

# **Crustacean Lab**

## 3rd Grade Program

**Description:** Ever wonder what it means to be a crab? Get up close with crabs, lobsters, and other crustaceans as you explore the world of arthropods. From exoskeletons to real live animal encounters, students will learn what it means to be a marine invertebrate. Your students will be excited about their crabbing adventures and all that they learned in the crustacean lab.

### **Objectives:**

- Students will be able to identify crabs, lobsters and crayfish as examples of crustaceans
- Be able to name and describe the function of crustacean structures (ex. chelipeds, eyes, walking legs, etc.)
- Students will be able to compare and contrast the adaptations that individual crustaceans have to survive and grow

## Biofacts & Adaptations Station:

Explore our crustacean biofacts to learn more about the different body parts of crustaceans and what they are used for! There are lobster, crab, and crayfish molts (exoskeletons that have been removed as the crustacean grew) as well as models of these animals. Have students get into small groups and each choose a crustacean. On the laminated sheets, students can record how many of each body part their animal has.

### Body Parts:

- **Walking legs** - 4 pairs of legs (8 total) used to move, find food, escape predators.
- **Swimmerets** - very small walking and swimming legs, only in lobsters and crayfish
  - **Chelipeds** - 2 claws, adapted legs used to defend and pick up food
  - **Carapace** - hard, upper part of exoskeleton to protect important organs
  - **Eyes** - 2 eyes to see
- **Antennae** - sensors to help feel and detect movement in their environment
- **Exoskeleton** - 'outside skeleton', hard shell on crustaceans that is actually their skeleton!

## Nature Journaling Station:

Encourage students to explore the designated area. They can work independently or in partners to find something natural and something man-made to document in their journals. You can help point out items of interest to students.

At end of time, please make sure all students have their clipboards, pencils, and journals. Check area for any misplaced supplies.

### Behavior Expectations:

- Stay within the designated area
- Take only memories – do not pick up anything – leave sticks, rocks and shells where they are
  - Watch your step – areas may be muddy
  - Be mindful of crab burrows
- Quiet voices to not disturb wildlife

### Talking Points:

- Where on the refuge would we find crustaceans?
  - Point out where crab burrows are
- Description of daily tidal changes and how crustaceans adapt