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## **How to care for your Hermit Crab**

Please read the following closely, it is important to the health of your new pet:

- Aquatic lights, heating mats or heat rocks are ideal because crabs become inactive when cold. They should be kept in a warm (ideally between 21 and 27 degrees Celsius) and moist environment, and this can easily be monitored with a "stick on" thermometer. On cold days if you do not have a heating pad or heating rock, you can move the crab tank into a sunny spot. But do not let them get too hot!
- Plastic or glass fish tanks we recommend for housing, always using the lids to keep the escape artists in. Try chicken wire folded around the sides of the tank for extra climbing room (wire must first be washed in vinegar).
- Gravel, sand or shell grit, are great to keep crabs on, but the floor must be kept dry. Gravel should be washed every few weeks when it gets dirty, and dried thoroughly. Shell grit and sand should be replaced at least every month or whenever necessary.
- To breath crabs need humidity, and will suffocate if his environment becomes too dry. So the crab's water bowl must always be full.
- When handling crabs, keep them on your flattened palm, but make sure they do not fall off the edge. Keep crabs off carpet, it can be dangerous to their health. If they do happen to "grab on" to you, generally blowing them will make them release, or for more stubborn crabs, a quick rinse under the tap. Try not pull them off as it hurts the crab.
- Hermit Crab Food provides a perfect dry food diet, to which small amounts of most vegetables, fruits and grasses should be added.

- Hermit crabs need fresh water for drinking and salt water to condition their exoskeleton and cleaning inside the shell. Use Water Ager to remove the Chlorine, Fluoride and heavy metals from the tap water. If the crab does not go into the weekly salt bath himself, slowly submerge the crab on his back, gently move him around, remove and place somewhere to dry where the water can run out of his shell.
- A pinch of natural rock salt in a weekly bath is essential for the conditioning of their exoskeleton and cleaning inside the shell. Iodised salt should not be used.
- Natural sea sponge is placed wet in the tank and is eaten to provide essential minerals, and provides humidity. The sponge should be rinsed thoroughly about once a week.
- A ceramic food bowl is difficult to knock over (resulting in far less food wastage) or chew, more hygienic and easy to clean. Crabs cannot swim, so drinking water bowls must be very shallow, or half filled with gravel. The drinking water must be kept fresh.
- You should provide your crabs with a rock, driftwood or ornament for climbing. To keep your crab active, these can be re-arranged and swapped weekly to keep the environment interesting. Make sure you handle your crab regularly, so they stay used to it.
- Spare shells (we have fantastic hand painted ones) of a variety of larger sizes should be provided for the crabs to try for size, and eventually move into when necessary. They grow about 4mm each year. When crabs molt (and usually eat) their exoskeleton each summer, they re-grow missing legs.
- Crabs are very susceptible to poisoning, so be very careful of any chemicals near their tank or wherever you let crabs play. The life expectancy of a crab in the perfect conditions is 40 years, so look after them.

*The above information is only meant as a guide, and you should not hesitate to contact our helpful staff if you have any problems or concerns. Enjoy and look after your new hermy.*