

Hermit Crabs

Hermit crabs are brilliant pets for beginners. Some may think that they can be solitary but they require to be in a pair at the very least, if not a large group. They can be commonly found in tropical areas near the sea of the Indo-region, western Atlantic and the western Caribbean. When the correct care is given, hermit crabs can live for up to 20 years in captivity.

There are also entirely aquatic species of hermit crabs.



Glossary

Reptile – A cold-blooded vertebrate with scaly skin.

Amphibian – A cold-blooded vertebrate that begins life as an aquatic animal and grows into a terrestrial adult with lungs.

Terrestrial – A ground dwelling animal.

Arboreal – An animal that lives in trees.

Diurnal – Awake in the day.

Nocturnal – Awake during the night.

UVB – Ultraviolet radiation.

Colubrid – A family of snakes.

Hybrid – Offspring from animals of different species.

Morph – Colourations created due to genetics.

Musk – Unpleasant odour released when an animal is stressed or feels threatened.

Live plants are only available on special order

If you require any further information, please ask our pet care advisors who will be very happy to help.

Opening Times

Monday – Saturday: 9am – 6pm

Sunday: 9.30am – 4pm

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Hermit Crabs



Care & Advice Sheet

Inspiration for your Home & Garden

Size & Housing

With suitable care, hermit crabs can grow to approximately 10cm. Small plastic enclosures are not suitable long term, but can be used temporarily. We recommend the Exo Terra or Komodo reptile tanks but covered aquariums are also suitable:

60 x 45 x 45 cm / 24 x 18 x 18" – Minimum for 2-3 Adults



Handling

It is perfectly fine to handle hermit crabs but you must always be aware that they are crabs and they can pinch. When handling, always keep an eye on the wandering crab to prevent the chance of being pinched or losing the crab. Always pick up the crab from the back of his shell. Do not pick them up from the front and never close your fist around them. You can walk them from one hand to the other or put them onto a steady surface. Be careful not to drop them as falls can be fatal.

Substrate & Furnishings

Empty shells of different sizes must be scattered around the enclosure to allow the crab to grow.

Hermit crabs will burrow and bury themselves in the substrate. This means that it should be at least 3-4 inches deep. Suitable substrates include sand, humus bricks, forest bedding or eco-earth. It is possible to use any of these, but it is also suitable to combine a soil based substrate with a sand substrate as this will help with humidity. Provide furnishings such as artificial or live plants, driftwood, logs and rocks for the crabs to climb over and use damp moss around the enclosure. It is also best to leave an area clear so the crabs have space to run if they want too. Spot pick the enclosure daily and full clean once a month using a reptile specific disinfectant. Use a metal strainer to sift through the sand to remove uneaten food, faeces or exoskeleton.

Please Note – Not all live plants are suitable for hermit crabs.

Lighting & Temperature

Overly bright lights will cause the hermit crabs to remain hidden most of the time so this is not necessary. The crabs will need to have a temperature that does not drop below 24°C as constant low temperatures can kill them. Keep the temperature up

by using a heat mat, heat bulb or ceramic heat emitter with a guard controlled by a thermostat at all times.

Food & Water

Hermit crabs are omnivores and should be fed a diet consisting of both vegetation and meat. Offer a variety of foods such as:

- Kale
- Watercress
- Chopped apples
- Grapes
- Pellet foods
- Grated carrot
- Dried sealife such as plankton or krill

They should also be provided with a calcium supplement at least three times a week. Provide two shallow water dishes – use aquarium salt to make one salt water. **Do not use table salt.** They require a fairly high humidity as they come from tropical areas so the enclosure should be misted regularly to keep the enclosure moist but not soaking wet.