

# Hermit Crab



## *Ceponobita clypeatus*

Hermit crab is a bit of a misnomer as these interesting little guys prefer to be around their own kind, travelling in the wild in packs of up to 100. With proper care hermits can grow up to 6 inches and live longer than 10 years.

### Housing

#### Size

It's important to provide a living area for your crab that is large enough to accommodate all of the necessary care products while still leaving adequate room for your crab to be able to roam if it so chooses. Another important consideration when deciding on an enclosure size is how many crabs you'll be keeping in your colony (remember, they like to have friends!). A 10 gallon tank should be sufficient for a single crab, or even a colony of small crabs. You'll have to increase the enclosure size to match your crabs as the number (and size) of your crabs increase.

#### Substrate

There are two main options for substrate: sand and coconut fiber. We recommend coconut fiber because it offers a few perks that sand does not. Coconut fiber, usually sold in a compressed brick, holds moisture well, therefore making it great for maintaining appropriate humidity. Coconut fiber is also an excellent medium for molting, as over time it will compact a little and may become stable enough to support burrowing by your crab. You'll want to make sure that the substrate is deep enough for the crab to bury in.

#### Temperature

Hermit crabs are tropical animals and will do best at warmer temperatures. Maintaining a range between 75°F and 85°F will keep your hermits happy. This is best achieved through the use of a small heating pad affixed to the back of your enclosure. If you're outside the recommended temperature range for your hermits it could result in lethargy (too cold) or loss of limbs (too hot).



## Some products to look for

- Zoo Med ReptiTherm Mini Under Tank Heater
- HBH Hermit Crab Variety Bites
- Zoo Med Precision Analog Thermo-hygrometer
- FMR Mister Trainer Water Bottle
- Zoo Med Hermit Crab Bright Bowls
- Hagen Crabworx Hotel Ornament
- FMR Small Natural Choya Wood
- Exo Terra Plantation Soil
- Hagen Crabworx Hammock



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## Humidity

Humidity is of paramount importance for your hermit crabs. Hermit crabs breathe through gills and need adequate humidity in order to breathe properly. An appropriate choice in bedding can help with this, but some misting may be necessary in order to keep the humidity in the desired 75%-85% range. In addition to misting, at least two water dishes should be offered at all times, one containing dechlorinated fresh water and the other containing salt water. Neither dish should exceed ½ inch in depth. A sponge may be added to either dish to help your crab enter and exit.

## Toys

Hermit crabs can be quite active (in the wild they can travel up to 1 mile a night!) so they need plenty of stuff to interact with in their home. They love to climb and will utilize just about anything they can to get up in the air. Some of the better choices for climbing include choya wood and plastic plants, while a coconut shell can make a great hiding spot. You'll want to make sure you have plenty of empty shells for your crabs in case they decide they need to upgrade.

## Diet

Hermit crabs are scavengers in the wild and will therefore eat just about anything. There are several appropriate commercially available hermit crab diets. In addition to your staple hermit crab diet you should offer treats. Just like people, your hermie's will appreciate variety. Some ideas for treats are a mix of fruit and nuts, freeze dried krill, and if you're feeling particularly adventurous (and have a good sized colony of crabs) you could even try a fish head obtained from your local fish market.



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