

8. *Ellipsoxiphus attractus*, n. sp. (Pl. 14, fig. 1).

Proportion of the major axis to the minor = 3 : 2. Shell spindle-shaped, very thick walled, with roundish, very irregular meshes, twice to five times as broad as the bars; eight to twelve on the half equator. The meshes are partly simple, oblong, partly lobed or composed of two to four (commonly three) confluent meshes. Surface smooth. Polar spines very short and thick, shorter than the minor radius of the shell, three-sided pyramidal, with prominent, somewhat contorted edges.

Dimensions.—Longer axis 0.15, shorter axis 0.1; meshes 0.007 to 0.02, bars 0.004; length of the polar spines 0.04, basal thickness 0.03.

Habitat.—Central area of the Pacific, Station 268, depth 2900 fathoms.

Genus 126. *Axoprunum*,¹ n. gen.

Definition.—Ellipsida with simple ellipsoidal shell, the main axis of which is prolonged at both poles into two opposite spines of equal size and similar form. Within the cavity of the shell four radial rods arise from its inner surface, two in the main axis, two in the smallest axis, perpendicular to the former; their free inner ends are at the same distance from the centre.

The genus *Axoprunum* possesses precisely the same shell as the foregoing *Ellipsoxiphus*, but differs from it in a very remarkable peculiarity. The two polar spines are centripetally prolonged into two internal beams, and perpendicular to these are two other, opposite, transverse beams, marking the minor axis of the ellipsoid. The free inner ends of all four radial rods bear little thickened knobs, and are at the same distance from the centre. It therefore appears as though a central, spherical, medullary shell had been lost, and this gives a strong support to the important hypothesis, that in many Sphærellaria, where the medullary shell is absent, it may have been lost by phylogenetic reduction or retrograde metamorphosis. In this case *Axoprunum* (and *Ellipsoxiphus*) would arise from *Lithatractus*.

1. *Axoprunum stauraxonium*, n. sp. (Pl. 48, fig. 4).

Shell ellipsoidal, one and one-third times as long as broad, with smooth surface. Network regular, with circular meshes four times as broad as the bars. Two polar spines three-sided pyramidal, half as long as the shell, as thick at the base as a single mesh. Four inner radial beams (lying, two in the major and two in the minor axis of the ellipsoid) very thin, at the central free ends knob-like, thickened. The distance between two opposite beams equals one-third of the minor axis, and indicates probably the diameter of the lost spherical medullary shell. (Three perfect and complete specimens of the same size and shape were observed.)

¹ *Axoprunum* = Plum with axis; ἄξις, πρῶτον.