

Hermit Crab (Land)

Coenobita clypeatus



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Hermit crabs are nocturnal scavengers that will eat almost anything. With practice and patience, hermit crabs can be handfed. Hermit crabs live in large groups in the wild.

Is a hermit crab the right choice for your aquarium?

Yes	No	Check "Yes" or "No" after reading the following statements:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. I have room for an appropriate size aquarium.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. The hermit crab would be compatible with my other aquarium inhabitants.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. I can commit to providing proper care for this hermit crab.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this crab.



If you answered "Yes" to these statements, a land hermit crab may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a hermit crab and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible aquarium care.

Average Size 2 to 6 inches long, depending on species **Life Span** Up to 20 years with proper care

Diet High quality commercial hermit crab food
Recommended treats include natural foods: any non-citrus fruits (especially mangoes, coconut, and papayas); vegetables (except starchy vegetables, such as potatoes); nuts; applesauce; seaweed; drained brine shrimp; and fish flakes
Need calcium source (such as cuttlebone)

Feeding Crush all pelleted foods before feeding and feed at night.
Non-metallic, non-porous water dish, shallow enough to prevent drowning.

Housing Size – 10-gallon or larger glass aquarium with a glass or screen lid.
Habitat – New shells should be larger than the current shell, and the shell opening should be the same size as the hermit crab's large pincer; provide climbing materials.
Substrate – Sand or smooth aquarium-safe gravel (not treated with epoxy), bark or mulch.
Humidity – Should remain at 70% to 80% (if their gills can dry out, they cannot breathe) Place damp moss in habitat to maintain humidity.
Temperature – Should range from 70° F. to 80° F.
Water – Always have a shallow dish of chlorine-free water available. If using a sponge it must be replaced often as the mold and bacteria that grows in sponges is fatal to hermit crabs.
A second shallow bowl of saline water is recommended as it helps to maintain the correct ion balance in the crabs "shell water".

- Recommended Supplies**
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate size glass aquarium | <input type="checkbox"/> Hermit crab food | <input type="checkbox"/> Décor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substrate | <input type="checkbox"/> Water conditioner | <input type="checkbox"/> Light |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water and food dishes | <input type="checkbox"/> Humidity gauge | <input type="checkbox"/> Heater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Climbing and hiding places | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer | <input type="checkbox"/> Cuttlebone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book about hermit crabs | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra shells | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Sea Sponge |

Hermit Crab (Land)

Coenobita sp



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Characteristics Nocturnal, but may be active on a cloudy day.

Hide food in substrate; Eat only a little, and very slowly.

Usually molt once a year; will bury itself in the sand; do not disturb during this process as the crab is very fragile; protect from other crabs by installing a divider; keep moist.

Very friendly toward other hermit crabs; recommend keeping more than one together.

Enjoy climbing; if climbing apparatus not provided will climb tank and walk across screen lids.

If a hermit crab grabs you with a claw, hold the crab under running water or support the crab with your other hand so that it feels secure; the crab should release you.

Use of copper-based medications can be toxic.

Habitat Maintenance Check humidity daily

Bathe hermit crabs every week in fresh, dechlorinated water: immerse the crab upside down in room temperature dechlorinated water, the crab may get out of the shell and walk around; remove the crab from the tub (crabs can drown), allow the crab to air dry for a few minutes; drain the remaining water from the crab's shell, and return the shell to it's owner.

Remove debris and old food from substrate every other day.

Compatibility Compatible with other hermit crabs

Signs of a Healthy Hermit Crab

- Healthy appetite
- Active

Common Health Issues	Health Issue (alpha)	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
	Mites	Mites appear on crab.	Completely clean habitat and habitat contents in boiling water. Replace substrate. Bathe crab in room temperature water several times a day for 3 to 4 days.

Red Flags

- Listlessness
- Loss of appetite
- Abandons shell and does not return

If you notice any of these signs, test water quality and improve as necessary, or contact your exotic animal veterinarian.

Preventing Common Health Issues Maintain humid environment; the gills of the crab must remain moist to breathe.

Maintain good water quality with regular water changes and do not disturb when molting.

Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the above sources or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.