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The Phylum Echinodermata comprises the starfish, sea urchins, sea cucumbers, brittlestars and feather-stars, all of which have a radial symmetry, most often with a five-armed arrangement. They also share spiny skins, hence their name (ekhinus = hedgehog, and derma = skin). All brittlestars, such as the hairy brittlestar (*Ophiothrix fragilis*) shown here, have five thin, flexible arms that they undulate in snake-like motion to shift around. Because their arms are fragile, brittlestars are seldom seen roaming in the open, but are abundant under the shelter of boulders, extending their arms to capture small detrital particles.

Photo and text: George Branch  
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