4.01 October 2001

Nature does not tolerate fools

nudibranchNEWS

editorial and special offer

It seems inappropiate to be sending this newsletter to you with the USA declaring we are at war. The recent loss of life has been terrible and for some life will never be the same. I hope for sanity at this time of madness.

This email arrived recenty:

Prints for sale: A fantastic set of ORIGINAL ALDER & HANCOCK nudibranch prints(litho's). I have the original 1845-1855 folio set , 7 volumes, of their monumental work NUDIBRANCHIATE MOLLUSCA.

Ed: If you are interested I can forward the contact details. Email me at glaskin@ozemail.com.au

in this issue

1..... Editorial
2.....mediterranean nudibranchs
4.....heron island opisthobranchs
6..... feedback
7.....sunshine coast nudibranchs
8..... book review

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miquel pontes

Mediterranean Nudibranchs

Facelina bostoniensis was found and described by Couthouy in the coast of Massachusetts back in 1838. A few years later, in 1843, Alder and Hancock described a similar species for European waters known as *Eolis curta*. Actually, scientists agree that these two species are in fact the same.

Having a species retaining the “American” name is uncommon, as usually species found in both sides of the Atlantic were long before named in Europe than in America, but this is not the case.

This nudibranch is medium sized, it may grow up to 55 mm. The body is broad and it is not very pigmented, giving the impression to be translucent, with a shade of light brown or pink. There are a few patches of white pigment on the head, between the rhinophores and down the tail of the animal, which is often difficult to find as the body is covered by long cerata.

Cerata are set in dense clusters, more apparent in older specimens. Juveniles seem to have a smaller amount of cerata that often make the “de visu” identification complicated. These appendixes are long, especially on the first cluster- and their shape is lanceolate. Their translucent colour allow us to distinguish the brown digestive gland inside. The colour of the intestine depends on the diet of the animal, so in certain locations it is brown while in others it is orange or even pink. There are white spots near the tip of the cerata.

Two long oral tentacles protrude near the mouth; they have white marks on their tips, and sometimes blue iridescence is also present on them.

The rhinophores are annulate/lamellate and they are often tipped with white pigment.

This nudibranch seems to prey on hydroids of the gender *Tubularia* or *Virgularia* which are present on the shallow water silty substrate this animal is frequents.

It can be confused with *F. coronata*. *F. bostoniensis* has much longer cerata and seems to have a broader body; also *F.coronata* shows a red patch behind the rhinophores -caused by the oesophagus- which is not present on *F. bostoniensis*. It can also be confused with *F. auriculata*. *F. bostoniensis* has only a small amount of blue iridescence, if any. Another possible confusion comes from *F. dubia* which has smooth rhinophores instead of lamellate.

Facelina bostoniensis’ name comes from Northeast America, but it’s main known distribution range is the Mediterranean, where it is rare, and the Eastern Atlantic, from Norway to the south of Portugal and Spain, where it can be found more easily.

According to Bernard Picton’s excellent book, **Nudibranchs of the British Isles**, the gender name *Facelina* means “lined face”.

The species name *bostoniensis* remembers us of the city of Boston, the place where the first described specimens were found.

I would like to thank several people for their contribution to the identification of the pictures accompanying this article: Luís Sánchez Tocino (Universidad de Granada), Juan Lucas Cervera (Universidad de Cádiz), Bernard Picton (Ulster Musem), Bill Rudman (Australian Museum) and Erwin Köhler (Medslugs).

More information

Readers can get more information and pictures (local variations are important) at the following web sites:

· **Bill Rudman's Sea Slug Forum**: http://www.seaslugforum.net/facebost.htm

· **Bernard Picton's Nudibranchs of the British Isles**:
http://www.pictonb.freeserve.co.uk/nudibranchs/facbos.html

· **Scottish Nudibranchs**:
http://www.a4454.freeserve.co.uk/facelina-bostoniensis.html

· **Patrick van Moer's Zeeland onder de golven**:
http://gallery.uunet.be/vanmoerpatrick/facelina.htm

· **Marine Biotopes and Species of Britain and Ireland**:
http://www.itsligo.ie/biomar/mollusca/FACBOS.HTM

· **Erwin Köhler's MEDSLUGS**:
http://www.medslugs.de/E/North_Sea/Facelina_bostoniensis.htm
http://www.medslugs.de/E/Mediterranean/Facelina_bostoniensis.htm

· **Norwegian Nudibranchs**:
http://www.ntnu.no/~vmzotbak/nudibranchia/facelinidae/facelina_bostoniensis.htm

· **Christophe Naslain's Fish World**:
http://chris.n.free.fr/affichage_photo.php3?langue=uk&numero=406

heron island

opisthobranchs

julie marshall

Heron Island is a coral cay situated in the Capricorn Bunker Group of the Great Barrier Reef about 64 km offshore from the Queensland port city of Gladstone. In previous months I have shown some of the cephalaspideans and nudibranchs that can be found in the sandy zone which occurs round the island. This month I am featuring some of the members of the family, Aplysiidae (generally known as sea hares) found in this zone.

Nudibranchs of the Outer Reef Flat or Living Coral Zone

The intertidal section of Heron Reef can be divided into a number of different zones. In the previous few months I have shown some of the animals found in the Inner Sandy Zone, which is the innermost section of the reef flat closest to the Island. The middle and outer section of the reef flat is sometimes called the Living Coral Zone. In this area living and dead coral with extensive algal encrustation forms an extensive platform-like region covering interconnecting subsurface channels. Sand patches are limited to pools or narrow channels. These are aligned perpendicular to the reef crest giving this zone a radial pattern. (Mather & Bennett, 1993) The surface of this area is usually exposed at low tide.

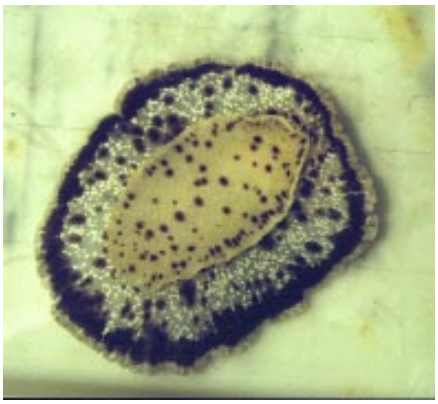
Many species of nudibranchs can be found in this area but most are only found there intermittently with their main habitat in other areas of the reef. However this zone is the main habitat of the following three species.

***Asteronotus cespitosus* (Hasselt, 1824)**

This large nudibranch (usually around 90 to 200 mm in length) is probably the most common species found in this area, emerging in the early evening and moving across the top of the coral platform. It has a flattened mantle with large pustules – those in the centre of the mantle being largest and isolated from each other, whilst those towards the margins are smaller and coalesce to form irregular concentric rings encircling the mantle. The mantle edge is very wavy. All the animals found in this zone are a muddy brown in colour and very solid in appearance. However, occasionally animals are found at the reef crest under dead coral slabs and these can differ in appearance. Some are greenish or pale brown and the mantle is less dense to the point of being almost trans-parent at its edge (see second photo). Others can be dull yellow with more numerous pustules (see third photo).

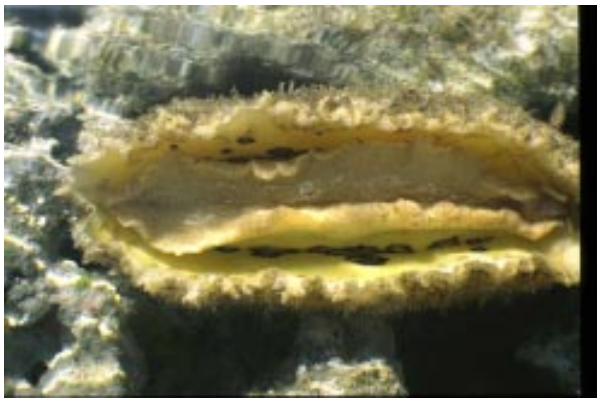
***Sebadoris nubilosa* (Pease, 1871)**

Another very large cryptically coloured nudibranch which can reach up to 230 mm in length. The mantle is covered with numerous, small, round pustules with some sparse papillae in the central area. The overall appearance is fawn-brown with irregular patches and spots of cream and dark brown. This gives the animal a mottled look which makes it very cryptic on the coral platform. Its most distinguishing feature, apart from its size, is the undersurface of the mantle which is creamish white with small, vivid white spots and large reddish brown spots that coalesce to form a broad submarginal band. The sole of the foot is also spotted with brown (see second photo). Another distinguishing feature of *Sebadoris nubilosa* is its ability to swim when irritated.



***Otinodoris* sp.**

At first sight this species could be mistaken for *Sebadoris nubilosa* because of its large size (210 mm) and similarly shaped body and colour. However there are distinctive differences. The mantle of *Otinodoris* is completely covered with fine papillae, the largest of which are elevated on low mounds. These papillae give the mantle a 'furry" appearance. The mantle margin also has regular undulations. The general body colour is fawn brown with some of the mounds being darker fawn or dull yellow. The papillae are cream. The undersurface of the mantle is very distinctive. It is yellowish cream with large chocolate brown circles near where it connects with the foot (see third photo). Both the sole and sides of the foot have very fine brown speckles. *Otinodoris* sp. cannot swim.



References.

Marshall, J.G. & Willan, R.C. 1999. Nudibranchs of Heron Island, Great Barrier Reef: a survey of the Opisthobranchia (Sea Slugs) of Heron and Wistari Reefs. *Leiden, Backhuys Publishers.*

Mather, P. & Bennett, I., eds. 1993. A coral reef handbook: a guide to the geology, flora and fauna of the Great Barrier Reef. *Chipping Norton, New South Wales, Surrey Beatty & Sons.*

feedback

Proceedings of the II International Workshop of Malacology

"Systematic, phylogeny and biology of Opisthobranchs molluscs"
Monogoraphic issues of Bollettino Malacologico
The volume cm 21x29,7 have 136 pages.
Contents are:

Fahey S. & Gosliner T. On the gernus Halgerda (Nudibranchia) from Westen Australia with desciptions of four new species

Cattaneo-Vietti R., Schiaprelli S. & Chiantore M.C. Food availability abd trophic needs of Peltodori atromaculata

Jensen K. Review of reproduction on the Sacoglossa

Brodie G. Some comparative histological aspectd of the dendrodorid genera Doriopsilla and Dendrodoris

Todd C.D., Lambert W.J. & Davies J. Some perspectives on the biology and ecology of nudibranch mol luscs:generalisations and variations on the theme that prove the rule

Tringali L. & Oliverio M. The types of marine mollusca species described by Monterosato, in the Museo Civico di Zoologia, Roma. General scope of thre work, and part 1:the opsitobranchs gastropods

Johnson R. & Gosliner T. Two new species of Thorunna from the Indo-Pacific (Nudibranchia)

Tringali L. & Oliverio M. The Recent mediterranean species of the genus Pyrunculus (Retusidae).

Gosliner T. Aposematic coloration and mimcry in opisthobranch mollusks: new phylogenetic and experi mental data

Munian C. Taxonomical and ecological aspects of the nudibranch Geitodoris patagonicafrom Argentina

Calado G. & Urgorri V. Feeding habits of Calma glaucoides: its adaptive structures and behaviour

Schrodl M. South American Opisthobranchia collected by Charles Darwin during the "Beagle" expedition in 1832-1835

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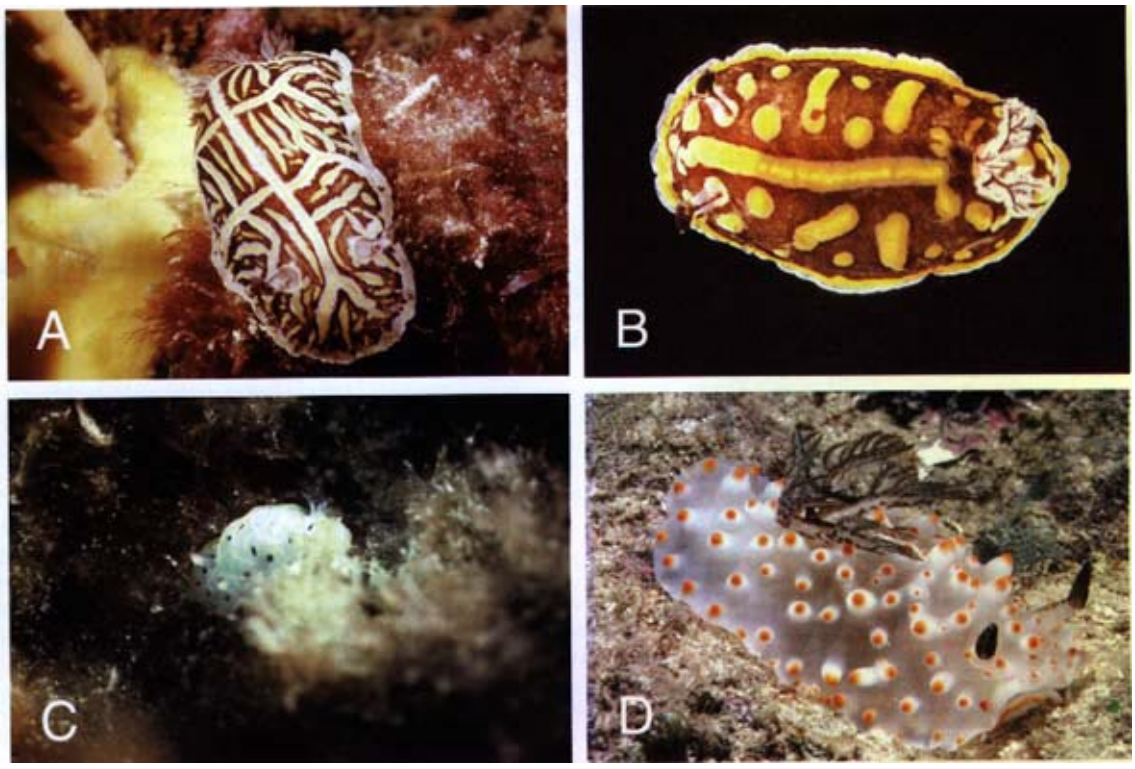


The species above are from **Fahey S. & Gosliner T.**On the gernus Halgerda (Nudibranchia) from Westen Australia with desciptions of four new species.
A. *Halgerda gunnessi.* **B.** *H theoboma* **C.** *H. mariola* **D.** *H. brycii*

sunshine coast nudibranchs

wayne ellis

Nerida Wilson's partner Dan, found this little beauty at Point Cartwright recently.
his pair of Favorinus (?) were feeding on nudibranch eggs as seen the the image below.

book review

dave behrens

Reef Creature Identification - Florida, Caribbean, Bahamas. 1992. Paul Humann

Reef Creature Identification is the number one identification guide for invertebrates of the Caribbean waters. It is one volume of a set of three which also includes Reef Fish Identification and Reef Coral Identification. The set is a must for any diver or biologist working or visiting these waters. Paul had collaborated with 30 marine taxonomic specialists to insure the accuracy of his identifications and text. The format of each volume is similar, with 2 or 3 species covered per page spread as seen below. Where a given species has a very wide range in morphology or color, or where juveniles and adults differ greatly, Paul dedicates the entire 2 pages to a single species.

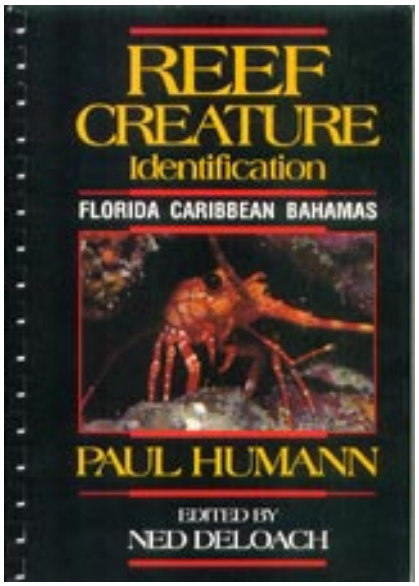
Reef Creature Identification covers all invertebrate phyla except the corals, the corals being covered in the separate volume noted above. Even though the waters of the Caribbean are not touted for the level of diversity of opisthobranchs found in the Indo-Pacific however, Paul includes 41 species in this volume. Included in these are some of this groups real special characters, such as Lobiger, Oxynoe and Scyllaea. The photography in the book is outstanding, with contributions from Jeff Hamann, a two of which are shown on the previous page.

The text is clear and concise providing information on how to identify each species visually and its abundance and documented geographical range. Paul has included the type of habitat you can expect to find each species and any documented interesting behaviors. Size and depth of occurrence are also included.

As good as the 1992 edition is, I happen to know that Paul and his colleague Ned DeLoach, have just finished production of a completely revised edition, which will to the printer soon. I can't wait as my 1992 edition is ready to self-destruct from constant use.

The current edition is 6x9 inches, spiral bound, 320 pages plus the index, and species checklist, and contains about 900 species of sponges through tunicates.

This classic is still available for those of you biblioholics, like me.



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