

Crayfish

A CAROLINA™ CareSheet

Immediate Care and Handling

Acclimate your crayfish as soon as they arrive, giving yourself 50 to 60 minutes. Your aquaria or holding pails should be ready with conditioned room-temperature water. (See General Guidelines for information on conditioning tap water.)

For feeder crayfish, open the top of the bag and float it in the holding tank. After 20 to 30 minutes, discard about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the water and replace it with conditioned water from the holding tank. Wait 15 minutes and repeat. After another 15 minutes, carefully remove the crayfish with a net and place them into the holding tank. Discard the shipping bag.

For crayfish shipped in moss, remove the box and mist with room-temperature dechlorinated water. If the box and contents are at room temperature, you can proceed. Otherwise, close the lid and wait 15 to 20 minutes or until everything is at room temperature, then transfer the crayfish into holding containers or habitats.

Habitat Setup and Maintenance

Keep crayfish by themselves or in a natural habitat aquarium. All water should be aged, conditioned, and need be no more than 15 cm deep. Keep the temperature stable at 18 to 25° C (64 to 77° F). Do not place aquarium under direct light.

You can add stones with a rough surface, a small piece of hollow log, or a short length of PVC pipe. There should be slightly more hiding places than the number of crayfish in the aquarium. Water plants provide hiding places as well as food. Water snails help keep the tank clean, and the crayfish will eat them, as well. Crayfish will accept bits of frozen fish, shrimp, crab, waterlogged oak leaves, small minnows, and bits of earthworm.

FAQ's

Our crayfish stay hidden and never come out to eat. What is wrong?

Crayfish are nocturnal; usually the greatest periods of activity occur shortly before dawn and just after dusk. Water temperature also plays a role in activity, which decreases at temperature extremes.

How much should we feed our crayfish?

Not too much. Remove uneaten food after a few minutes.

How many crayfish can I keep together?

For short-term storage, hold 12 to 18 crayfish in a 20-gallon aquarium. For long-term maintenance, a 20-gallon aquarium is suitable for one or 2 crayfish. You can keep individual crayfish in large culture bowls if you replace water at least weekly.

Can I refrigerate the crayfish?

We recommend acclimating the crayfish as instructed above.

How can I keep my crayfish healthy?

Acclimate your crayfish properly and maintain the aquarium. Remove about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the aquarium water weekly and replace it with water that has been aged and treated with water conditioner. Never replace more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the water at a time. Also, keep aquarium conditions stable.

All the crayfish died soon after we put them in the aquaria. What went wrong?

If you acclimated them and conditioned the water, your tap water may contain metal ions that are toxic to crayfish, especially if the water pipes at your school are less than 3 years old or if there have been recent major repairs to the plumbing. You may have to use water from another source, such as bottled water. Or the crayfish may have been overstressed during shipping.

Which crayfish do I have, Orconectes or Procambarus?

You can tell by the body color. *Orconectes* is gray; *Procambarus* is dark red.

Problems? We hope not, but if so contact us. We want you to have a good experience.

Orders and replacements: 1-800-334-5551 then select Customer Service

Technical Support and Questions: caresheets@carolina.com



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