



Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:
Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:

Venetian (?) ruin at Demati
Black sea urchin (Arbacia lixula)



Currently nothing much is known about the archaeological site "ruin at **Demati**". The complex with its almost metres thick wall remains indicates a former "Manor". A part of the concave curved, upwards pointing wall parts, suggests that at least one building area formerly had a kind of a domed roof. A comparison with similar, archaeologically investigated ruins in Crete suggests that this could be an installation from the Venetian era (1204-1669).

The worth to see ruin is located in the south of Crete and can be reached from **Arkalohori** (south-east of Iraklion) towards **Ano Viannos**. After the village **Martha** follow the signs towards **Pirgos** (in western direction). At **Skinias** then drive further on in southern direction to **Demati** (and **Tsoutsouros** to the South coast).

The ruins are situated outside of the village **Demati** (towards **Kastelliana**) about 150-200 m before the (left) branch to **Tsoutsouros** on the left hand side. It is easy to miss because it resembles a "rock formation" from afar; this impression is reinforced by plant growth. You can see them only when you almost past them.



Fig. left shows the ruins complex which is "fit into the landscape", as such visible from afar is very difficult. The figure right shows a front view of the compact and "guard" ruin.

Pictures: H. Eikamp (08.05.2003)

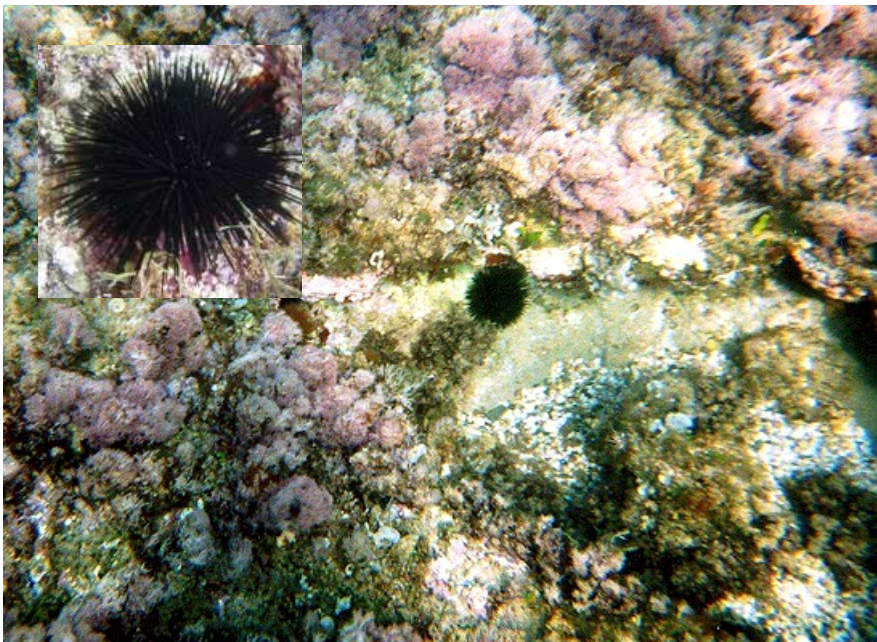


Figure left shows a building tract on which wall remains (left and right in the top third) rudiments of "Venetian arc" are visible. Remains of "Venetian filling paste" are also in fragments, sometimes with colour remnants, preserved. The up to 1 metre thick walls (fig. right) and the room arrangement indicate a type of "Venetian military architecture"

Black sea urchin (*Arbacia lixula*)

This sea urchin is probably known by every holidaymaker from the Mediterranean. It is found everywhere in clefts, on rocks or stone holes to a depth of 50 cm. Their skeleton consists of single, with grown together plates. Thereon are small “humps” that form the basis of the different from species to species quills, which mostly are flippable in all directions. Between the quills are small grippers, called PEDICELLARIEN¹. There are regular sea urchins (which also is the black sea urchins) and irregular sea urchins. At the regular sea urchins the opening of the mouth and the anus are located at the pole and the body is radial-symmetrical (the irregular sea urchins in contrast have a bilateral-symmetric body and their mouth is located at the front or in the middle and the anus in the back). The Black sea urchin prefers the sunlight zone with large currents in the sea. The diameter of the slightly pressed, pentagonal shell is approx 6 cm, with spikes as long as the body diameter. With his powerful suction feet he can attach him self well on the ground. He protects him self from the surf, but also against "attackers" because he immediately sticks his closely quills towards every “shadow”. With a strong block muscle he locks the quills so that they can hardly move to the side, but only break. Many holidaymakers have had probably already his painful experience. In many Mediterranean countries the sea urchin is as a "Delicacy" available on the menus in the restaurants; in Crete the locals eat the Black sea urchin just seaside, raw, with some lemon juice. Today on Crete the "Sea urchin collection" is prohibited, a measure which may came too late; if the holidaymaker today steps on a sea urchin, this is a rarity and to get them to face is possible only in a few (untouched) places. Sea urchins are not only at Crete's coast, there are also to find as **fossil**. Especially irregular sea urchins (and their quills) can be found “fossilized” within the Miocene sediments of the island; therefore see also our leaflets No. **011-04/E** and **036-04/E**: fossil find spots at Crete at http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/NLUK_en.htm; topic “Fossils / Place of finding”

¹ PEDICELLARIEN (lat. *pedicellus* = tootsie) Complex grap organs that serve the feeding, cleaning and defence.



The fig left shows a Black sea urchin “in situ” at Trachilos (Kissamos) on the North coast of West-Crete; in Detail in the upper left corner of the picture. The right figure shows a skeletal snippet of the oral area of a modern Sea-Urchin

Picture source: Kreta Unterwasserwelt
www.fotoreiseberichte.de and www.echnino.de (K.D. Jädicke, Seddin)

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