



PET PLANET
COMMUNITY

CARE
GUIDE

LAND HERMIT CRABS



EXPERIENCE LEVEL



Level 4: Intermediate

4 out of 5: Advanced!

ORIGIN

Natives to Coastal ecosystems in tropical regions around the world.



SPECIES FEATURES

Male: No Gonopores

Female: Present Gonopores



Caution inspecting for gonopores it can severely hurt them if forced.

Adult Size: 1-6in depend on specie

Weight: 0.22 - 1 lbs (adults)

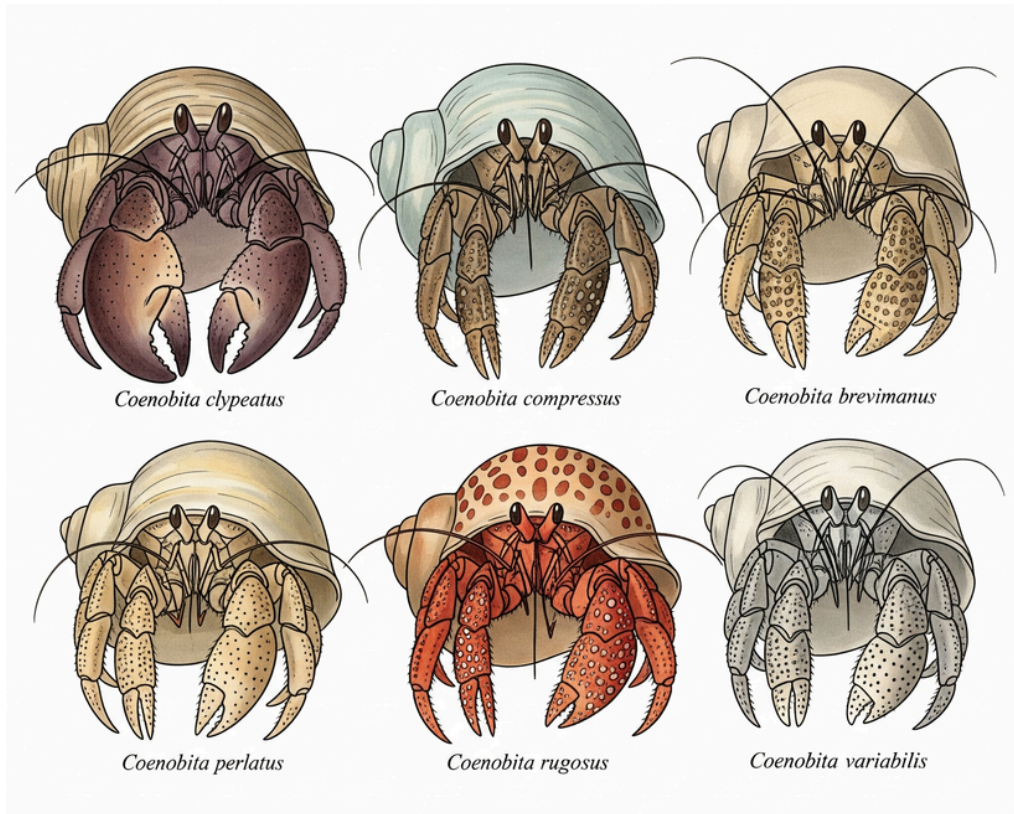
Lifespan: 50+ yrs





Most common in the pet trade species.

Wild-Caught: All pet-trade hermit crabs are taken from the wild. A 1-inch crab may already be several years old.



1. **Caribbean hermit crab** (*Coenobita clypeatus*) aka purple pincher, the most popular pet species.
2. **Ecuadorian hermit crab** (*Coenobita compressus*) smaller, often more active, with lighter-colored claws.
3. **Indonesian hermit crab** (*Coenobita brevimanus*) also called Indo crab, larger, with dark-colored bodies.
4. **Strawberry hermit crab** (*Coenobita perlatus*) bright red/orange, less common, needs strict care.
5. **Ruggie hermit crab** (*Coenobita rugosus*) sometimes sold in the U.S. and Asia, very active.
6. **Australian hermit crab** (*Coenobita variabilis*) mostly found in Australia as pets.



DIET



They require a very varied daily diet.

- Offer a varied diet: protein, vegetables, fruits, grains, and calcium.
- Provide food daily.
- Include calcium for healthy exoskeletons.
- Remove old food and keep the feeding area clean.



✗ Feed only commercial hermit-crab pellets.

✗ Give processed, salty, sugary, or seasoned foods.

✗ Feed food with pesticides or chemicals.

✗ Assume they only need food every few days. (They eat everyday)



Make sure to look up any food you're not sure that could be toxic to hermit crabs like certain "mushrooms"

HYDRATION



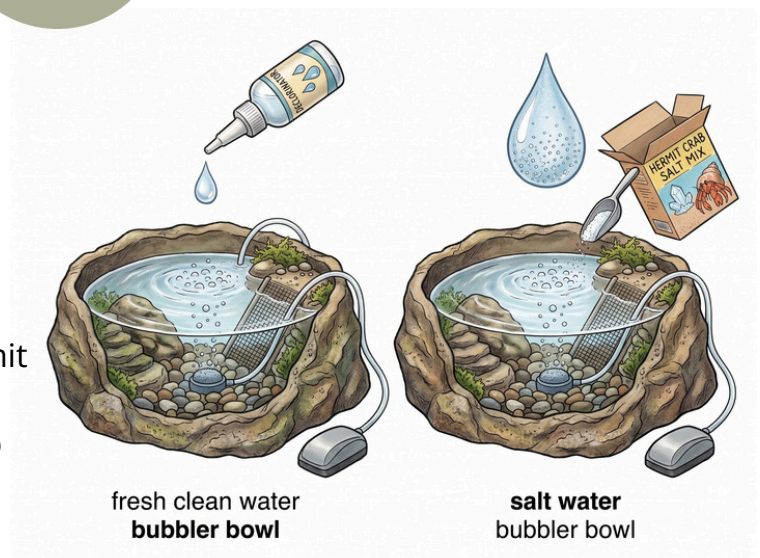
Specail Hermit Crabs Salt Water. and Fresh water pools



Use marine salt made for hermit crabs.
RO water, or dechlorinated tap water.



Keep both bowls clean and available at all times. Provide safe access in and out.





IDEAL CONDITIONS



Day temp: 78–80°F



Basking: Not recommended. Use Heating Paths.



Night: 75–80°F



Humidity: 80% always

INSPIRATION CRABITATS

Need Humidity at all times to breath. Deep substrate to molt. Space to walk and climb.

Indoor, 50 gallons.

⚠ Caution:

✗ No bare tank. They need plenty of hides, explore & enrichment.

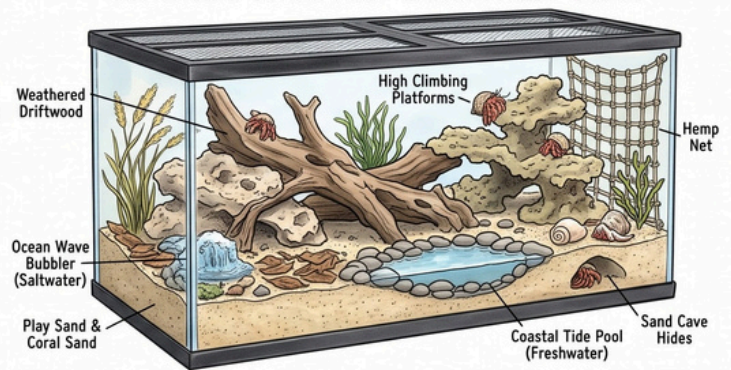
Water pools available at all times.

Thermometer and Humidity meter at all times to monitor.

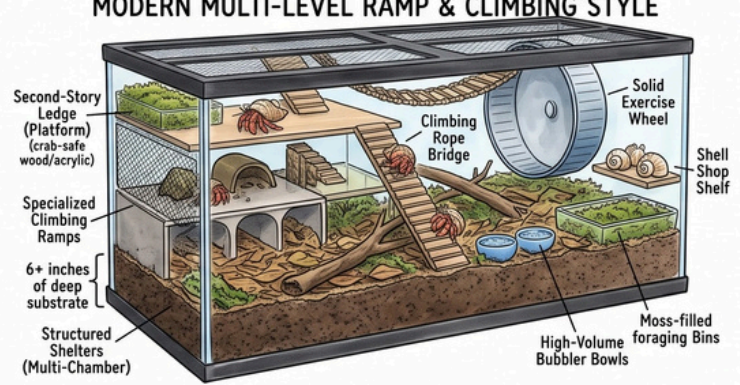
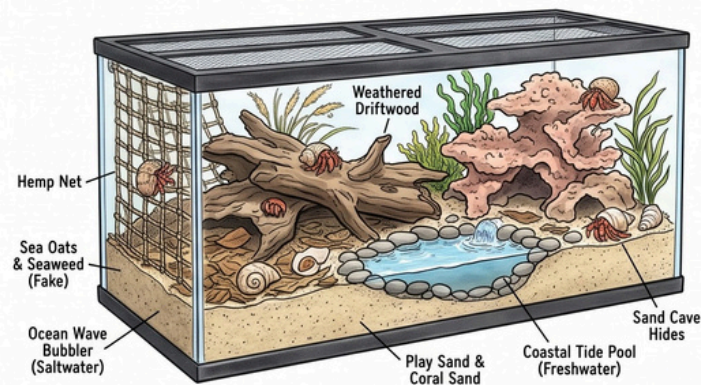
NATURAL JUNGLE STYLE

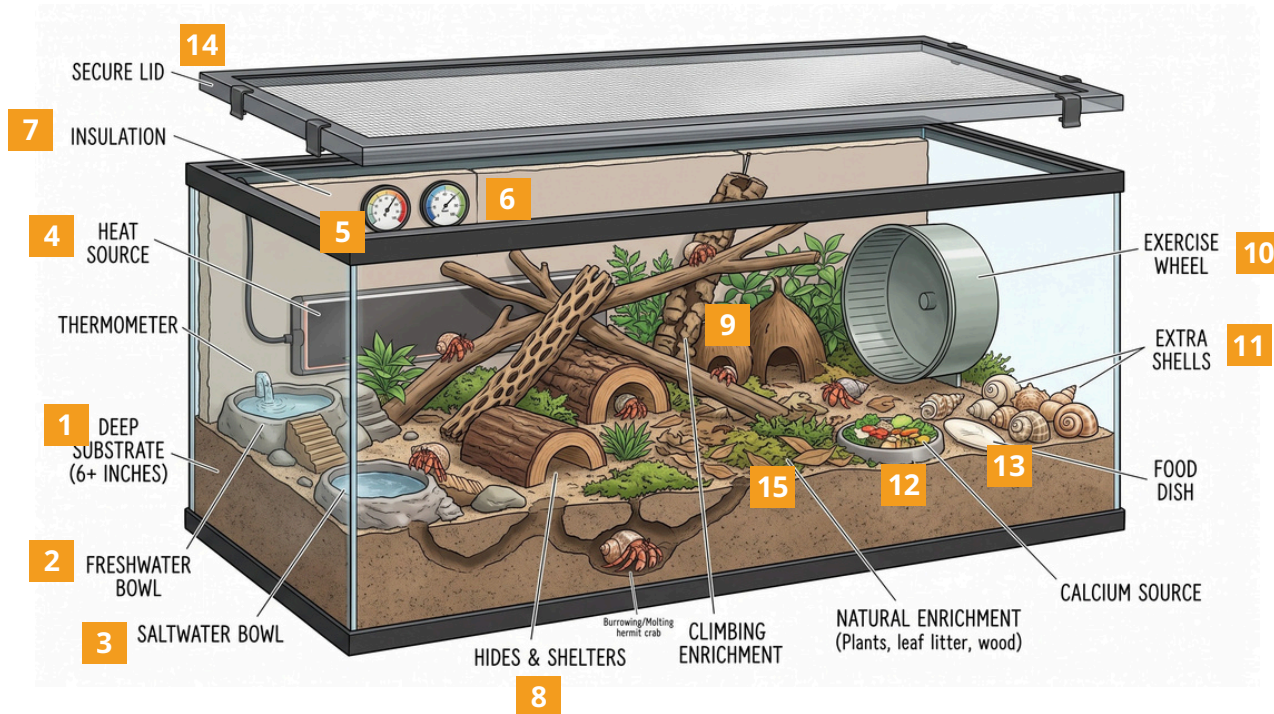


BEACHSIDE CORAL REEF & DRIFTWOOD STYLE



MODERN MULTI-LEVEL RAMP & CLIMBING STYLE





- 1 Deep substrate: 6+ inches for burrowing and molting
- 2 Freshwater bowl: Always available
- 3 Saltwater bowl: Always available
- 4 Heat source: Maintains proper temperature
- 5 Thermometer: Monitors temperature
- 6 Hygrometer: Monitors humidity
- 7 Insulation: Helps maintain stable temperature and humidity
- 8 Hides & shelters: Multiple safe hiding places
- 9 Climbing enrichment: Branches, climbing toys, etc.
- 10 Exercise wheel: Safe opportunity for exercise
- 11 Extra shells: Multiple appropriately sized shells
- 12 Food dish: For a varied diet
- 13 Calcium source: Supports healthy molts
- 14 Secure lid: Maintains humidity and prevents escapes
- 15 Natural enrichment: Plants, leaf litter, cork, wood, and other safe materials

ENCLOSURE

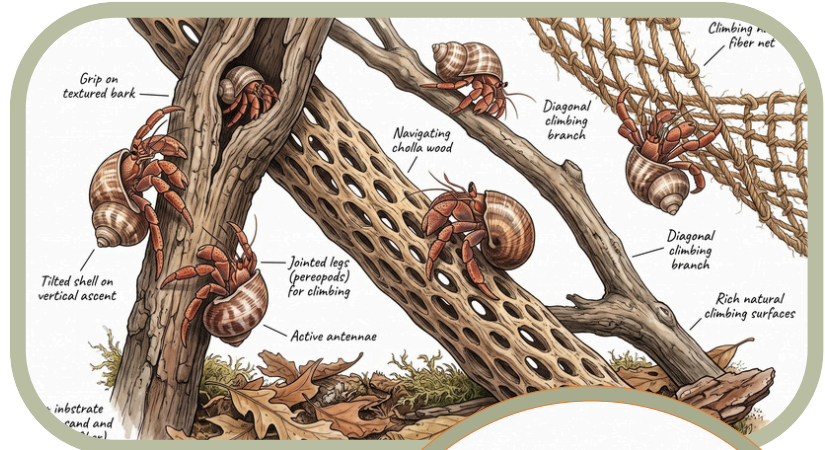
Need humidity and tropical warmth at all times. Also always make proper shells sizes available for all your hermit crabs.

Indoor enclosure always.



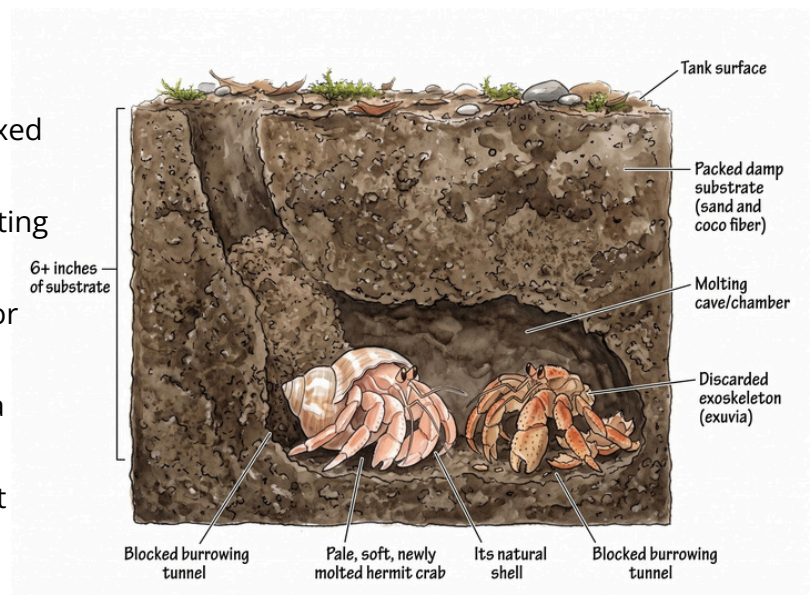
ENRICHMENT & BEHAVIOR

- **Love to climb & explore**
- **Dig & burrow:** especially before molting
- **Forage:** enjoy searching for food
- **Explore new textures & spaces**
- **Change shells:** inspect and try different shells
- **Hide & rest:** need quiet, secure spaces
- **Use their antennae:** smell and explore their surroundings
- **Social animals:** enjoy living with other hermit crabs
- **Active at night:** naturally more active after dark
- **Enjoy variety:** rotate safe enrichment without constantly changing their habitat



MOLTING TIME

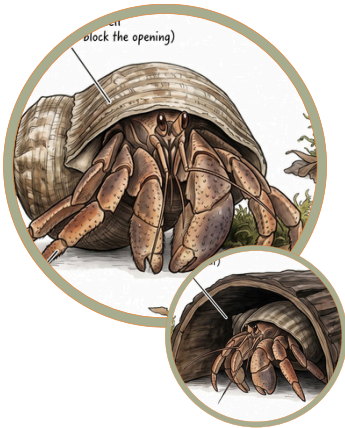
- **Begins:** When they need to grow — no fixed season
- **Behavior:** Less active, digging, hiding, eating less
- **Burrows:** May disappear underground for weeks or months
- **Do not disturb:** Never dig up or handle a molting crab
- **Deep substrate:** Essential for a safe molt
- **Humidity:** Must stay high and stable
- **After molting:** Exoskeleton is soft and vulnerable





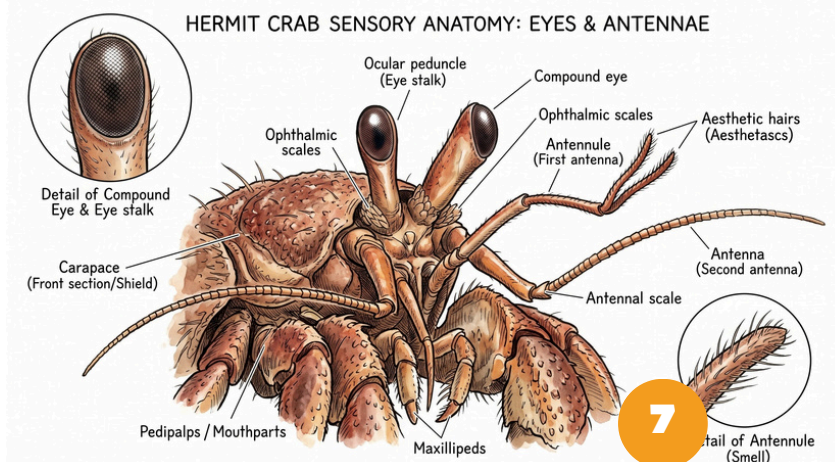
HEALTH & SAFETY CHECK

-  **Shell fit:** Can fully retreat into the shell and close the opening with its large claw
-  **Shell options:** Has several clean, suitable shells available
-  **Shell condition:** No cracks, holes, sharp edges, or damage
-  **Body:** No unusual swelling, wounds, wet/mushy areas, or discharge
-  **Legs & claws:** Present, moving normally, and not visibly injured



-  **Eyes & antennae:** Moving normally; no crust, swelling, or discharge
-  **Odor:** No foul or rotten smell coming from the crab
-  **Water:** Smell and look for cloudiness, debris, algae, or contamination

-  **Food:** Smell for spoilage; remove anything moldy, rotten, or attracting pests
-  **Substrate:** Smell for sour/rotten odors; check for mold, flooding, or pests
-  **Temperature:** Check with a thermometer
-  **Humidity:** Check with a hygrometer
-  **Shell choices:** Make sure clean, suitable shells are always available
-  **Behavior:** Hiding for too long or unusual. And often molting is might be a sign of an unhappy crab





ADOPT PET CHECK LIST



Enclosure

40+ -gallon tank minimum
Secure lid
Multiple crabs: 4+



Substrate

6+ inches deep
Playsand + coconut fiber



Water

Freshwater bowl
Saltwater bowl
Dechlorinator drops
Marine salt made for hermit crabs
Safe ramps/rocks for climbing in & out



Cleaning & Maintenance

Feeding tongs
Scoop
Spray bottle for humidity
Spare substrate/materials



⊘ Avoid

Painted shells
Gravel-only substrate
Calcium sand
Small plastic cages
Sponges in water bowls
Soap or chemical cleaners



Temperature & Humidity

Thermometer
Digital hygrometer
Heat source paths
Insulation



Hides & Enrichment

Cork bark, logs & hides
Climbing structures
Safe exercise wheel
Leaf litter
Plants & natural textures



Shells

3-5+ extra shells per crab
Correct size & opening shape
Natural, unpainted shells



Food & Supplements

Quality hermit crab food:
Protein sources
Fruits & vegetables
Calcium source (not in sand)
Cuttlebone or crushed eggshell





SURRENDERING YOUR PET

If You Can't Keep Your Turtle:

- ✗ Never release into the wild. They may not survive. Can harm native wildlife
- ✓ Contact a rescue (like Crustacean Plantation Inc.)
They'll help or connect you with an organization in your area.

Surrendering is safe, free, and kind.

ADOPT A PET

Rescue First: Check exotic pet rescues and Facebook groups — hermit crabs are commonly abandoned pets.

Responsible Breeders: Captive breeding is extremely rare. Hermit crabs in the pet trade are wild-caught, and painted shells are often used. **Best choice: don't support the industry.**

Check Legitimacy: If purchasing, verify they are well cared for: healthy crabs, clean enclosures, appropriate habitats, clear care information, and no painted shells.

FUN FACTS!

Hermit crabs can “shell shop” together! They may line up by shell size and quickly switch shells in a chain reaction when a better shell becomes available.





SPECIAL THANK YOU



Janie Groeling

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