

ABSTRACT

Upper Oligocene echinoids of Jamaica

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Relatively few Oligocene echinoids are known from the Caribbean. This may be a consequence of the extinction of many taxa from the diverse Eocene fauna during the late Eocene to mid Oligocene, but it also reflects a lack of collecting by palaeontologists. Only one species, the spatangoid Eupatagus hildae Hawkins, has been previously described from the Oligocene of Jamaica, in contrast to at least 70 species recognised from the Eocene of the island. However, echinoids are locally common and moderately diverse, at least in the Upper Oligocene (Chattian). Exposures in old and working quarries in the type area of the Browns Town Formation in the parish of St. Ann, north central Jamaica, have yielded 11 species of echinoid. Regular echinoids are represented by radioles, such as those of Prionocidaris spinidentatus (Palmer), and rare coronal plates. Many regular echinoid fragments are considered incerti ordinis. Irregular echinoids are more common, better preserved and more diverse. The irregular echinoid fauna is dominated numerically by three species of Clypeaster, C. batheri Lambert, C. oxybaphon Jackson and Clypeaster sp. nov. Other irregular echinoid taxa include the holectypoid Echinoneus sp. cf. E. cyclostomus Leske; the cassiduloid

Echinolampas lycopersicus? Guppy and the spatangoids
Eupatagus hildae Hawkins, Agassizia sp. and indeterminate
sp. or spp. Comparison with the echinoid fauna of the
Chattian Antigua Formation of Antigua shows some
generic/specific similarities. However, echinoids from the
Oligocene of Puerto Rico agree less well with those of
Jamaica and Antigua.