



Echinoid fragments (Ordovician to Recent)
Phylum Echinodermata; Class Echinoidea

Echinoids are spherical, disc shaped, or heart-shaped marine animals which are armored with a boxlike skeleton composed of many plates. The outer surface is covered with spines which served as protection or could be used for walking. Most echinoids show a radial five-fold symmetry. Recent echinoids include sea urchins, heart urchins and sand dollars. Echinoids lived in the intertidal zone down to abyssal depths. Most were burrowers or bottom dwellers on the sea floor but some lived in rock cavities. Echinoids were delicate creatures and were only preserved in-tact under special conditions. The following fragments and spines are found in Mississippian and Pennsylvanian age rocks in the Ozark Plateaus Region. Echinoid fragments and whole echinoids are also present in Cretaceous and Tertiary sediments.



Echinoderm spines from the Brentwood Limestone, northwest Arkansas.
Centimeter scale.



Echinoid plate from the Pennsylvanian Prairie Grove Member of the Hale Formation, north-central Arkansas.



Echinoid plates from the Pennsylvanian Brentwood Limestone Member of the Bloyd Formation, northwest Arkansas.