

## What are Sea Urchins?

July 26, 2024 • vajiramandravi.com



### About Sea urchins:

- They belong to a group of **marine invertebrates** called **echinoderms**, which means spiny-skinned animals.
- It includes other well-known marine creatures **like starfish and sea cucumbers**.
- **Habitat:** They can be found in **various marine environments**, including rocky shores, coral reefs, seagrass beds, and sandy bottoms. They live on the ocean floor, usually on hard surfaces, and use tube feet or spines to move about.
- **Appearance:** Sea urchins are characterized by their **spherical** to somewhat flattened, **spiny bodies**.
- The largest urchin (known from a single specimen) is **Sperostoma giganteum** of deep waters off Japan.
- **Features**
  - They have a **globular body and a radial arrangement** of organs, shown by five bands of pores running from mouth to anus over the test (internal skeleton).
  - The pores accommodate tube feet, which are slender, extensible, and often sucker-tipped.
  - They have a **hard exoskeleton**, or test, made up of interlocking plates or ossicles, which are often covered with movable spines.

- From nodules on the test arise long, movable spines and pedicellariae (pincerlike organs); these structures may have poison glands.

- **Food Habit**

- They are herbivorous, primarily **feeding on algae and plant material**.
  - They use their **specialized mouthparts**, called **Aristotle's lantern**, to scrape algae and other food sources from rocks or the seafloor.
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## Q1: What are invertebrates?

Invertebrates are characterized by their lack of a backbone or vertebral column. Instead, they have other structural features that support and protect their bodies. Invertebrates comprise a vast array of animal groups, including insects, spiders, crustaceans, mollusks etc

**Source:** [Sea urchins fed waste cabbage to spare Japan's seaweed forests](#)

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Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/sea-urchins/>

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