

Hermit Crab

Scientific Name: Paguroidea

Brief Description:

Hermit Crabs are nocturnal scavengers that will eat almost anything. They have long curved abdomens, which are soft, unlike the hard, calcified abdomens seen in related crustaceans.

With practice and patience, hermit crabs can be handled. Hermit crabs like in large groups in the wild.



Average Size: The Hermit Crab is approximately two-to-six inches long, depending on species.

Life Span: Hermit Crabs can live up to twenty years with proper care.

Feeding:

- Use high-quality commercial hermit crab food.
- Hermit Crabs take small bites and eat slowly, usually during the night time.
- Treats are suggested, but include natural foods as well.
- Hermit Crabs will eat non-citrus fruits such as: mangos, coconut, papayas, vegetables (non-starchy), nuts, applesauce, seaweed, drained brine shrimp and fish flakes.
- Also use a calcium source, such as cuttlebone.
- Hermit Crabs don't have big enough claws to grab on to pellet-type foods. Feed them one teaspoon of powdered hermit crab food, or pellets crushed into powder.

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- Supplement diet with dark, leafy vegetables such as kale or broccoli and fruit, such as, apple, grapes and banana.
- Do not use a metallic dish, crabs are sensitive to metal. Use a ceramic or non-metal, non-porous material.



Housing:

- One Hermit Crab will require a ten-gallon aquarium or larger tank with a glass of screen lid.
- New shells should be larger than the current one to ensure room for growth.
- Shell opening should be larger than the Hermit Crab's larger pincer.
- Also provide climbing materials in the tank.
- Use sand or smooth aquarium-safe gravel, bark or mulch as a substrate for your crab.

Maintenance:

- First thing, daily, be sure to check the tanks humidity level.
- Your Hermit Crab should be bathed, once a week, in fresh, de-chlorinated water.
 - o Immerse the crab, upside down in room temperature water.
 - o The crab may get out of the shell and walk around.
 - o Remove the crab from the tub and allow to dry for a few minutes.
 - o Drain the remaining water from the crab's shell and return to its owner.
- ☐ Remove debris and old food from the substrate, every other day.

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Water and Accessories:

- Always have a shallow dish of chlorine-free water for your pet.
- If using a sponge as a water source, replace it often.
- A second shallow bowl of saline water is suggested as it helps maintain balance in the crabs "shell water".



Reproductive:

Crazy Crabs breed by scattering their eggs into the water. The eggs develop in the ocean as part of the plankton community. They return to land after a few years once grown to the size of a pea. They cannot breed in captivity.

Notes and Comments:

Hermit crabs are nocturnal, but may be active on a cloudy day. Hide food in the crabs substrate, it will only eat very little and very slowly as well. Hermit crabs usually molt once a year and will bury itself in the sand. It is important not to disturb the crab during this process as the crab is very fragile. It will need to be protected from other crabs by installing a divider in the tank, but keep it moist.

Hermit crabs enjoy being in a tank with other hermit crabs. They also enjoy climbing so put a small climbing apparatus in the enclosure as well.