

## HERMIT CRAB

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The Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club's February 2005 excursion to Marion Bay followed storm activity which resulted in numerous debris, including large numbers of molluscs and crabs, being washed up on the shore. The gulls were enjoying the offerings. Quite a few hermit crabs were found. The one that I have drawn below (*Trizopagurus strigimanus*) is shown trying to upright and manoeuvre itself - fascinating to watch. According to Graham Edgar, the species in question is unusual in having a ridged, sound-producing organ on the palm of both claws. It is in the family Diogenidae, members of which have an asymmetrical soft abdomen partly coiled to fit the empty gastropod shell that they inhabit; and a left claw equal in size to, or larger than, the right claw. Their colouring is striking, being bright red in the body with blue eyes. This shell appears to be from a great whelk *Penion maxima*, a species which normally resides in deep waters but enters comparatively shallow waters in southern Tasmania, where *Trizopagurus strigimanus* resides.

