

Turbinidae

Megastraea rupicollina (Stohler, 1959)

Common Name: Giant Wavy Top Snail.

Distribution: San Diego, California, south to Baja California Sur, Mexico.

Habitat: Along open coast, the species may be found in rocky habitat usually below 60 feet in depth. On the lee side of off-shore islands in Mexico, small to moderate sized shells may occur in shallower water.

Size: The basal diameter can reach 170 mm, but most large shells are 125 -150+ mm in diameter, and may survive 15+ years. The weight of large individuals exceeds 2 pounds.

Color: Live shells have a thick brown periostracum. When cleaned they are white, but may have some additional colors towards the apex. Small to moderate shells can be quite colorful.

Notes: Previously, this species was mistakenly called *Megastraea turbanica* (Dall, 1910). The species often occurs together with *M. undosa* and neither species is restricted to kelp forests. Like *M. undosa*, *M. rupicollina* is also harvested commercially in Baja California, Mexico and in Southern California. *Megastraea* cannot be collected legally in Baja, except by commercial fishing cooperatives. Off San Diego, they can be found at Three Fingers Reef, below 60 feet. Small to moderate sized shells have two prominent radial cords, while *M. undosa* only has one prominent radial cord. For additional differences between these two species, visit the research paper below.

References: Tuskes, P.M. & A.M. Tuskes. 2025. *Megastraea turbanica* (Dall, 1910) vs. *Megastraea rupicollina* (Stohler, 1959) (Turbinidae). *The Festivus* 57(3):196-206. <http://doi:10.54173/F573196> . Additional photograph: Berschauer & Clark. 2018. *Marine Shells of the California Province*.

