

Striped Hermit Crab

(*Clibanarius vittatus*)



Relatives

Member of the Subphylum Crustacea which includes other crabs, lobster, shrimp and barnacles. Member of the Infraorder Anomura which includes porcelain and mole crabs.

Description

Claws are equal in size. Have brown and white stripes on their legs.

Size

1 ¼ in (3.1cm) long carapace. Total length with legs, is 3 inches (7.5cm)

Habitat

Live in mud flat pools, the borders of marshes and bays, and shallow waters.

Predators

Eaten by fish and shore birds.

Diet/Prey

Eat carrion and debris, worms and other hermit crabs.

Reproduction

Mating occurs in the spring. The male will drag the female around waiting for her to leave her shell. Once she does the male will deposit his sperm on her abdomen. She carries the fertilized eggs on her abdomen with her 4 middle legs where she can keep them clean and aerated.

Adaptations

- Hermit crabs have large claws they use to help gather food and to protect them from predators.
- Hermit crabs carry shells on their backs (a behavioral adaptation). The shell provides protection. Note: hermit crabs do not have body parts that create shell. Snails create the shells. When a snail dies, a hermit crab will then move into the empty shell (a behavior).
- If danger lurks close by, hermit crabs pull all of their body parts inside the shell to increase safety (a behavioral adaptation).
- Hermit crabs have two pairs of antennae that they use to sense their surroundings.
- Hermit crabs have two eyes. Each eye is located on a stalk. Crabs and their relatives have some of the most well-developed eyes in the invertebrate world.