

nudibranch NEWS 2:8

Feature Creature

Noumea laboutei and
Chromodoris rufomaculata



Imagine the surprise of turning over a rock to find five different species and this pair together.

These were found at Point Cartwright (SEQ) in the intertidal zone.

The yellow species, lower right is **Noumea laboutei** Rudman, 1986 and the white and purple animal, top left is **Chromodoris rufomaculata** Pease, 1871. Careful observation ruled out mating occurring between these two.

Vol:2 No:8

In This Issue

29	-----	Feature Creature
29	-----	Editor's Notes...
29	-----	Feedback
30	-----	Vayssiorea caledonica
31	-----	Limacia clavigera
32	-----	Dave Behrens' Book Review
32	-----	Solomon Islands Update

Editor's Notes...

In the last couple of month's I have been able to visit Sunshine coast rocky headlands with some expert marine naturalists. Richard Willan, Neville Coleman and I recently visited Caloundra Headland. Richard and Neville turned up some fascinating opisthobranchs. See page 30 for one of the species. Certainly opened my eyes to a site I usually avoid and rekindled my dislike of slime covered rocks. Yes, I ended up horizontal, too the amusement of my companions.

Leslie Newman (flatworms), Nerida Wilson (nudibranchs), Dan Jackson (abalone) and I combed my favourite rocky headland, Point Cartwright recently turning up several nudibranchs and some more flatworms for Leslie.

Nerida confirmed the following species, *Hallaxa iju*, *Discodoris fragilis*, *Okenia plana*, *Diversidoris aurantionodulosa*, *Noumea simplex*, *Chromodoris decora*, *Doriopsis pecten* and the side gill slug, *Berthella stellata*. A yet to be ID'ed, dorid is to be added to the list soon.

The confirmation of **Hallaxa iju** extends the known range for this species. An unconfirmed ID from Point Cartwright was made in 1998. Visit <http://www.diveoz.com.au> to see the current species list for the Sunshine Coast. Remember to scroll down the nudibranch page. Also check out the links page for more great nudibranch sites.

Are you carrying out mollusc research in the Australasian region? The **Malacological Society of Australasia's** research database is about to go on-line. For further information send an email to the database manager at glaskin@ozemail.com.au

Photography is one of the main avenues most people become interested in nudibranchs. Why not share your tips with others? What camera do you use, housed or Nikonos? Your film of choice is? It will be interesting to here your opinions.



Feedback

This is a great service and should be a wonderful help for us nudi seekers. Just an idea, ever given any thought to gathering and disseminating info concerning **flatworms**? There is very little info out there right now - certainly no ID book like debilius' or the one for Micronesia concerning nudis. I find new ones (No ID available) on almost every dive in the Indo-Pacific. Anyway, looking forward to hearing from you. Read about your site in **ASIAN DIVER**.

Good luck mates and many thanks
Walt Brenner USA

ED. Thanks for your comments Walt. Yes, a feature on flatworms is on the way. Although the newsletter is dedicated to nudibranchs it's always worth covering the other opisthobranchs and flatworms from time to time. Helps to be able to distinguish what we are all seeing. Don't forget to visit Wolfgang Siefarth's flatworm site at <http://privat.schlund.de/r/ranja/>. Leslie Newman's flatworm paper is available from the Queensland Museum.

australian nudibranchs

wayne ellis

Vayssierea caledonica

Risbec, 1928

Vayssierea caledonica is a tiny dorid reaching 6 mm in length, which may explain why such a reportedly common species is rarely seen.

Prey is the small spirorbid tube worms. Using their radula as a drill they bore through the worm's shell.

The body is transparent orange and the internal organs are visible especially the darkened spheres of the gonad. The tail is pointed and the mantle is smooth and doesn't have a notal brim separating it from the foot.

The rhinophores are simple and darker than the body and there is no sheath around the rhinophoral pocket.

There are no gills, an animal this small can probably exchange gases through its skin.

Vayssierea caledonica, *Vayssierea elgans* and *Vayssierea cinnabarea* differ in radula structure only, externally they look similar.

Thanks to Dr. Richard Willan and Neville Coleman for pointing out this species on our recent excursion to Caloundra Headland.

Several rocks we turned over disclosing several tiny 1.5 – 3mm orange dots, which turned out to be this interesting little animal.

Returning to the platform several days later many more specimens were located, notably in the higher reaches of the intertidal zone.

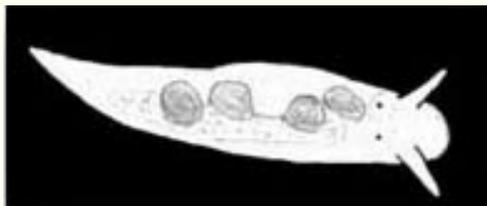


fig. 1. *Vayssierea caledonica*. The dark patches are the internal organs. At first glance those at the rear could be easily be mistaken for gills.

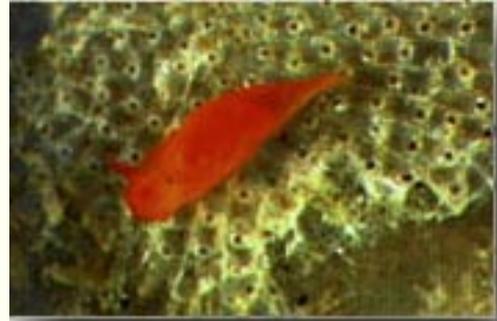


fig. 2. *V. caledonica* photographed at Hervey Bay, QLD by Dr. Richard Willan. Used with permission.



fig. 3. This particular rock high up in the intertidal zone had at least eight specimens under it.

References

Richard Willan pers comm
Bill Rudman pers comm
Marshall and Willan 1999.
Nudibranchs of Heron Island

mediterranean

miquel pontes

Opisthobranchs

Limacia clavigera

Müller, 1776

Described by Müller back in 1776, this is a small species, reaching 2 cm in length. Generally coloured white to light blue, it is characteristic for the tips of the foot, rhinophores, gills and other appendixes of the body to be coloured bright orange, yellow or red.

The dorsum has a large number of appendixes: 8 pinnate frontal tentacles, 5 to 7 lateral claviform appendixes and many dorsal verrucose extensions. The laminated rhinophores can be retracted into small sheaths when the animal is disturbed. The 3-4 bipinnate gills are located before the anus.

The former name *Triopa claviger* (Johnston 1843) is now a synonym of the actual denomination, *Limacia clavigera*.

The word *limacia* comes from latin "*limax*" which means slug. The words *clavigera* and *claviger* derive from the latin term "*clava*", that means club or stick, and the also latin term "*gerere*" means to bring, so "*clavigera*" means "*which brings clubs or sticks*". A "*clava*" is a roughly carved stick, about 1 metre long, which grows in diameter from the grip to the opposite side, which is round. Mythology takes us to **Hercules**, who brought a club like that and because of this weapon he is often referred as "claviger". *Triopa*, from the former denomination of this nudibranch, is the name of the son of Poseidon (Neptune) and Cenacea.

The *Limacia clavigera* is mainly observed in summer and it feeds on bryozoans of the species *Callopora dumerili*, *Cryptosula pallasiana*, *Electra pilosa*, *Membranipora membranacea* and *Porella concinna*.

This nudibranch is typical on rocky bottoms with little light and little water movement. It is commonly found under the rocks, on or near bryozoan colonies. Also found in seagrass meadows, where bryozoans are found.

It is distributed along the Mediterranean, where it is uncommon, and along the European Atlantic coast, including the English Channel and the North Sea, where it is common. There are sighting reports from as far as Norway and Faeroe Islands and down to South Africa.



Visit these web sites for more information:

Medslugs (http://www.medslugs.de/E/North_Sea/Limacia_clavigera.htm)

Nudibranchs of the British Islands (<http://www.pictonb.freeserve.co.uk/nudibranchs/limcla.html>)

Underwater guide, Madeira, Canary Islands and Azores (<http://siolibrary.ucsd.edu/slugsite/wirtz/wirtz2.htm>)

Underwater Life Gallery (<http://www.gla.ac.uk/~gbza62/nbranch2.html>)

Norwegian Marine Fauna (http://www.asterisk.no/~emil/nudibranchia/limacia_clavigera.htm)

Nudibranch on the Coast of Central Norway (http://www.ntnu.no/~vmzotbak/nudibranchia/polyceridae/limacia_clavigera.htm)

The Slug Site (http://slugsite.tierranet.com/wirtz98/p_5_1.htm)

M@re Nostrum (<http://marenostrum.org>)

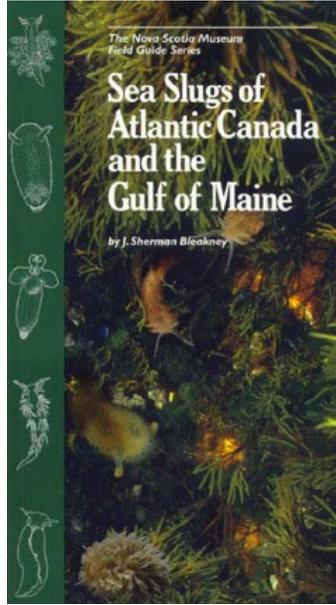
Dave Behrens' Book Review

Sea Slugs of Atlantic Canada and the Gulf of Maine. (1996).

J. Sherman Bleakney

This is the perfect (and for that matter, only) guide book to the opisthobranch fauna of this cold temperate region of North America. Compact in size, it is bursting with detailed descriptions of the species found along this portion of coastline. The major contribution this book makes is the attention to the Natural History and Biology of each species.

216 pages in length, it includes details about the regions 47 species. Each species is illustrated with a black and white drawing. I have found the most valuable contributions of this book not necessarily to be the species descriptions so much, but the introductory remarks on scientific names and how to understand them, where to find sea slugs and how to collect and document them, as well as a fantastic series of appendices, which include one on how to set up to do indoor microphotography of your finds. This specific topic is valuable to those individuals studying any group of small creatures.



This is a great little handbook.

(Item #15B) at \$14.95(US), plus shipping.



Solomon Islands Update

Bruce Potter sent this image of what is probably *Hyselodoris whitei* (Adams & Reeve, 1850). It was found at about 10 metres, and there were two of them together. Any comments on the ID?



Dave Behrens is the author of Pacific Coast Nudibranchs and with his wife Diana owns and operates Sea Challengers Natural History Books
35 Versailles Court
Danville, CA 94506 USA
Ph. 925-327-7750
Fax. 925-736-8982
dave@seachallengers.com
www.seachallengers.com

This morning (April 13) the copy of McFarlands Memoirs I had ordered arrived. Having received several damaged books from other distributors it was great to see the amount of trouble Dave & Diana had taken in packing the book. Thank you both.

If you have the slightest interest in nudibranchs and historical books buy this one. It is a steal at this price.

Published and distributed monthly
by Wayne Ellis
P O Box 3
Glasshouse Mountains
Qld 4518 Australia
Ph. + 61 7 5493 0040
Email: glaskin@ozemail.com.au
URL: <http://www.diveoz.com.au>
[http:// www.ozemail.com.au/~glaskin](http://www.ozemail.com.au/~glaskin)