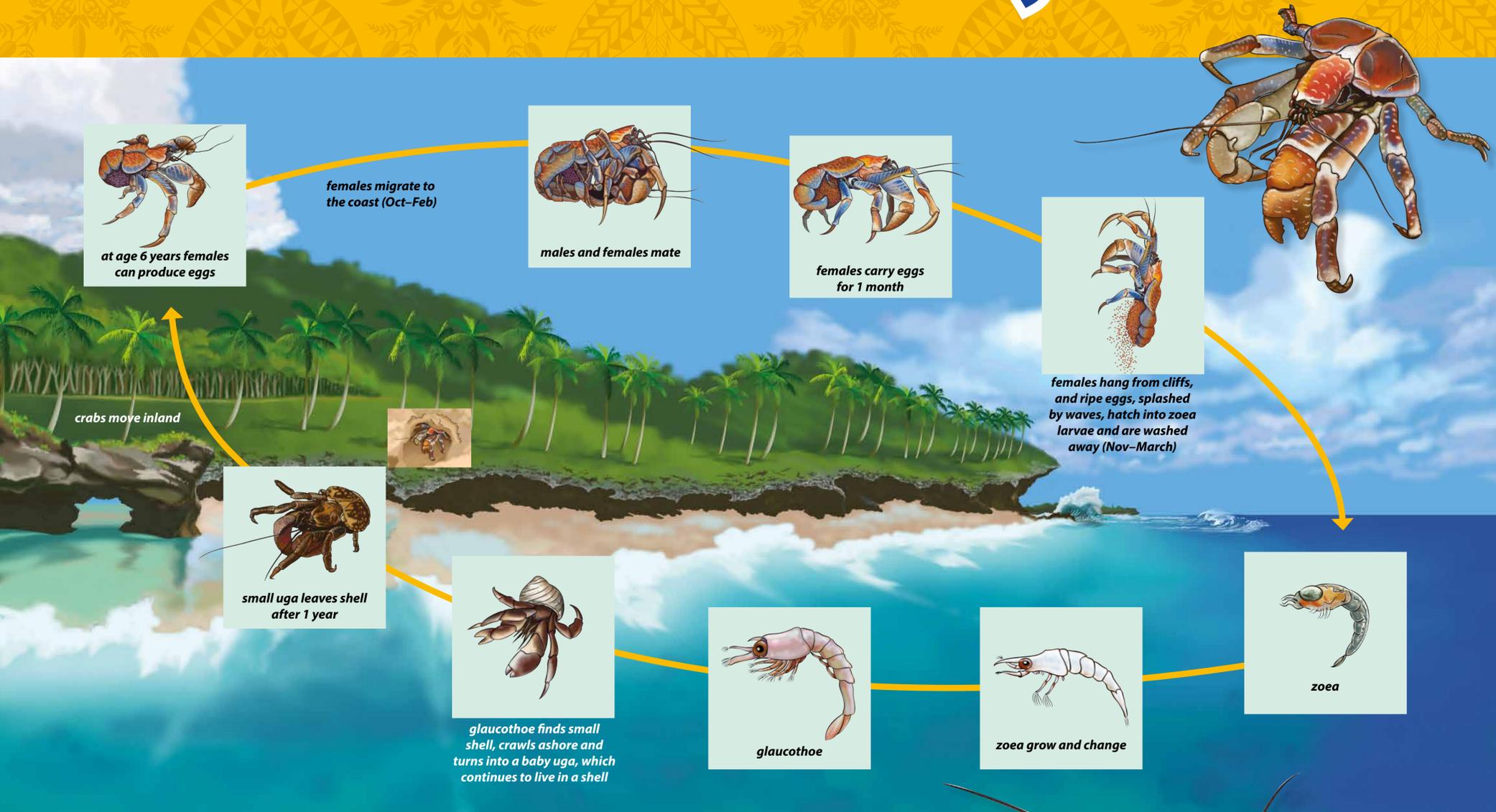
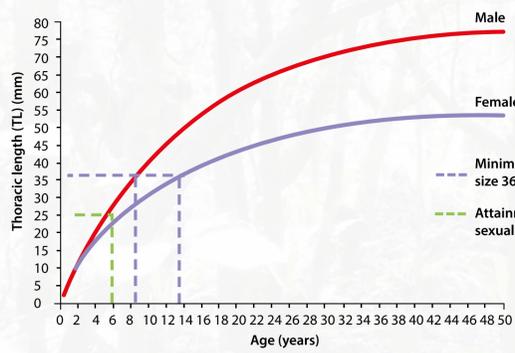
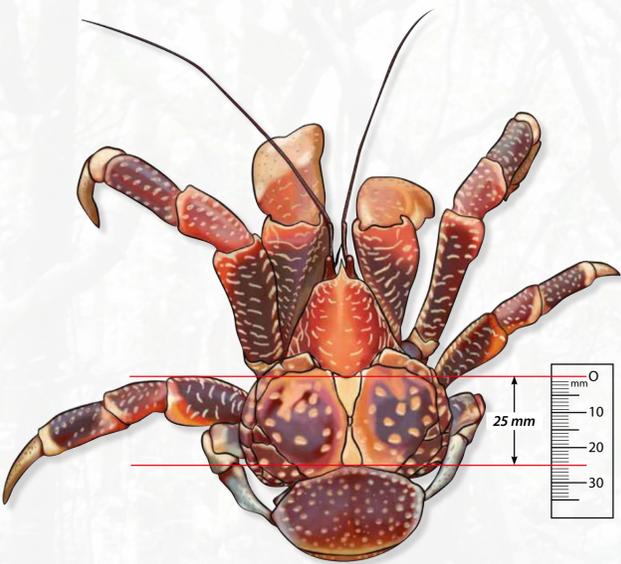


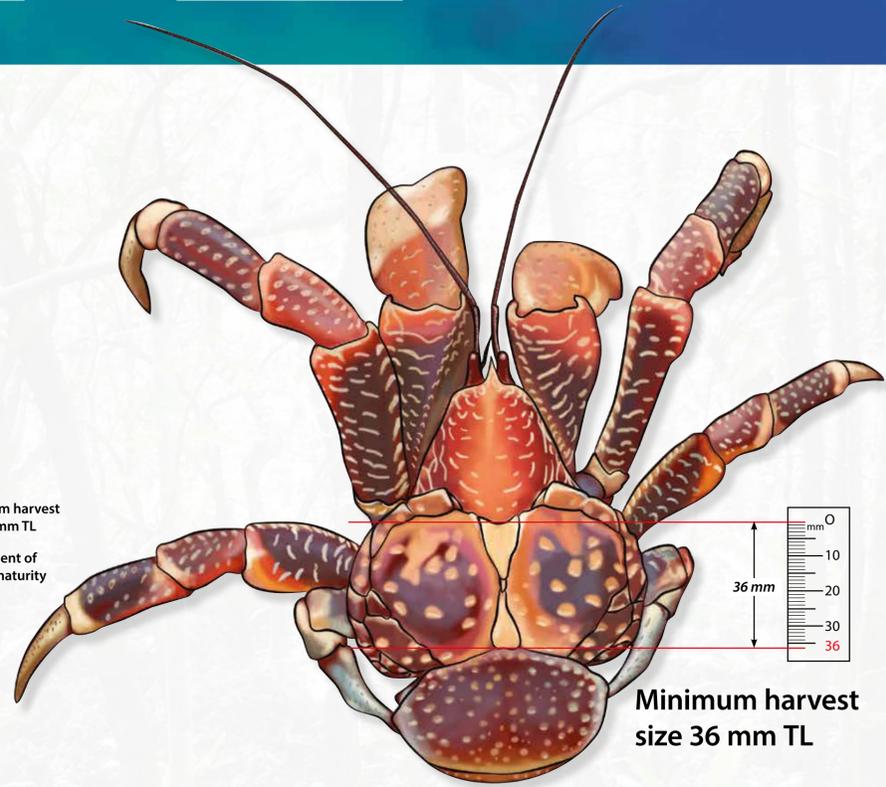
Uga Coconut crabs of Niue



Most female uga reach sexual maturity at this size; some reach maturity at a smaller size



How to estimate the age of uga



What is uga?

Uga (coconut crab) is an iconic species in Niue, a local delicacy, and is regularly used in celebrations. It also supports the growing eco-tourism sector.

Food: Uga is omnivorous, eating leaves, fallen fruits, berries, nuts, as well as other small animals.

Habitat: Adult uga live alone, in burrows, under ledges and rock crevices, and in holes in rocks or logs, in coastal forest regions, where the moist conditions are very favourable.

Not much is known about the behaviour of juvenile uga after they have settled along coastlines.

Growth: Uga shed (moult) their hard exoskeleton (shell) in order to grow.

This process takes three to sixteen weeks and occurs more frequently with younger uga and during the dry winter months (May–August).

Uga are very slow growing. Males take around eight to nine years to reach the minimum harvest size of 36 mm thoracic length (TL), while females take around thirteen to fourteen years.

Why we need to conserve

The survival of uga to maturity is affected by oceanic currents, which are beyond our control. Survival of juvenile uga is dependent on having good numbers of large crabs for spawning and favourable habitats for foraging.

The uga's slow growth, ease of capture, extended longevity, unpredictable survival and dependency on suitable habitats make uga highly susceptible to over-exploitation. It is important to ensure uga remain abundant in Niue.

A decline in uga population would have negative consequences for its distribution and biodiversity, and also for the traditional, social and economic aspects of life in Niue.

Management

The Niue Fishing Regulations prohibit:

- the interference, taking or killing of:
 - uga with a thoracic length of less than 36 mm
 - uga with soft shells
 - female uga carrying eggs
- the export of uga or facilitating the export from Niue of the uga in any form, whether in whole or in part, without the written approval of cabinet

In addition to the above regulations, authorities undergo surveys to:

- monitor the quantity and size of uga caught
- determine population density, sex ratio and size structure

Analysis of information from surveys allows for the improvement of regulations and management for the benefit of uga and Niueans.

Points to remember

DO	DON'T
Release uga smaller than the minimum harvest size	Interfere with egg-carrying female uga that are migrating to the coastline
Release uga with eggs	Disturb female uga as they release their eggs
Release female uga during breeding season	Use dogs to hunt uga
Assist with the control of feral pigs	Hunt continuously in the same area of the forest
Pass uga migration paths with care	Smuggle uga or any part of the uga overseas

Please help to conserve our uga so that it survives for future generations