

an isolated one. The structural characters of this genus appear to me to warrant its separation in a distinct subfamily.

The Porcellanasteridæ may be said to hold a divergent position between the Archasteridæ and Astropectinidæ, rather than a directly intermediate relation. In some respects they appear to present a more archaic character than the Archasteridæ, but this, it seems to me, is dependent on striking features of structural detail rather than on general facies, and, as a matter of fact, is not borne out by the present state of our knowledge of the older forms of starfish life. Furthermore, this apparently archaic facies is largely due to the remarkable degree in which the Porcellanasteridæ present permanently characters which are regarded, in the majority of forms at least, as essentially embryonic.

The following table will show the distinctive relations of the genera discussed in the succeeding pages, and will serve as a brief epitome of the more prominent superficial characters by which they may be recognised. The genera are divided into two subfamilies.

Synopsis of the Genera included in the Family PORCELLANASTERIDÆ.

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| A. Cribriform organs highly developed; localised. Actinal interradial areas with no fimbriated transverse channels | PORCELLANASTERINÆ |
| a. Actinal intermediate plates naked. Adambulacral plates with a single series of spines on the furrow margin only. Terminal plates large, armed with conspicuous spines. Cribriform organs one to nine in number. | |
| a. With a tubular epiproctal elongation or anal funnel. Abactinal membrane with simple spiniferous spicules. Actinal intermediate plates not imbricated. Ambulacral furrows wide and exposed. Rays more or less turned back. Cribriform organs one to three, component structure lamelliform | <i>Porcellanaster.</i> |
| b. No tubular epiproctal prolongation, but a more or less definite conical peak may be present. Abactinal membrane with pseudo-paxillæ. Actinal intermediate plates imbricated and arranged in columns. Ambulacral furrows narrow and concealed. Rays not revertible. Cribriform organs five to nine (three in one case only), component structure papilliform. | |
| α. Rays very long. Supero-marginal plates with long robust spines, forming a single series along the median line. Spines of adambulacral armature long and needle-shaped, radiating apart. Marginal plates united along the median line of the rays | <i>Styracaster.</i> |
| β. Rays short. No spines on the supero-marginal plates. Spines of adambulacral armature short, compressed, forming independent series or fans | <i>Hyphalaster.</i> |
| b. Actinal intermediate plates covered with spiniform granules. Adambulacral plates with papilliform spinelets on the outer portion of the plate. Terminal plates very small and inconspicuous; unarmed. Cribriform organs fourteen in number | <i>Thoracaster.</i> |