

7. CONCLUSION

An atlas of the skeletal components of the crown-of-thorns starfish (*A. planci*) is an essential tool if whole or fragmentary elements are to be identified in the sedimentary record. The gross morphology, microstructure and colour of crown-of-thorns elements is sufficiently different from corresponding elements of most other common reef-inhabiting stars to avoid serious confusion. With this atlas as an aid, future studies on reefal debris may be able to determine the extent of crown-of-thorns outbreaks in the past.

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