

**Long Clawed Hermit Crab, *Pagurus longicarpus***  
**Flat Clawed Hermit Crab, *Pagurus pollicaris***

Out of their shell, Hermit Crabs look similar to a mini lobster or crawfish. Unlike lobsters and crawfish which have hard exoskeletons to protect them, Hermit Crabs have a soft exoskeleton and need a shell for protection. As Hermit Crabs grow, they will search for the perfect shell to inhabit. When they find a new shell, they simply wiggle out of their old one and into the new one, leaving the old shell behind for another Hermit Crab to find and call home.



Long clawed Hermit Crab



Flat clawed Hermit Crab

Photo credit: Richard A. King

<http://www.richardkingwildlifephotography.com/portfolios/crustaceanscrabs.html>

## Blue Crab, *Callinectes sapidus*

Blue Crabs get their name from their bright blue claws. They are very popular for their sweet, white, plump meat, most often served with Old Bay seasoning. Feisty and ill-tempered, make sure to stay clear of their pinchers. According to the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) 5.7 million pounds of blue claws were harvested commercially in 2018. Blue Crabs are scavengers, searching the bottom for anything dead to eat. A common bait used to catch Blue Crabs is Atlantic menhaden, also known as bunker.



## **Lady Crab, *Ovalipes ocellatus***

Don't be fooled by their name, appealing spots or purple coloration. The Lady Crab is just as feisty as the Blue Crab. They like to burrow with only their eyes above the sand. Have you ever been in the ocean and wonder what is pinching your feet? Yup, it's most likely the ill-tempered Lady Crab.



Photo credit: Barnegat Bay Partnership

## **Atlantic Mole Crab, *Emerita talpoida***

Atlantic Mole Crabs, also known as sand crabs, live along the swash zone (where waves crash on the beach). They feed on plankton and move up and down the beach as the tides change. If you dig in the sand at the swash zone, you can dig up these small tan crabs. Mole Crabs are harmless, as they lack pinchers and only move in one direction, backwards.



Photo credit: Barnegat Bay Partnership