

Genus *Pholidaster*, Sladen.

*Pholidaster*, Sladen in Narr. Chall. Exp., 1885, vol. i., p. 616.

Disk small. Rays long, tapering, subcylindrical and flexible. Interbrachial arcs acute.

Abactinal plates arranged in regular longitudinal series (the median radial series largest), bearing large plate-like skin-covered scales, which mask all the plates except some of the primary apical plates on the disk and the median radial series along the ray. Small isolated papulæ are present at the angles of the plates.

Supero-marginal plates subequal in size to the median radial series of plates, and bearing plate-like skin-covered scales similar to those above described. Infero-marginal plates smaller than the superior series and bearing a single, delicate, elongate, naked lateral spine appressed to the ray, and several compressed, scale-like, skin-covered spinelets.

Actinal intermediate plates two or three series, each plate bearing a single naked spinelet similar to the lateral spine, appressed to the ray, and several skin-covered papillæ; the large spines forming longitudinal series along the ray.

Adambulacral plates broader than long, each alternate plate with a prominent ridge which extends far into the furrow, the intermediate plates appearing to form the straight wall of the furrow. Adambulacral armature consisting of a pair of delicate furrow spines, which radiate apart at the inner end of the ridge; on the outer part of the plate is a group of skin-covered papillæ parallel to the furrow. The intermediate non-prominent adambulacral plates only bear the group of skin-covered papillæ, and a few more prominent extending to the margin of the furrow.

Madreporiform body more or less masked by the plate-like scales of the abactinal plates; the striations appear to be few in number and coarse.

Anal aperture inconspicuous and excentric; closed by squamiform plates.

No pedicellariæ present.

Ambulacral tube-feet with a terminal fleshy knob; crowded and forming four alternating rows.

*Remarks.*—This genus is unquestionably related to *Zoroaster*, of which it is probably the shallow-water representative in this tropical area. *Pholidaster* is, however, readily distinguished from *Zoroaster* and from all other known forms by the presence of the remarkable scales borne on the abactinal and marginal plates. So far as at present known the genus has a very small area of distribution.

*Chorology of the Genus Pholidaster.*

a. *Geographical distribution:*—

EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO: Two species between the parallels of 20° N. and 10° S.

*Pholidaster squamatus* off the Philippine Islands. *Pholidaster distinctus* in the Banda Sea, between the Ki Islands and the Banda Islands.