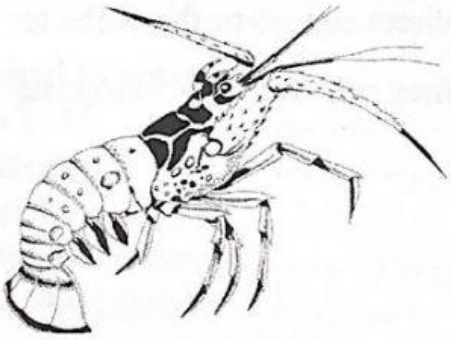
Lesson 1

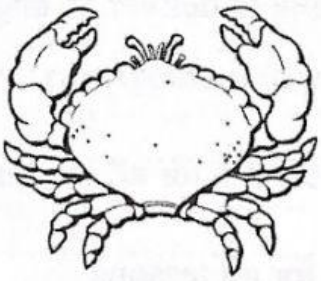
Crustacean

To study animals more easily, scientists divided them into two major groups. Animals with backbones are called vertebrates and animals without backbones are called invertebrates. Invertebrates live almost everywhere on Earth. Invertebrates make up **97%** of all animals. Invertebrates are classified into several smaller groups. Animals that have many of the same characteristics or traits are classified in the same group. Jellyfish, spiders, insects, starfish, sponges, worms, crabs, octopus, crawfish and centipedes are all **invertebrates**.

The word arthropod comes from two Greek words. **Arthro** means joint, and **pod** means foot. However, "jointed feet" is not the best name for these animals because the legs, not the feet, are jointed. Many common arthropods, includes horseshoe crabs, lobsters, shrimps, spiders, and ticks. The largest group of arthropods are the **insects**, which are the only invertebrates able to fly.

Arthropods that have **two** body sections and **two** pairs of antennas are called **crustaceans.** They include invertebrates such as lobster, shrimp, crab, krill, spiny lobster, and soldier crab. The hard outer covering is called an **exoskeleton**. The exoskeleton protects the organs inside the animal's body. It also prevents the loss of water from the body. The exoskeleton does not grow, it molts. To **molt** means to shed the outer body covering.





Crustaceans use **gills** to breathe, and they reproduce by laying eggs. The eggs are laid in water, and young crustaceans that hatch do not look like the adult. As they grow, their bodies change until they resemble the adult. Most crustaceans spend all their time in the water, but some crabs live all their adult lives on land.

Crabs are the most common land crustaceans found in The Bahamas. The largest crab population is found on Andros. Black and pond crabs are used for food.

The spiny lobster/crawfish and crab are sold locally, but the spiny lobster is an Export - sold abroad to help bring money into the Bahamian economy. The **spiny lobster/crawfish** is protected by law and can only be captured during the crawfish season August 1st to March 31st.

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