



**P & K Pets
Info Sheet #05**

19 Magill Rd

Stepney

SA 5069

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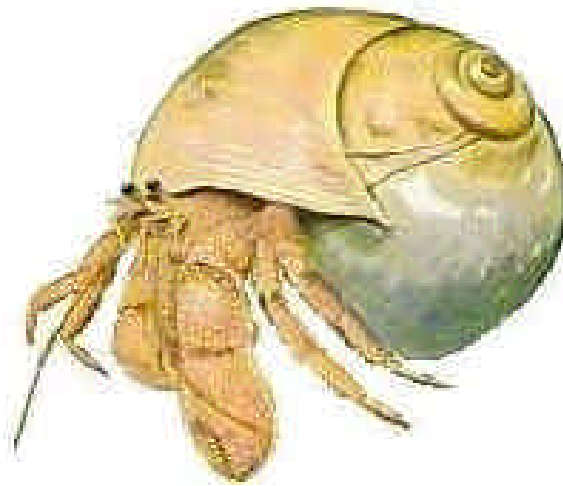
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HERMIT CRABS

CARE

INFORMATION





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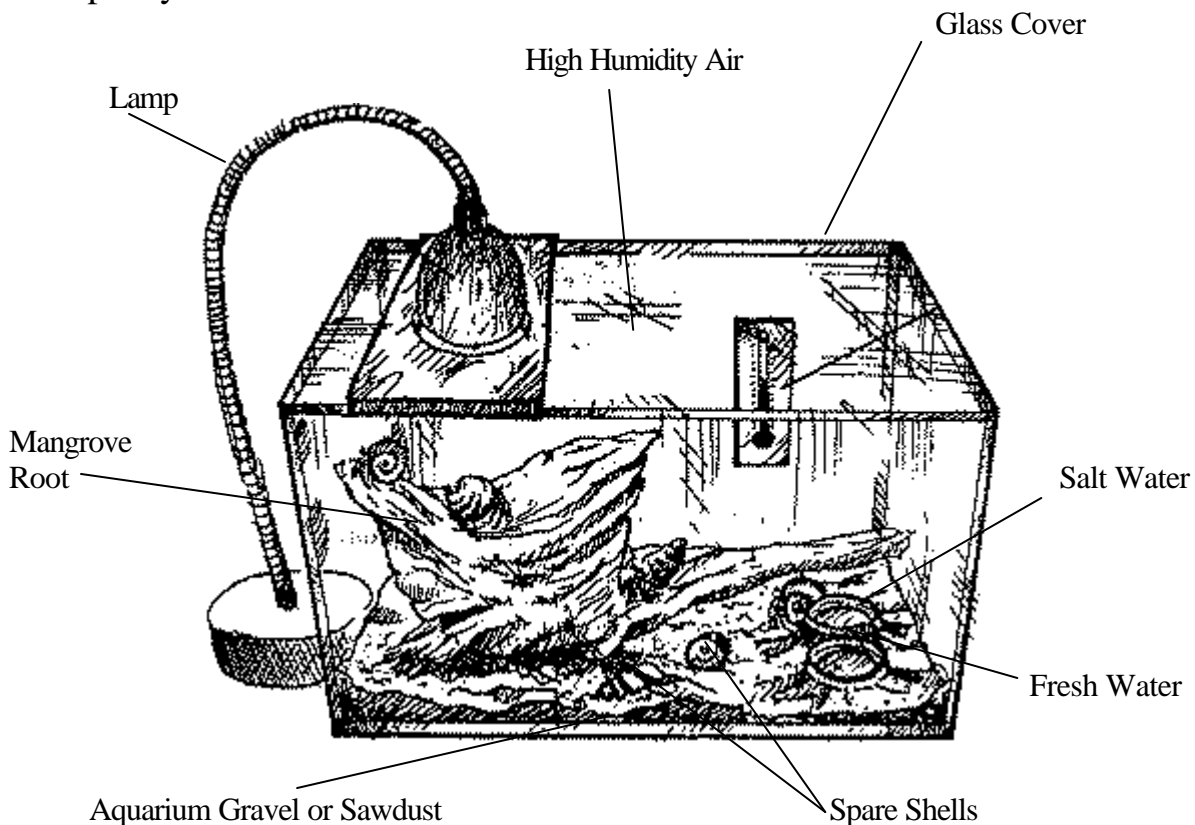
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INTRODUCTION

The land hermit crab makes a wonderful pet. It is friendly, intelligent, odour free and very clean. The hermit crab has evolved to live on land and uses an empty shell as a portable home, as well as for protection. Remember, it is a land animal and must not be kept in water.

HOUSING

To house hermit crabs, use an aquarium with a glass cover as humidity is essential to the crabs well-being. The floor of the aquarium should be kept dry and can be covered with shell grit, aquarium sand, or in winter coarse saw dust to help keep them warm. A piece of drift wood or mangrove root looks effective as well as providing a great playground. Land hermit crabs love to climb, so make sure they have plenty to do in their home.





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HEAT

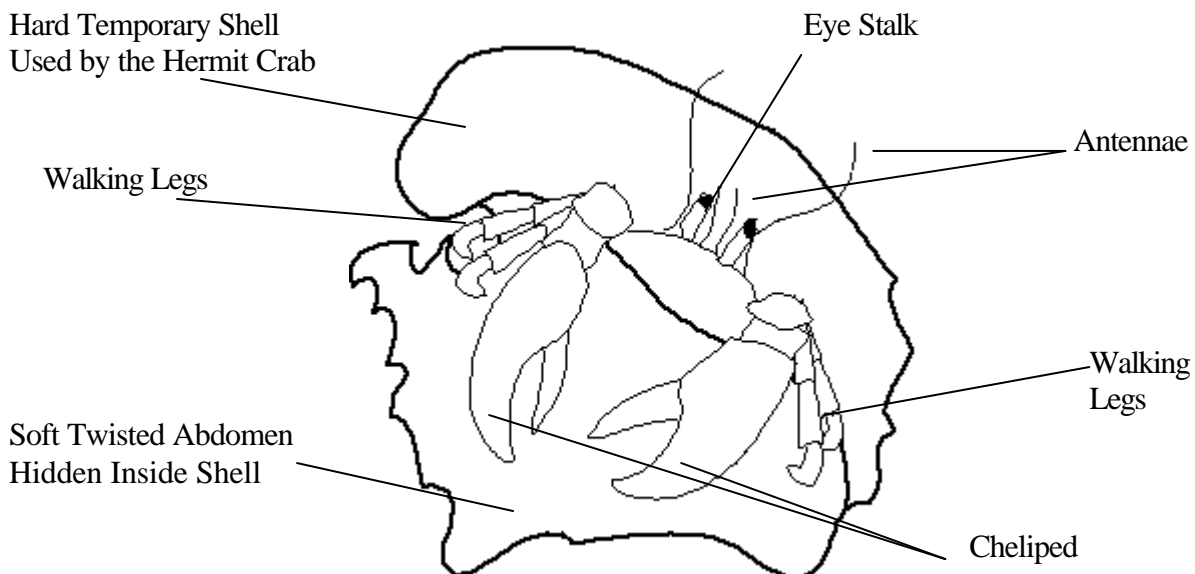
The land hermit crab is tropical and is best kept at about 30°C. Do not let the temperatures drop below 20°C. Heating can be provided by installing a low wattage globe over the top of the aquarium. Place the source of heat closer to one side of the aquarium than the other, this allows your hermit crab to move from warm to cool spots depending on their requirements throughout the day. Make sure a thermometer is used to monitor the temperature.

WATER

Two bowls of water must be provided, one containing freshwater for drinking, the other containing sea water for bathing. (Synthetic sea salt can be used to make up the sea water. Use one level teaspoon (5cc) of Aquasonic sea salt per 100mls of fresh water). Ensure the water bowls are sturdy and cannot be tipped over. As previously mentioned, the floor of the aquarium must be kept dry. Change the water frequently to keep it clean.

FOOD

A range of foods can be offered including fish pellets, any cereal, bread, shredded coconut, apple, and other varieties of fruit. Only put in small quantities at a time to ensure it is fresh when eaten.





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EXTRA SHELLS

The crab will climb out of it's shell and "put on" a new one from time to time. Therefore, a few spare shells should always be kept in the aquarium for the purpose. It is essential a slightly larger size shell is always available to the crab after it has moulted.



MOULTING

Like other crabs, the land hermit crab needs to cast off it's outer skeleton, usually twice a year. After it has moulted the crab needs to be left alone for several weeks until its new skeleton hardens.

HABITS

The land hermit crab is somewhat nocturnal by nature and will sleep during most of the day. Low temperature and low humidity also sends it into it's shell. Warm humid air and the warmth of your hands is usually sufficient to wake it up.

These crabs are long lived, and if well cared for will live for several decades. During this time they will become so friendly you will consider them one of the family.

Enjoy your new pet!

