

Halloween Moon Crab Care Sheet



Origin: The Moon Crab can be found mostly in Costa Rica.

Size and Longevity:

Moon Crabs can grow anywhere from 2 inches to 2.4 inches long and have a lifespan of 8 to 10 years.

General Description:

The Moon Crab does well in captivity and is tame, but it does require constant attention. Like most reptiles, Moon Crabs are Nocturnal, which means they sleep during the day and come out at night. These reptiles require a lot of heat and moisture and several homes(shells) throughout it's lifespan. Crabs are social creatures by nature and live longer, healthier lives when in the company of crabs of the same species.

Habitat and Cage:

Moon Crabs do not need much space when they are young, but they do enjoy climbing, and as they grow their environment must be able to sustain them. The most common size for an enclosure is a 10 or 15 gallon aquarium with at least two water dishes and some things to hide in. The water dishes should be short and wide to allow access and keep the water from running dry. Water should be changed daily to ensure the water is clean and to prevent bacteria from growing.

A moist substrate needs to be provided to create a good humidity level for your pet and provide them a place to dig. Moon crabs need a large amount of water to survive and a constant humidity level right around 70%. The terrarium should be set up so that the temperature is between 80° and 85°F and should not be allowed to drop below 78°F or be raised above 85°F at any time.

A low wattage lightbulb is the most suitable lighting for Moon Crabs because it helps keep the humidity high while keeping the terrarium darker. Less light will make the crab feel more comfortable and safe while still providing enough light to see them and enough heat to create evaporation.

Molting:

Molting is the process of the crab losing a layer of skin and growing a new one. This happens approximately once every 18 months and takes several days to complete. The first signs that a crab is molting is when it turns a very dull color and/or turns white around the eyes. During this time, darkness is encouraged and handling should be limited to little or none. Provide food as normal but keep the lights low or off, and do not try to peak or disturb the crab if it is hiding. After the molting process is complete the crab will eat some or most of it's old skin to gain the calcium and other nutrients in it. This is natural and should be allowed to happen. If the exoskeleton is not completely eaten within two days of molting then it is ok to take it out.

Feeding:

Moon crabs will eat just about anything, but should not be fed everything. Good food sources include fruits such as what they would find in their natural environment like mangoes, papayas, and coconuts. Vegetables of all kinds also provide proper nutrients. They will also eat meats, but the meat must be cooked thoroughly or your Moon crab may be at risk of health problems. Crabs will not eat when they are not hungry, so over feeding will not be a problem. Place a small amount of food in the feeding dish each day and remove any left-overs from the day before. If

there is no left over food then try adding a little more each day until there is at least a little left over (under feeding your pet can be deadly).

Handling a Moon Crab can be confusing and somewhat tricky. Each crab has it's own attitude and behavior, which at times can be very frustrating. Handling your crab daily will help it acclimate to human interaction and may change it's disposition to a more human-friendly one. Some may always want to pinch or stay tucked away and then there are others who are always craving attention and are not shy at all. The best advice is to learn your crab's behaviors and deal with them accordingly.