

Field key to separation of *Astropecten* species in Southern California Bight waters

- 1a. Disk diameter (distance between bases of opposite arms) greater than 1cm 2
- 1b. Disk diameter less than 1cm *Astropecten sp*
- 2a. Color of back of animal light red, often slightly darker towards midline of ray, marginal plates pale *Astropecten ornatissimus*
- 2b. Color of back gray to lavender, tan or pale yellow, seldom darker along midline - may be lighter, marginal plates nearly the same color as back 3
- 3a. plates at edges of tops of arms (supramarginal) with spines or tubercles, especially where rays meet; spines often fewer and smaller in smaller stars; madreporite light in color, easily located, not overhung by adjacent paxillae *Astropecten armatus*
- 3b. supramarginal plates without spines or tubercles; madreporite little different from general surface color, difficult to see, often overhung by adjacent paxillae *Astropecten verrilli*