC HORSESHOE CRAB

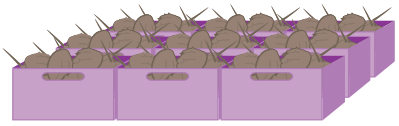
Limulus polyphemus



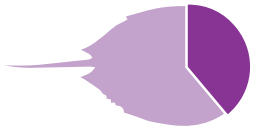
Conservation status: 'VULNERABLE'

Use in biomedical research: Substance taken from crab blood is used to detect bacterial endotoxins in vaccines, injectable medicines and medical devices.*

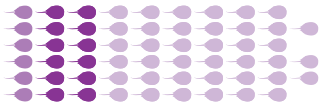
Use is not covered by most lab animal laws.



+500K
CAPTURED EVERY YEAR



25-40%
OF BLOOD IS REMOVED



8-30%
ARE ESTIMATED TO DIE

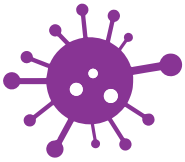
Concerns:

ANIMAL WELFARE

captured, transported, handled, cleaned, restrained, kept out of water, blood taken, released

ENVIRONMENTAL

wild population decreasing; effects on foodchain



GROWING GLOBAL DEMAND FOR MEDICINES

including vaccines for COVID-19, raises serious questions around animal welfare and sustainability

The future:

REPLACING CRAB BLOOD

Synthetic alternative (rFC) - available since 2003 but debate exists over how well it detects endotoxins. Accepted by regulators in Europe. Not accepted in USA. Other alternatives are being developed.

REDUCING CRABS USED

New technology can reduce the amount of crab blood product needed - down 95%.

↓95%

REDUCING SUFFERING

Better handling, less time out of the water and removing less blood could **reduce mortality by +50%.**

↓50%

*Endotoxins can cause serious side effects including blood poisoning. If you, or your pets, have ever had an injection, you are a consumer of horseshoe crab blood.

RSPCA

We believe horseshoe crabs can suffer and want to see genuine commitment to replacing their use in endotoxin tests and to conserving them in the wild.

This research was supported by Wellcome

AnNex Animal Research Nexus

Find out more at: tinyurl.com/HorseshoeCrabReport