



STARFISH

CLASS: ASTEROIDEA

DID YOU KNOW?

Starfish can weigh up to 5kg and live for 35 years or even indefinitely due to their amazing powers of regeneration. If a starfish loses an arm, it re-grows. They can even regrow their body from an arm!

WHERE AT AQWA?

Gently touch a starfish at AQWA's Touch Pool!

SIZE: <100CM

DIET: CARNIVEROUS

**MAIN PREDATOR:
FISH, SHARKS, RAYS
OTHER STARFISH**

**HABITAT: ALL TYPES
OF SEA FLOOR**

**FOUND: ALL OCEANS
TROPICAL OR COLD
& FROM THE SHORE
TO THE DEEP SEA.**

SPINY SKINNED

Starfish belong to a group of animals called 'Echinoderms' which means spiny skinned ('echino'- spiny and 'derm'-skin). Their body is covered in plates which can be large or small, soft or spiky. These plates give the starfish's body strength, but are also flexible, unlike hard bones. This helps them to twist and turn their body's to fit into small spaces, or turn over if they are flipped upside-down.

FLAT WITH ARMS

Starfish have a flattened body with 5 or more arms extending from a central disc. They are made of water and chalk with no bones, blood, heart, brain or ears. Starfish have an 'eye' and a nose at the tip of each arm, their feet are on their arms, their mouth is under their body and their bottom is on top!

HUNDREDS OF FEET

Beneath each arm, starfish have rows of up to 200 'tube feet'. To move, starfish pump water in and out of their tube feet. Feet come in different shapes and each shape is suited to where the starfish lives. To cling tightly to rocks, some starfish have suckers on the end of their feet. Starfish that live in the sand have pointed feet to help them dig and burry themselves.

UNIQUE EATERS

To eat mussels and oysters, starfish use their tube feet to open the shells. They then push their stomach out of their body and into the shell. Once it has soaked up its food the starfish pulls its stomach back in!

ALL SHAPES AND SIZES AND HABITATS BUT ONLY THE SEA

There are at least 1,600 species of starfish and they all live in the ocean.