

KŌURA LIFE CYCLE

Kōura (also known as kēwai) are freshwater crayfish endemic to Aotearoa. They can be found in streams, rivers, ponds, lakes and wetlands throughout the motu



THERE ARE TWO SPECIES OF KŌURA IN AOTEAROA



Paraneohrops planifrons

are slightly smaller and have less hairy pincers. They can be found in the North Island and in the northwest of the South Island.



Paraneohrops zealandicus

are generally larger and have very hairy pincers. They can be found along the eastern side of the South Island and on Stewart Island.



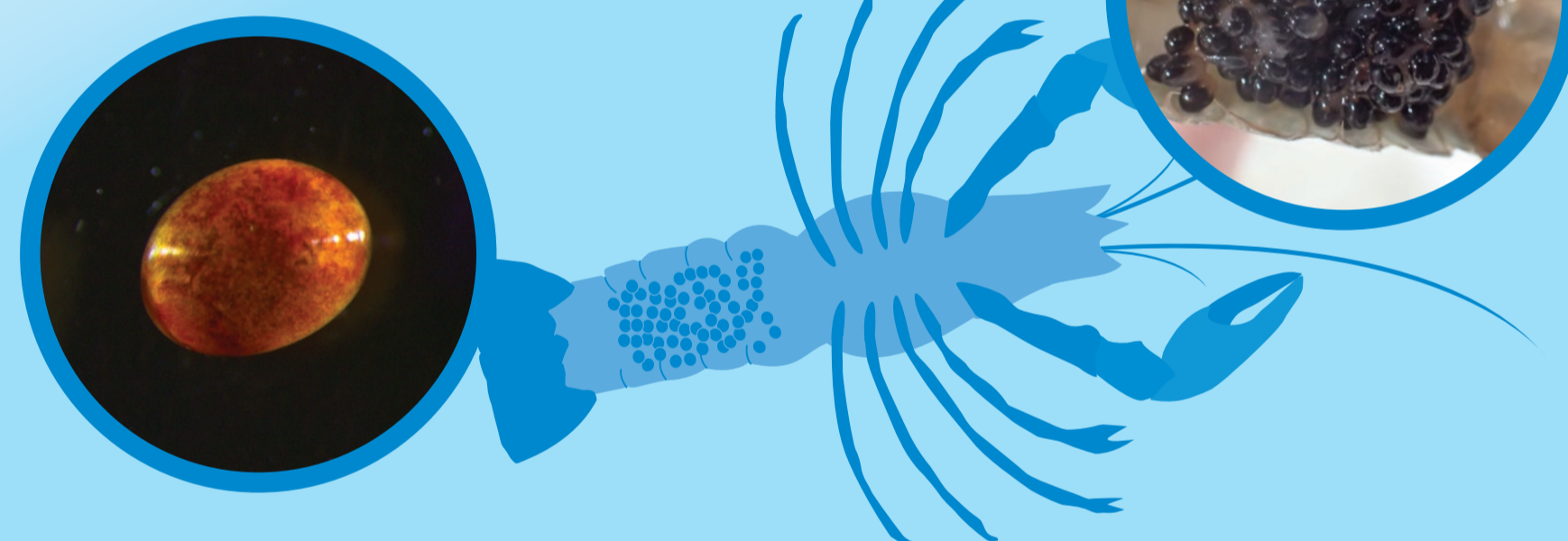
Kōura have their skeleton on the outside, an exoskeleton. They moult their exoskeleton multiple times throughout their life as they grow and replace lost limbs. Kōura are very sensitive during this period, they become soft for a short time as the new outer shell hardens.



Kōura are more active at night and usually seek cover from predators during the day. They are highly territorial and need places to hide from each other as well.

1 EGGS

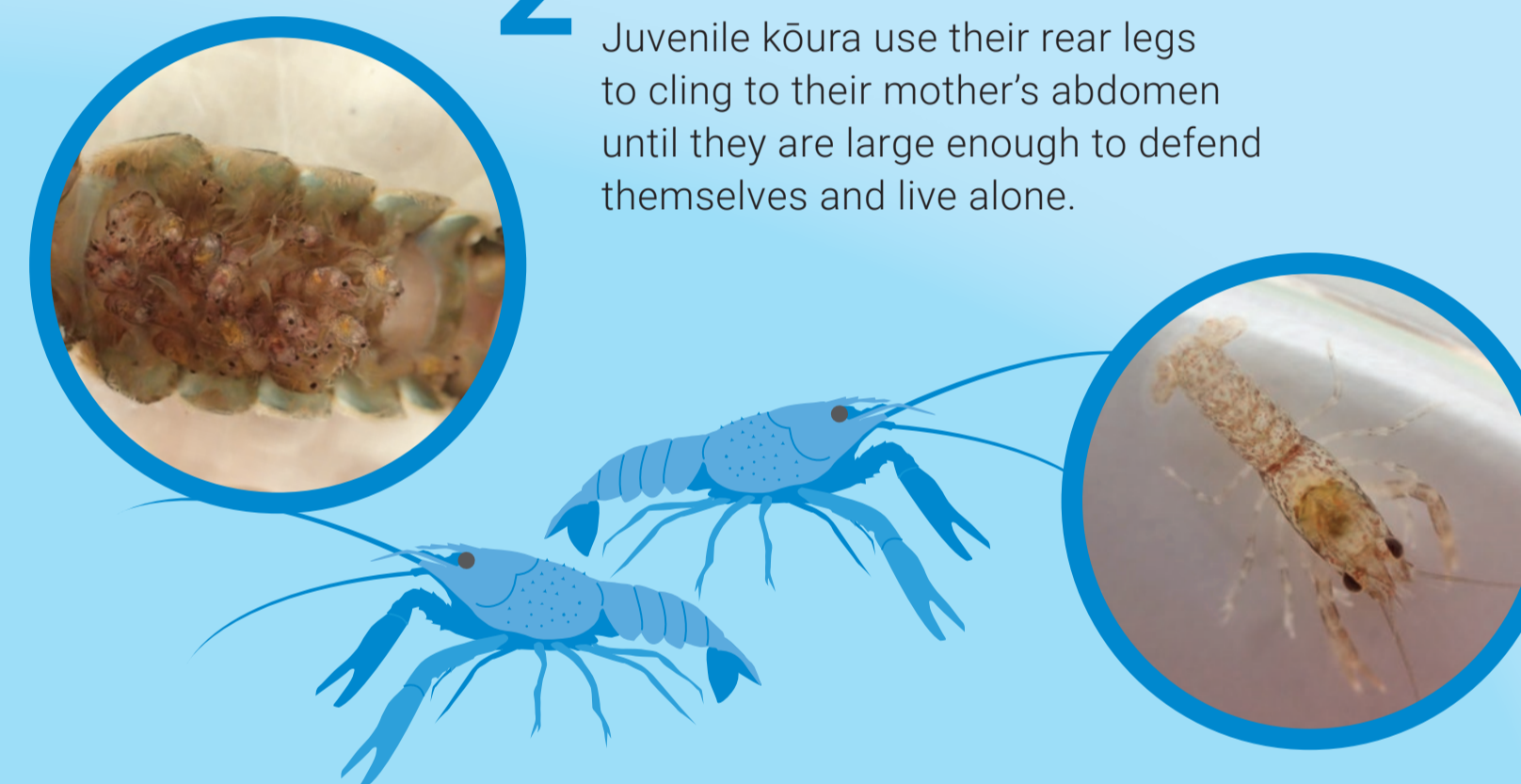
A female can have anywhere between 20 – 320 eggs at a time, which are attached to hairs on the underside of her tail. The eggs stay on the female for between 4 and 15 months until they hatch and fully develop into juvenile kōura – the time it takes can vary depending on the water temperature and species.



Female with eggs and attached sperm packet

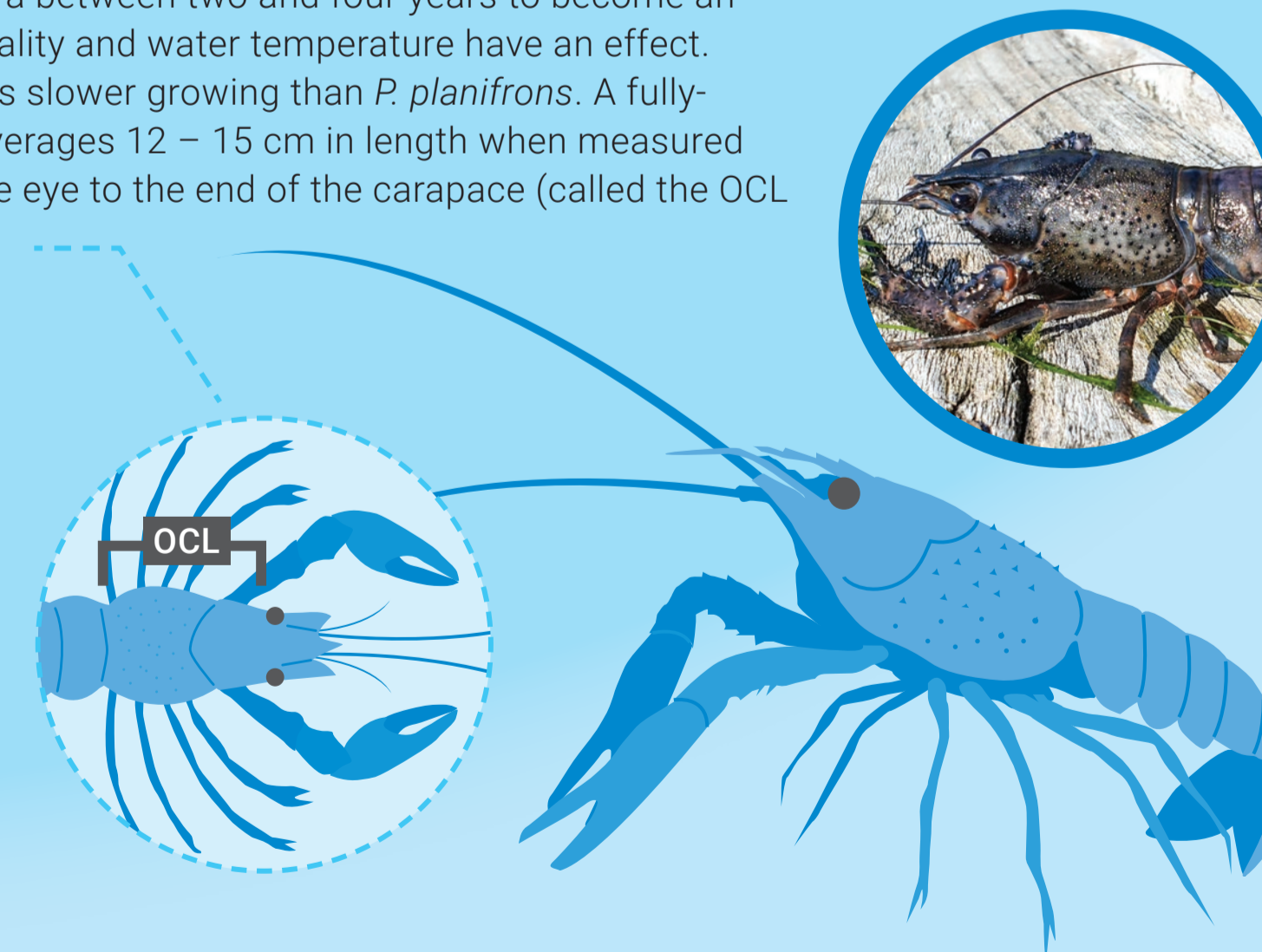
2 JUVENILES

Juvenile kōura use their rear legs to cling to their mother's abdomen until they are large enough to defend themselves and live alone.



3 ADULTS

It can take kōura between two and four years to become an adult – seasonality and water temperature have an effect. *P. zealandicus* is slower growing than *P. planifrons*. A fully-grown kōura averages 12 – 15 cm in length when measured from behind the eye to the end of the carapace (called the OCL measurement)



4 BREEDING

Kōura that live in lakes are thought to have two breeding seasons per year, one in late autumn and one in summer. Male kōura attach a packet of sperm on the underside of the female. When the female lays her eggs, they pass through the packet of sperm and become fertilised.



Male with sperm packet

For more information visit niwa.co.nz/te-kuwaha/koura

