Land Crabs

Diet

Land crabs prefer a diet of leaves, berries, flowers, grasses, and decaying plant material. Occasionally these crabs feed on insects, spiders, carrion, and feces. Land crabs typically do not stray far from their burrows to forage and often carry food in their claws back to their burrows to eat.

Natural Predators

Jellyfish and small fishes feed on larval crabs, while large mammals and wading birds feed on juveniles and adults. Adult males are larger than females and often have a larger major cheliped. Adults are usually blue but may also be gray or tan. Spawning females tend to be gray or tan and return to blue after the spawning season.

Morphological Differences

The sexes of these land crabs can be determined by their distinctive underbellies. Males have narrow, candlestick-shaped aprons, while females have broader, spade-shaped aprons.

Ecological and Economic Significance

Land crabs are an important food source throughout the Bahamas and the Caribbean. Populations may be in decline in these areas due to overharvesting, land-clearing, and development.

How You Can Help

- Be mindful of migrating crabs in the roadway during spawning/migration season (June–November).
- Know harvesting regulations in your area, and do not take egg-bearing females.
- Protect land crab burrows from erosion and fill-in from development.