



# Invasion of the Christmas Crabs

VICTOR LÓPEZ (ASCAP)

## INSTRUMENTATION

- 1 Conductor
- 10 Flute
- 2 Oboe
- 10 B♭ Clarinet
- 2 B♭ Bass Clarinet
- 6 E♭ Alto Saxophone
- 4 B♭ Tenor Saxophone
- 2 E♭ Baritone Saxophone
- 8 B♭ Trumpet
- 4 F Horn

- 6 Trombone/Baritone/Bassoon
- 2 Baritone Treble Clef  
(World Part Trombone in B♭ Treble Clef)
- 4 Tuba
- 2 Mallet Percussion  
(Bells, Xylophone)
- 1 Optional Timpani  
(Tune: C, F)
- 2 Percussion 1  
(Snare Drum, Bass Drum)
- 2 Percussion 2  
(Triangle, Crash Cymbals)

### WORLD PARTS

Available for download from [www.alfred.com/worldparts](http://www.alfred.com/worldparts)

- Horn in E♭
- Trombone/Baritone in B♭ Bass Clef
- Tuba in E♭ Bass Clef
- Tuba in E♭ Treble Clef
- Tuba in B♭ Bass Clef
- Tuba in B♭ Treble Clef

## PROGRAM NOTES

If you have a fear of being surrounded by small animals like spiders or rats, Christmas Island in December in Australia is the place to overcome this fear. At the first rains of the wet season (December), about 120 million crabs come out of hiding and start heading towards the ocean. Having been separated from other continents for many millions of years, a remarkably high ratio of Australia's wildlife is found nowhere else in the world. A forested landmass surrounded by nutrient-rich waters, Christmas Island is home to one of the most prolific sea-bird colonies in the world. However, twenty species of crabs are known to inhabit the island, resulting in a diversity and abundance that is unrivalled by any other island on the planet. Land crabs are crucial to the health of the island's rainforest ecosystem. Red and robber crabs are probably the most infamous of the bunch though and their behavior is part of the magical allure that attracts visitors from across the globe. Estimates put the number of red crabs inhabiting the forests in excess of 50 million, meaning there are approximately 5700 crabs per square hectare (which is roughly 2 1/2 acres), which results in a biomass of one ton of crabs per hectare.

The crabs' path remains much the same each year, and often takes them directly through areas of human settlement. Caring little for the disruption they cause, armies of crabs march through school grounds, stop in at the pub, check out the island's shops, invite themselves into homes, pay little respect at the mosque, create new hazards on the golf course and slash the odd tire of local traffic. Visitors find the migration an astounding event to witness, but equally astounding is how the locals take it all in their stride. They have learned to live with the annual invasion and give little heed to the crabs as they swarm across their feet. In an attempt to keep the intrusion to manageable levels, some even affix "crab boards" (wooden planks) across their doorways. The local notice board provides migration updates, informing of road closures and detours. Even the mine's truck drivers do their bit, opting for alternative routes. As for the locals, they are happy to revert to other means of getting around. Bikes, skates and walking become the vogue, and the pace of life slows just that little bit more. Those lucky crabs that make it to the beach celebrate with a dip in the ocean as seawater provides the crabs with a way to replenish vital salts and bodily fluids. Despite their aquatic past, red crabs have tiny gills that extract insufficient oxygen from the water and they no longer have the ability to swim. Finally, as the last quarter of the moon coincides with a low-volume neap tide, the crabs take up position for their speed-dating event. As the tide swells to its fullest level, the red crab mass spawning begins and the females carry out a comical dance in the shallows. They wave their claws in the air and shake their body to expel their fertilized eggs into the sea.

## NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

This composition provides a great opportunity for very young musicians to begin to develop an understanding of dynamics and articulations. To achieve best results, an explanation of the basic dynamic and articulation indications will be necessary. In music, dynamics normally refer to the volume of a sound or note, but can also refer to every aspect of the execution of a given piece, either stylistic (staccato, legato, etc.) or functional (velocity). The two basic dynamic indications in music are *p* or *piano*, meaning "soft," and *f* or *forte*, meaning "loud" or "strong." Additionally, there are subtle degrees of loudness or softness which are indicated by *mp* or *mezzo-piano*, meaning "moderately soft," and *mf* or *mezzo-forte*, meaning "moderately loud." In addition, there are words used to indicate gradual changes in volume. The two most common are *crescendo*, sometimes abbreviated to *cresc.*, meaning "get gradually louder," and *decrescendo* or *diminuendo*, sometimes abbreviated to *decresc.* and *dim.* respectively, meaning "get gradually softer." Signs sometimes referred to as "hairpins" are also used to stand for these words. If the lines are joined at the left, then the indication is to get louder; if they join at the right, the indication is to get softer. In mathematics, students refer to similar signs as less than and greater than. This analogy may help the students better understand the concept. Hairpins are usually written below the staff and they tend to be used for dynamic changes over a relatively short space of time.

There are four primary articulation markings: the tenuto and the accent, which are to be used on long or full value notes, and the staccato and the marcato, which are to be used on short or less than full value notes. Staccato markings are usually found only on notes with durations of one beat or less and generally suggest that the note is to be played less than its full written value. In this composition, measures 1 through 3, and then again in measures 29 through 31 and 45 through 47, the note slurs leading to a staccato quarter note should follow the indicated dynamic level with a slight emphasis on the staccato quarter note. The percussion section should reflect the same dynamics and articulations as the winds. The solo cymbal crash on the fourth beat of measures 4 and 32 should be played aggressively and with a "let ring" effect. The player should use the correct posture and clash the hand cymbals together and then hold them over his/her head while allowing them to go through their slow decay.

At rehearsal number 5, make certain that all quarter notes are played long unless otherwise marked. At measures 16 and 23, due to the modal nature of this composition, a new note, Concert B, has been introduced in several of the instruments. Work on learning the new note collectively as it is easier and will help to facilitate the rehearsal. Note that although the mallet part indicates bells and xylophone, it will sound as effective if played by bells only.

Pickups to measure 21 introduce a two-measure motive of "O Come, All Ye Faithful." Students should be made aware that the technique of borrowing melodic ideas from other tunes is frequently used by many composers, specifically in the jazz idiom. At rehearsal number 29, the introduction is restated followed by the A1 section. Ultimately, at rehearsal number 45, the introduction is repeated again, thereby setting up the final ending. Please note that on the last measure, the note in parenthesis in the flute and trumpet parts is for those students who can easily play the higher note.

I hope that the students and audience enjoy *Invasion of the Christmas Crabs* and that it serves as a unique musical experience for the very young musicians.

*Victor Lopez*

# Invasion of the Christmas Crabs

FULL SCORE  
Approx. Duration - 1:45

By Victor López (ASCAP)

In a "crab-like" style ♩ = 116

Flute

Oboe

B $\flat$  Clarinet

B $\flat$  Bass Clarinet

E $\flat$  Alto  
Saxophone

B $\flat$  Tenor  
Saxophone

E $\flat$  Baritone  
Saxophone

B $\flat$  Trumpet

F Horn

Trombone/Baritone/  
Bassoon

Tuba

Mallet Percussion  
(Bells, Xylophone)

Optional  
Timpani

Percussion 1  
(Snare Drum, Bass Drum)

Percussion 2  
(Triangle, Crash Cymbals)

The musical score is written for a full orchestra and includes the following parts:

- Flute
- Oboe
- B $\flat$  Clarinet
- B $\flat$  Bass Clarinet
- E $\flat$  Alto Saxophone
- B $\flat$  Tenor Saxophone
- E $\flat$  Baritone Saxophone
- B $\flat$  Trumpet
- F Horn
- Trombone/Baritone/Bassoon
- Tuba
- Mallet Percussion (Bells, Xylophone)
- Optional Timpani
- Percussion 1 (Snare Drum, Bass Drum)
- Percussion 2 (Triangle, Crash Cymbals)

The score is in 4/4 time and features a "crab-like" style with a tempo of ♩ = 116. The key signature has two flats (B $\flat$  and E $\flat$ ). The dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *f* (forte). The percussion parts include a snare drum and bass drum pattern (S.D. and B.D.) and a triangle/crash cymbal pattern (Percussion 2). The score is divided into four measures, with a "Solo" marking at the end of the fourth measure.



13

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Sax. *mf*

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

13

Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn./Bar./Bsn.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Bells *p.*

Xyl. *mf*

Timp.

Perc. 1

Cr. Cyms. (Hi-Hat style)

Perc. 2 *lightly*

10 11 12 13 14

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn./Bar./Bsn.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

15 16 17 18 19

21

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

21

Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn./Bar./  
Bsn.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Both

Bells

Xyl.

20

21

22

23

24

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn./Bar./Bsn.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Xyl.

Bells

Xyl.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2





33

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

33

Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn./Bar./Bsn.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Fl.  
Ob.  
Cl.  
B. Cl.  
A. Sax.  
T. Sax.  
Bar. Sax.  
Tpt.  
Hn.  
Tbn./Bar./Bsn.  
Tuba  
Mlt. Perc.  
Timp.  
Perc. 1  
Perc. 2

41 45

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

41 45

Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn./Bar./Bsn.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

*p* *mf*

*p* *mf*

*p* *mf*

*p* *mf*

*p* *mf*

*p* *mf*

*p* *mf*

*p* *mf*

*p* *mf*

*p* *mf*



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