3:08 April 2001

All the animals except man know the principle business of life is to enjoy it
Samuel Butler

nudibranch NEWS

editorial

Steve Long, editor of Opisthobranch News kindly sent me a colour copy of the last issue of nudibranch news. This is the first time I have seen the newsletter printed. Australian A4 paper is a different size to that in the USA. (Their paper is shorter and fatter). Steve is able to print (in colour) copies of each newsletter and mail them to interested subscribers. This service is **not free** as Steve has printing, postage and packaging costs. Anyone interested please email me at glaskin@ozemail.com.au

I am looking at creating an index for each volume and Steve will be able to print and distribute it (Just don't hold your breath waiting for the index).

My apologies for the error in the last newsletter. Mistakes happen when I try to do too much in too little time.

Welcome to two new contributors, Dave Harasti and Neville Coleman.

Dave Harasti sent in an article to be run over upcoming issues on Lady Musgrave Island on the Great Barrier Reef. This along with Lord Howe Island are two of my favourite sites in Australian waters.

Interested in a nudibranch discovery holiday. I have been thinking about this for some time and Neville Coleman mentions it in his new column on Lord Howe Island nudibranchs. Let me know what you think of the idea.

Hopefully Richard Willan will be back with us next issue, events in Darwin have overtaken him this month.

Below is a request for information, the east coast aussies have really rallied behind the newsletter recently. All I need now is to balance the articles with material from the Americas, Japan and SE Asia, The Indian Ocean, Africa, the Red Sea and the Middle East. This newsletter is for nudibranch fans all over the world so please share your findings with the rest of us.

Until next month.

Wayne Ellis

contributions
observations
articles

help nudibranch news grow
send your material to glaskin@ozemail.com.au

south-eastern australian nudibranchs

akos lumnitzer

Chromodoris collingwoodi Rudman, 1987

Chromodoris collingwoodi is an instantly recognisable nudibranch we have only occasionally observed in the Sydney area. Although, according to Dr. Bill Rudman of the Australian Museum, the species seems to be a permanent resident along our Sydney shores.

The mantle's edge has a distinct purple border, followed by a creamy band all the way around the inside of this purple border. The creamy band is littered with moderate-sized yellow spots and as the band merges with the large central orange-brown spot it also has some larger purple spotting. Observing the central orange-brown blotch, we can distinguish the tiny white specks that almost entirely cover the central region of the body. The "tail" of C. collingwoodi is also creamy in appearance, covered with a few larger purple and many small orange spots.

The base of the rhinophores is translucent, while the club is brownish ending in a white tip. The gills appear to have a dark, almost black line running up on both sides all the way to the tips.

This species is often confused with another Chromodorid, C. aureopurpurea, but that species is much different upon closer observation. Personally we found that by memorising the most basic features of these easy-to-confuse slugs, it is not too hard to spot the differences between species. Although a good general rule of thumb, many a time we could come across species that may look very similar, but be something entirely different.

All the images come from Fly Point at Nelson Bay, just north of Newcastle along the NSW coast. At Fly Point, we saw dozens of this species when we visited last Christmas. Using my close gear I managed to obtain these images.

readers discoveries

wayne ellis

Dave Harasti

Just thought I'd share with you a discovery. 3 weeks ago at Jervis Bay I found ***Phyllidiella pustulosa*** , according to Bill Rudman this is the most southern recording for this species. (http://207.254.123.101/phylpust.htm#m4022)

It must have been swept down with the warm currents, the temp down south is still about 23 degrees so hopefully we wil have more finds like this over the next month.

Steve Dales

I was thrilled today to find two genuine nudibranchs (*Hyselodoris obscura*). I bet these are more to your taste, can you shed any light on them, as in what they eat. I believe they are carnivorous so I will put some brine shrimp eggs in their tank in the hope that they can make a meal of the eggs/ hatchlings(fry?,shrimp?). As soon as I saw the first one I knew what it was, it just took a few seconds to beleive it! Am I incredibly lucky that I found the first let alone a second within half an hour or are they more common than I think.

Cheers,
Steve Dales

Ed: Hyselodoris eat sponges and do not do well in captivity.

lady musgrave nudibranchs

dave harasti

Lady Musgrave Island is a coral cay and forms part of the Southern Great Barrier Reef off the North Eastern Australian coast.

With over 80 dives around Lady Musgrave Island I have covered many sites and found many different nudibranchs. The best nudibranch site is a location known as Battery Bombie (a simple shore dive straight out from the campsite), 13 different species were found at this one location. Pictured below are some of the species that were found on a recent visit in January 2001:

Halgerda aurantiomaculata

This is one of the larger nudibranchs found around the Island, the above specimen was about 8cm. This species was not very common, it was only observed at Battery Bombie.

Phyllidia elegans

This was the most common species found on Musgrave. It was found at all depths and at several sites around the Island. It was generally about 3-5 cms in length with small juveniles also found measuring >2cms.


Reticulidia halgerda

I refer to this nudibranch as being 'shy' as it was only found under ledges or in crevices, never out in the open. This made it rather difficult to photograph.


Chromodoris kuniei

This Nudibranch was only found once, on a dusk dive at Battery Bombie. The below animal was about 5-6 cms and had the most vivid fluorescent purple spots and mantle. It was observed moving quickly, probably in search of it's favourite food source.


Chromodris roboi

This species was found at several sites, the below animal was photographed at a site known as the 'canyons'. The animal was generally about 4cms with very long purple spotted gills. This is one of the more spectacular nudibranchs found on the Island.

miquel pontes

Chromodoris purpurea *(Risso in Guérin, 1831)*

In the ancient Greek mythology Doris was a marine nymph, wife of Nereus and mother of the Nereids. Doris shares her name with one of the most beautiful nudibranch groups in the Mediterranean, the *chromodorids* or “brightly coloured dorids”. *Chromodoris purpurea*, the scientific name of this month’s species, means “purple doris”.

This is a medium sized dorid nudibranch. Its oval shaped body can reach about 30-35 mm long and is coloured white with pale pink tones. The mantle is rounded by a bright yellow or orange band. The tail at the back of the body is coloured pale pink and is also rounded by a yellow band.

This sobriety on its colour patterns differentiates it from other similar species which are more conspicuously adorned, such as *C.Krohni*, which is very similar but has three yellow lines running along the mantle. Because of the pale background colour, this species was not included in the monograph by Ortea et al. (1996) dealing with the dark blue Atlantic chromodorids.

The rhinophores on the head and the branchs on the back of *C.purpurea* are coloured dark purple with white tips, and can be retracted into the body when the animal is disturbed. For this reason it takes a big dose of patience to photograph this nudibranch underwater.

C.purpurea can be found all year round on rocky bottoms at depths from 5 to 15 meters and its distribution embraces the Western Mediterranean and the East Atlantic coast from Morocco to southern France.

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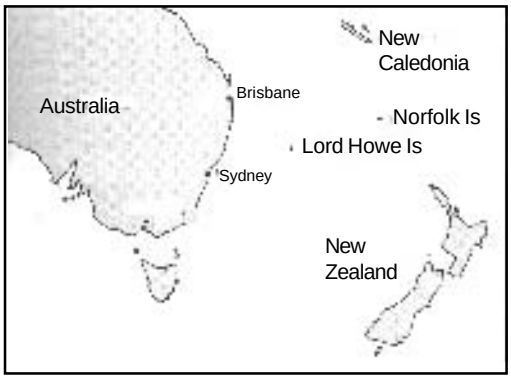
And on the Internet:

· Erwin Köhler’s MedSlugs: http://www.medslugs.de/E/Mediterranean/Chromodoris_purpurea.htm

· Bill Rudman’s Sea Slug Forum: http://www.seaslugforum.net/chropurp.htm

visit Miquel’s site at www.marenostrum.org

lord howe opisthobranchs



neville coleman

Since my first dive trip to Lord Howe Island in 1965 each respective expedition just gets better and with over 1000 species photographed there is now time to concentrate on specifics.

Due to it's distance, 300 kilometres out in the South Pacific from the Australian mainland Lord Howe Island is influenced by many different oceanic currents and as such it's marine flora and fauna is comprised of many mixed components.

Some tropical and sub-tropical species are found in Japan, the Indian Ocean, Marshall Islands, Hawaii, New Caledonia, The Great Barrier Reef, Norfolk Island, New Zealand and many places on the adjacent Australian Mainland.

As well as many visitors the island's waters have their own endemics from the unique Norfolk ridge.

Through the years there have been fish surveys, coral surveys, algae surveys with new species beinf discovered and described. Even mulloscs and echinoderms have had significant investigation but as yet nothing has been published.

Although most of my recording and photography has been achieved during or around professional operations running underwater photography or marine biology tours, over 100 new and a number of undescribed species have been discovered.

In the early years collecting permits were possible through the various museums ans animals were housed in scientific institutions once they had been photographed and preserved. Camera or film failure sometimes meant that photography didn't happen.

With ***1001Nudibranchs*** so close to publication I returned to the Island with the assistance of Pat De Groot of Pro Dive Travel to photograph some of the fantastic opisthobranchs I'd missed years before. After 15years I was finally able to up Jeff and Carol Deacon's (local dive operator) invitation to stay with them. Jeff took me back to many of the old sites along with some new ones. After 14 dives I had most of the species I required plus some new ones.

I discoved 8 species under the kids swim pontoon in 1 1/2 meters of water in the lagoon.

Now that the original opisthobranchs have cross referenced photographic records we can set about preparing a species list. Hopefully a list of species along with the other groups of marine fauna will be compiled as a single entity through National Parks and Wildlife who are actively engaged on the island.

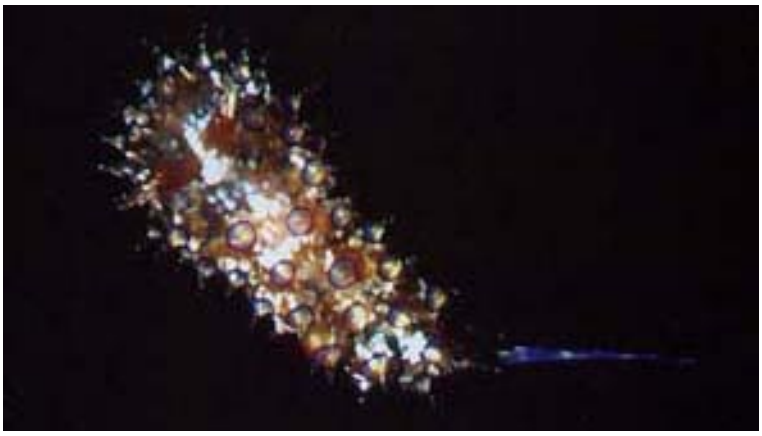
With the ***1001 Nudibranchs*** due for release in May 2000 many of the undescribed species will be presented in this newsletter.

Nudibranch Discovery Tours to Lord Lowe Island are currently being considered (after *1001 Nudibranchs* is published). For more information or to express your interest please email the editor at glaskin@ozemail.com.au Internattional readers please note the aussie dollar is low compared to many other currencies, making this a great opportunity to experience one of the most beautiful islands in the South Pacific.

Spanish Dancer
Hexabranchus sanguineus *(140mm). Fairly common at certain dive sites, especially at Malabar and the Admiraltys Islands, in depths of 15-35metres. Eggs ribbons and juvenilles are observed during the summer months (Oct -Feb)*

Sinuate ceratosoma
Ceratosoma sinnuta *(50mm). Found in the open on a wall during the day this specimen displays the very distivnctive "nose" sen on semi adult specimens when observed from the dorasal aspect. Shape and colouration is typical od Lord Howe Island / NSW specimens.*

Elegant tritonopsis
Tritonopsis elegans *(15mm). Discovered on the underside of the encrusting soft coral Briarium sp. This juvenile was the first I had encountered in the field. The soft coral showed "grazing" scars on the surface but there were no feeding scars as seen on other food species when adults are present*



Exquisite Jonolus
Janolus sp *(15mm). This very characteristic little Janolus occurs in Japan and has been recorded from Heron Island, GBR (Willan And Marshall) and by Phil Woodhead at Holmes Reef off Cairns. It was found at 20 metres on a luxuriant gutter wall covered in sponges bryozoans and hydroids. It seems there are several Janolus spp. with purple - ringed cerata found throughtout the Indo-Pacific, some of which grow up to 60mm. They all appear to be undescribed.*

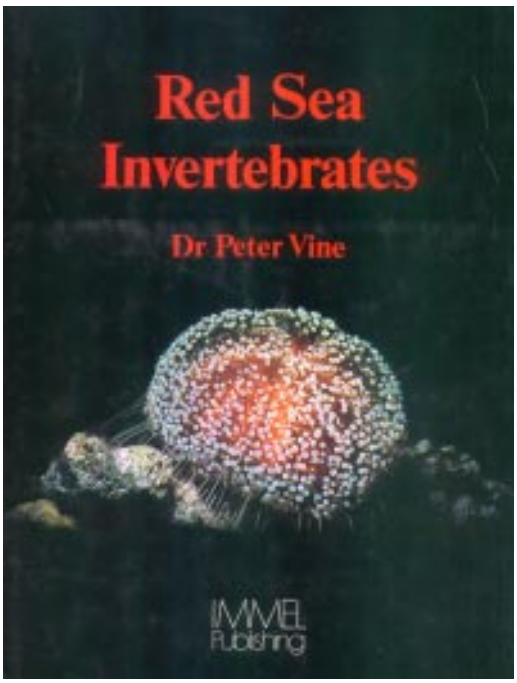
book review

dave behrens

Red Sea Invertebrates
1986. Peter Vine

224 pages, 8 1/2 x 12 inch format, hardcover, over 300 color photos.
Immel Publishing, Ltd., UK.

Red Sea Invertebrates is one of my personal favorites and one of the texts I used while beginning to prepare my own coral reef guide. Peter Vine has presented an informative mix of color photographs and pen & ink drawings. He also includes a list of species (within the text) for all Red Sea species, as well as a phyllogenetic tree guiding the reader from phylum to order and suborder, in each chapter.



While the book covers all invertebrate taxa from sponges, through molluscs and urochordates, we are concerned here with the opisthobranch section. The book describes twenty-one families of opisthobranchs found in the Red Sea (since its publication several more have been documented, but this is a good list) and 42 species. Peter's species list for the Sea includes 87 species of opistho-branch.

The book's text descriptions are unique, depending on the family or species they may cover a wide list of topics from the usual size, color and external morphol-ogy to seasonality of occurrence in the Red Sea, numbers per square meter during population highs, food preferences and morphology of the buccal parts.

The other invertebrate sections are equally as good, containing excellent photographs, many full or half page (8 1/2 x 12 inches) in size, giving it coffee table book quality, and excellent pen & ink drawing, by Jane Stark, that provide anatomi-cal details not readily observable in photographs. I am compelled to note that drawings of the crabs are spectacular.

If this is an area you are interested in or planning to visit this book is an excel-lent resource. The book is almost out of print however.

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