

Facts about sea animals (About the starfish)

1. Are starfish fish?

No, starfish, or sea stars, are not fish; they belong to the invertebrate group called an [echinoderm](#). Generally, they have five arms, with some species possessing more. They have radial symmetry, meaning their body parts are organized around a central axis. Their bodies are divided into five sections. They belong to the phylum Echinodermata. The phylum Echinodermata contains around 7000 species.

2. Do you know the characteristics and features of sea stars, or starfish?

These are colorful creatures that can walk with tiny tube feet. They have a star-shaped body along with a central disc. They appear in various color shades, like red, orange, blue, and brown. There are around 1000 tube feet that are present on the underside of their body, which are helpful for holding a grip and moving slowly. Their bodies have a smooth or spiny structure. They are able to detect light or darkness with the help of eyespots, called [ocelli](#), which are located at the top of each arm. Their endoskeleton is made up of calcium carbonate plates called ossicles and their skin is composed of tough and leathery skin, while certain species also have numerous spines on their body. Nearly all starfish are of the shape of a star but only some are exceptions, like cushion starfish.

3. Where do starfish live?

Starfish are able to survive in distinct climatic conditions, like warm and cold, and they appear in oceans like the [Indian Ocean](#) and the [Pacific Ocean](#). They are unable to survive in fresh water.

4. Do you know some of the largest species of starfish?

The *Midgardia xandaros* is one of the largest species of sea stars, which has an arm span of about 4.5 feet. It is found in [the Gulf of Mexico](#). These are deep-water sea stars. The sunflower sea star is the largest sea star among the species found in shallow waters. It has about 24 arms and measures about 3 feet across. The red cushion star is another species that has a diameter of about 20 inches.

5. What is the average life of a sea star?

The life of sea star species varies by environment and species. Many species have a life of 5–10 years, while large species of sea star can live for about 35 years.

References

- <https://kids.britannica.com/scholars/article/sea-star/69454>
- <https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Starfish>