

Ghost Crab

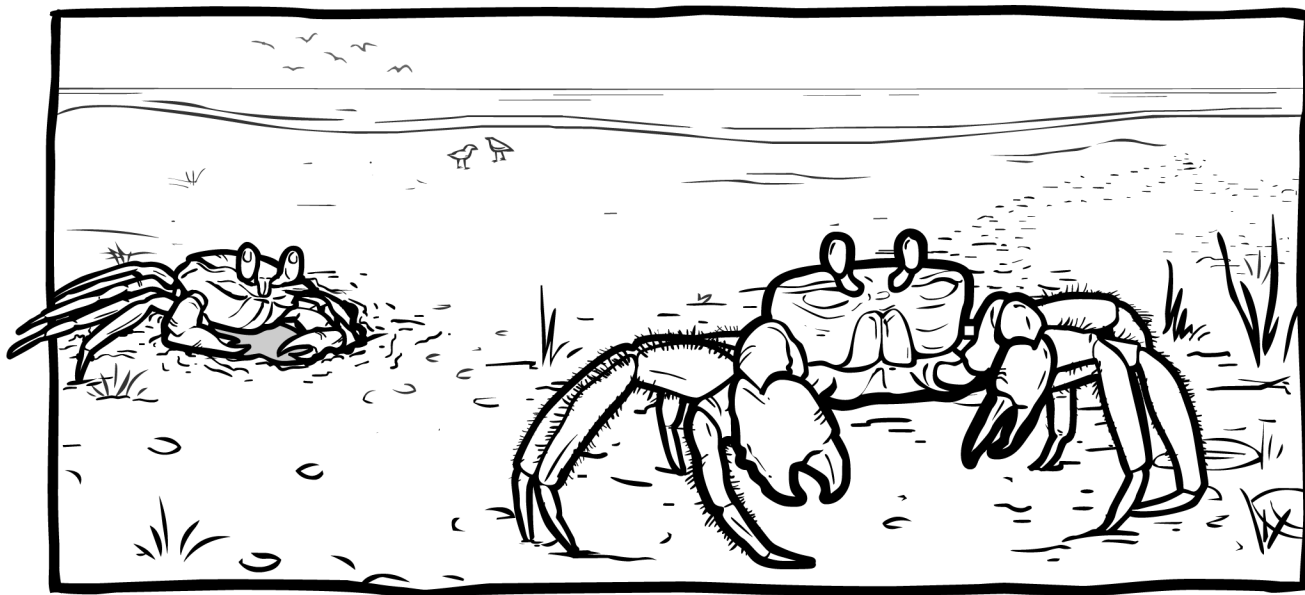
Ghost Crab *(Ocypode quadrata)*

Instant ID

- Sand-colored crab with distinctive white claws
- Square, translucent (semi-clear) shell can change color to match environment
- Has four pairs of walking legs and one pair of claws
- Shells grow to three inches in width

Native Niches

- Only ghost crab found on the east coast of the United States
- Common on coastal beaches from Rhode Island to Brazil
- Dig four feet deep burrows for shelter and “hibernation”



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Favorite Foods

- Feeds on insects, turtle eggs and hatchlings, and filters small plants and animals from water
- Can scavenge for plants and dead material

Critter Characteristics

- Young burrow closer to the water than adults
- Live up to three years
- Large eyestalks can rotate a full circle (360 degrees)
- Fine hairs on legs pick up water from damp sand

Population Protection

- Impacted by beach erosion, oil and coastal development
- Avoid crushing or disturbing burrows