

nudibranch NEWS 2:7

Feature Creature

Hypselodoris maritima (Baba, 1949)

This beautifully coloured nudibranch is found throughout the tropical Indo-Pacific, especially in shallow water and is most common in the intertidal zone. Under stones and dead coral stabs on reef platforms is one of the best places to look for *H. maritima*.

They can grow to 40mm and the bright colouration makes it easy to spot. The egg mass is white.

Leslie Newman found three specimens together under a rock at Port Cartwright recently while we were searching for flatworms.



One of the specimens located by Leslie Newman at Point Cartwright, Sth QLD.

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Editor's Notes...

Since moving the nudibranch pages to Neil Miller's site, many more people have joined our mailing list. Welcome and thanks for reading. We always appreciate your comments, feedback and sightings.

Bill Rudman's Sea Slug Forum is attracting some interesting international contributions. The South African and Japanese species show what diversity is still to be described in many areas of the world.

Amazing the difference another pair of eyes make. On two recent trips to the Sunshine Coast rocky headlands, I have been able to join Leslie Newman looking for flatworms and to spend time with Richard Willan and Neville Coleman, collecting molluscs.

As you can see in this month's Creature Feature, Leslie turned up the beautiful *Hypselodoris maritima*, which I had never seen before. Leslie found several nudibranchs for me while I was able to turned up some flatworms for her (lucky we were together).

Richard and Neville found several interesting opisthobranchs (see the report next month). Under one rock Richard found seven, 1.5mm - 3mm long nudibranchs. Not bad for an area at which I had until then, never seen a single nudibranch. I am now looking forward to spending more time with Leslie and Neville discovering what interesting marine creatures exist in my own "backyard".



Feedback

I found your email address in a dive paper. I live in **Honiara, Solomon Islands**, I do a lot of underwater video. If you are able to open the attached bitmat, you will find a nudibranch there that I have never seen before, and cannot find in any of my books (and I have plenty of books)

I would be very interested if you are able to identify it, or make any comment about it. I have a particular interest in nudibranchs as video subjects.

Regards
Bruce Potter.



Ed. Looks like *Hypselodoris purpleomaculata* Hamatani, 1995. See Ono's, "**Opisthobranchs of Kerama Island**", #158, page 99. The blue tinge is no doubt from the video.

australian nudibranchs

wayne ellis

Aphelsodoris varia

(Abraham, 1877)

An endemic species from the NSW coast. Known from Byron Bay in north to beyond Sydney in the south. Dark blotchy or reticulate patterns with dark concentric lines adorn the mantle, which can be yellowish-white with white and brown alternating bars around the margin. Several irregular thin brown lines can be seen inside the mantle margin.

The rhinophores and five bipinnate gills are brownish-black.

Maximum length appears to be 60mm and is found down to 40m tolerating silty conditions.



Ceratosoma

brevicaudatum

Abraham, 1867

Endemic to temperate Australia, ranging from Byron Bay in the east, around the southern coast and up to Abrolhos Islands in the west. This species occurs intertidally to 36m and is regularly found under stones or crawling in rock pools.

The body is high, slender and is hard and inflexible to touch. The tail is short, not much longer than the mantle, hence the name.

Growing to 150 mm this species is easy to see, although the range of colours can confuse those unfamiliar with this beautiful animal.

Hypselodoris bennetti

(Angas, 1864)

A common eastern Australian species ranging from the southern Queensland in the north to Victoria in the south.

This image clearly shows the reproductive organs, which occur on the right hand side of the body, just behind the head.

Often found in rock pools crawling between the short seaweeds and the large ascidian, *Lobophora variega*. Possible one of the most common species on the central section of the east coast of Australia.



Reference for whole article: Nudibranchs of Australasia. Willan & Coleman, 1984. (Out of Print).

mediterranean miquel pontes

Opisthobranchs

Thuridilla hopei
Vérany, 1853

Described by Vérany back in 1853, this species is known also as *Thuridilla splendida* (Grube), *Actaeon hopei* (Vérany) or *Elysia splendida* (Grube). It can reach a maximum length of 25 mm.

Its color scheme can not be confused with any other species, with its intense blue (sometimes violet) colored body, and the orange, light blue and white (sometimes yellow) stripes that run along it. These colorful bands may be discontinuous along the parapodia (lateral body extensions) and have an *aposematic* function, that is, they clearly warn predators about the acid secretion this animal uses for defense purposes. The top of the rhinophores and the back of its head are colored white.

The parapodia reach the animal's head, a point quite obvious to the observer, and they are longitudinally rolled over the body so their underside part is what is really visible. By shaking these parapodia the *Thuridilla hopei* can "swim" from one location from another.

The two rhinophores are relatively long, up to 4 mm long. They are rolled and are often adorned with golden yellow bands, some with blue borders. There is no branchial cirlet nor internal shell nor dorsal appendixes. The tiny eyes can be distinguished between the parapodia and the rhinophores.

This sacoglossan lives on rocky, shallow and well illuminated bottoms, usually over its food, the green algae *Cladophora vagabunda* and it can be seen both by divers and snorkellers, as it is found from surface to 25 m deep.

It is common in all the Mediterranean and very frequent in certain places and it has been observed that their number follow the algae growth. This opisthobranch is occasionally found over the yellow sponge *Verongia aerophoba*.



fig 1. Photographer – Miquel Pontes



fig. 2 Photographer – Albert Ollé



fig.3 Photographer – Lluís Aguilar

Dave Behrens' Book Review

Studies of the Opisthobranchiate Mollusks of the Pacific Coast of North America, was published posthumously in 1966 by Olive Hornbrook MacFarland, wife of Dr. Frank Mace MacFarland. This gigantic monograph (it weighs over 7 pounds) has been the foundation for the taxonomy of opisthobranchs of the Pacific coast of the USA. The text presents the very detailed anatomical studies conducted by MacFarland during his most productive career. The "Memoirs" as the locals refer to it, is 546 pages, containing detailed drawings of the anatomy of 86 species. These drawings include detailed half tones of: shell, radula, jaws, rhinophores, notal texture, spicules, nervous system and reproductive systems. The work also contains 2 dozen or so colour paintings of living specimens (an example is shown below).



Frank and Olive MacFarland



A colour plate from the book

While a few errors slipped through the editors fingers, as often happens in posthumous publications, most of the work remains intact and valid.

Those familiar with the scientific literature on Pacific Coast fauna know that it is rare that an author not refer to the Memoirs in published descriptions and studies on the species of this region. This monograph is highly recommended for the serious opisthobranch worker, and is a real collectors item for those who enjoy the beauty of early scientific documents.



MacFarland's Memoirs is available from Sea Challengers.
Item #230M.
Hardcover, 9 1/2x12 inches, 546 pages
Weighs over 7 pounds
Cost \$29.95 USD
Shipping/Handling - \$9.00 in US.
Surface mail internationally - \$9.00.
Airmail depends on country.



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