



Cabrillo Marine Aquarium

FISHIN' FOR F.A.Q.'S



Q. *Is it true, a sea star brings its stomach to its food?*

A. *Yes, once the prey is captured the jelly-like stomach oozes out of its tiny mouth in a process known as **eversion**. When the stomach is outside of the sea star's body it is turned inside out and stomach acids and **enzymes** will help breakdown the meal.*

Q. *How do sea stars reproduce?*

A. *Sea stars reproduce by **spawning**. The males **broadcast** (release) their gametes and females broadcast eggs from pores near the base of the arms. Fertilization takes place in the sea and currents carry the young to new habitats.*

Q. *What is the lifespan of most sea stars?*

A. *It takes about 2 years for most sea stars to reach maturity. On average most live about 5 years, while some **species** like the Ochre and Giant sea stars can live into their 20's.*

Fun Facts

Sea stars belong to a group of animals called **echinoderms**, which means spiny-skinned. Their body is covered in plates, which can be soft or spiky.

The Sun star is one of the fastest of all the sea stars, clocked at moving underwater at the rate of 75cm per minute.

The Leather star is often said to smell like garlic or sulfur, explaining one of its common names, the Garlic star.

Just for Laughs

Q. What lies at the bottom of the sea and shakes?

A. A nervous wreck!

At CMA

Just follow the blue line to our outside Touch Tank and experience what a sea star feels like!

Fast Facts on a Local Species

Common name: Bat star

Scientific Name: *Asterina miniata*

Range: Alaska to Baja California

Size: lengths from 6 to 8 inches across

Diet: preys on a variety of plants and animals

Life Cycle: egg to larva, juvenile to adult

Average Lifespan: can live over 20 years

Natural Predators: birds, sharks & sea otters

Common Relatives: sea cucumbers, sea urchins & sand dollars



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Sea star