

# Care Sheet

## YABBIES

*Cherax destructor*



- SIZE:** Can grow to 20cm and over.
- RANGE:** *Cherax destructor* is the most widely distributed *Cherax* species in Australia, and ranges through parts of South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and even the Northern Territory.
- TEMPERATURE:** From 8°C-25°C. Best at 12°C - 20°C.
- WATER:** pH between 7.0 – 8.0. Hardness 50-300ppm.
- FOOD:** In nature yabbies are true scavengers, in the aquarium they will eat anything fish eat. Any sinking food is fine.
- COLOUR:** Usually brown/green on the shell with patterns on the claws. Yabbies also occur in very pale shades as well as blue forms.

Yabbies make an interesting addition to the home aquarium. They are quite comfortable in tropical or coldwater and can be kept with fish, (providing the fish are active and healthy). Yabbies are capable of eating aquatic plants and are therefore not recommended for display or plant tanks.

In a shop situation the use of rocks or short pieces of PVC pipe is recommended, as yabbies can become quite territorial if over crowded. For this reason it is not recommended that more than one yabby be housed in small aquariums or bowls. If your customers want to keep more than one, large aquariums with plenty of hiding places are required.

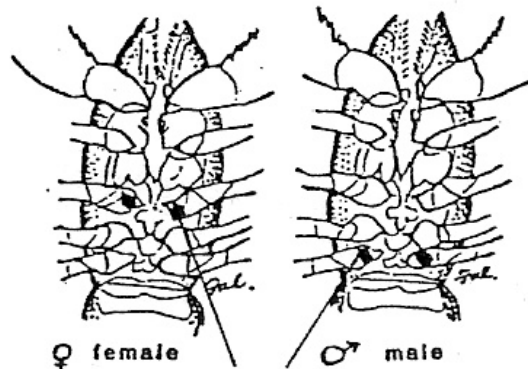
Yabbies breathe through gills, which are situated along each side of the body. For this reason good aeration and filtration are important for their wellbeing.

As yabbies grow they regularly shed their outer skeleton (moult) and at this time may be attacked and eaten by large fish eg. fully grown Oscars. They are quite safe in with average community tank species. If for any reason yabbies lose claws or limbs these will be re-grown over the next few moults.

Yabbies, as with other invertebrates, are sensitive to copper in water, therefore do not use aquarium medications containing copper in their tank.

If plants or decorations reach near the top of the aquarium, a coverglass should be used as yabbies may escape under these circumstances.

Yabbies will breed when the temperature is above 15°C and the day length exceeds 14 hours. Up to three hundred eggs are stuck under the mother's tail, where they hatch from a few weeks up to several months depending on temperature. Baby yabbies should be separated from the adults and be fed baby fish food (that sinks).



### SEXUAL APERTURES

