

Lytechinus pictus (Verrill 1867)

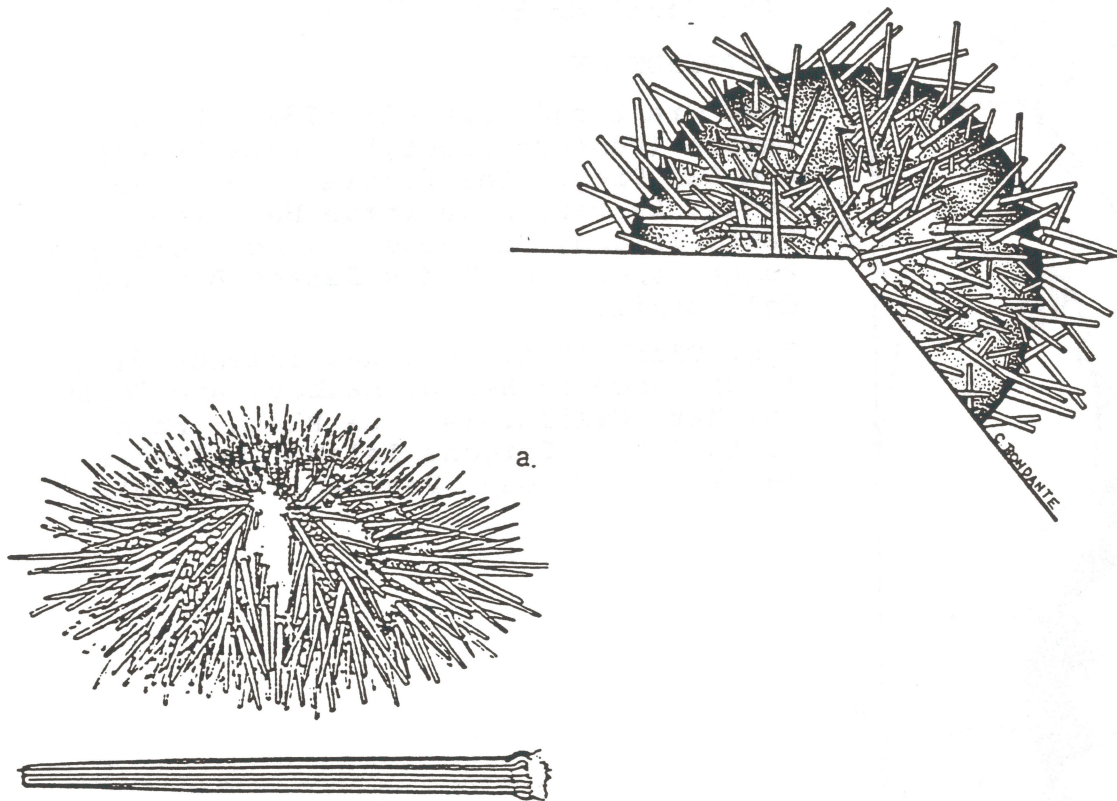


Fig. 26.24 *Lytechinus pictus*.
(a) Whole animal. (b) Single spine.

Lytechinus pictus (Verrill)

This short-spined urchin has a test diameter reaching nearly 40 mm. The spines are short, thick, and blunt. The color is a pale straw brown to gray, occasionally with a rosy hue. The basal half of the spines usually remains white, regardless of the distal coloring. Young specimens occasionally may have banded spines. In California this species is found in the mid and low intertidal, but in the Gulf it is restricted to the very lowest minus tides and the subtidal. *Lytechinus pictus* occasionally attaches bits of shell and gravel to its tube feet, as do many species of sea urchins. It is most active at night and often found partially buried in the sand during the day. Its range is from central California and the northern Gulf to Ecuador. This species is nearly identical to *Lytechinus anamesus* H. L. Clark, differing mainly in its shorter spines and larger test, the test diameter of *L. anamesus* being only 10 to 20 mm. Ricketts *et al.* (1968) reported *L. anamesus* as occurring in the Gulf, but I have seen no other reference to it from Gulf waters. Clark (1940) stated these may be ecological types of a single species. Figure 26.24.

From R. C. Brusca, 1980. Common Intertidal Invertebrates of the Gulf of California.

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SYNONYMS

Psammechinus pictus Verrill 1867.
Lytechinus pictus Clark 1912.

DISTRIBUTION

From Grant and Hertlein 1938: Mugu Lagoon (Ventura County), Palos Verdes, and San Diego, California. Cape San Lucas, La Paz, Aqua Verde Bay, Espiritu Santo Island, San Jose Island, Estero de Punta Banda, and Todos Santos Bay, Baja California.

From Clark 1948: Channel Islands (1 to 12 m), Newport Beach, Balboa, and Corona del Mar, California. La Plata, Ecuador (2 to 3 m). Gorgona Island, Colombia (6 m). Honda Bay, Panama (1 to 2 m).

