

# Crustaceans

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<sup>1</sup> Crustaceans have several common features that insects (such as beetles and dragonflies) and arachnids (such as spiders and scorpions) also have. In fact, crustaceans, insects, and arachnids all belong to an animal group called arthropods. So, what are the similarities?



- They do not have backbones. Animals without backbones are called invertebrates.
- They wear "armor" - they have hard, outer skeletons covering their bodies to protect them from predators. These special shields are also known as exoskeletons.
- They have jointed legs and segmented bodies.

<sup>2</sup> Given these descriptions, can you guess which animals are crustaceans? Shrimps, crabs, lobsters, prawns, barnacles, and woodlice are all examples of crustaceans. Most crustaceans live in the sea or in fresh water. However, a few of them have adapted to live on land. For example, coconut crabs (or robber crabs) are land-dwelling animals - they come out of their hideouts on sandy beaches at night to look for food. They are famous for their ability to climb a coconut tree and cut off a ripe coconut with their sharp claws. Only female coconut crabs go to the sea, because they need to lay their eggs in the water. Even though coconut crabs can swim, they will drown if submerged in the water for too long.

<sup>3</sup> As crustaceans grow, their exoskeletons become tight. To make room for their expanding bodies, crustaceans have to molt or shed their old exoskeletons. When crustaceans just have their "armor" replaced, they are very vulnerable because their exoskeletons are too soft to protect them from hungry predators.

<sup>4</sup> Aside from relying on their exoskeletons for protection, crustaceans have an effective weapon for self-defense - their claws! Many crustaceans have such powerful claws that they are capable of exerting hundreds of pounds of pressure! Nicknamed "thumb splitters", mantis shrimps can split a man's thumb to the bone with just one strike! Crustaceans use their claws to pick up leftover scraps on the seabed, to catch and crush prey, and, of course, to defend themselves.

## Crustaceans

<p>1. With which of the following animal groups do crustaceans share many common features?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> A Insects</li><li><input type="radio"/> B Birds</li><li><input type="radio"/> C Reptiles</li><li><input type="radio"/> D Mammals</li></ul>	<p>2. Crustaceans are invertebrates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> A True</li><li><input type="radio"/> B False</li></ul>
<p>3. Which of the following animals are arthropods?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> A Crocodiles</li><li><input type="radio"/> B Sharks</li><li><input type="radio"/> C Iguanas</li><li><input type="radio"/> D Spiders</li></ul>	<p>4. Which of the following statements about crustaceans is <b>not</b> true?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> A Both crustaceans and arachnids have exoskeletons.</li><li><input type="radio"/> B All crustaceans live either in the sea or in fresh water.</li><li><input type="radio"/> C Crustaceans must molt or shed their exoskeletons when they get bigger.</li><li><input type="radio"/> D Female coconut crabs go to the sea to lay eggs.</li></ul>
<p>5. Which of the following crustaceans are nicknamed "thumb splitters"?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> A Decorator crabs</li><li><input type="radio"/> B Coconut crabs</li><li><input type="radio"/> C Crawfish</li><li><input type="radio"/> D Mantis shrimps</li></ul>	<p>6. Which of the following statements best describes crustaceans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> A Crustaceans, insects, and arachnids are arthropods.</li><li><input type="radio"/> B Coconut crabs are nicknamed "thumb splitters."</li><li><input type="radio"/> C Crustaceans' exoskeletons are expandable so they do not need to shed or molt their "armor."</li><li><input type="radio"/> D Crustaceans and arthropods are arachnids.</li></ul>
<p>7. Which of the following animals are crustaceans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> A Rays</li><li><input type="radio"/> B Jellyfish</li><li><input type="radio"/> C Starfish</li><li><input type="radio"/> D Woodlice</li></ul>	