

All we are saying is give peace a chance - John Lennon



editorial

Welcome to the first issue for 2002. I hope it is a little cooler where you are and our NSW and especially Sydney readers came through the fires OK. We were surrounded by fires in 1994 and a State of Emergency was enforced and appreciate what some people are going through.

It has been so hot and humid here, my thermometer exploded at 42° C. Must have been 46° C in the sun. We have had a hot humid summer with no let-up in sight.

December 30th I travelled to the coast (Caloundra Headland) to photograph some *Elysia* I had seen days before. Having no luck capturing any specimens I decided to pack up and wait for the moon to come up later in the evening (to photograph it for a camera club competition). From the headland I watched a storm developing out to sea and lightning was striking around the mountains near home. As the weather turned I decided to head home in case the storm was going to hit. Driving along the rain began bucketing down. The weather turned really nasty and several times I considered pulling off the road, the only problem was, in the conditions I could not see the verge. Arriving home after driving through what looked like a war zone I found a large tree across the driveway. A mini cyclone had hit the area and created havoc, especially to the vegetation. Our house was OK and I could not have dropped the tree in a better location. Next morning it was out with the chainsaw early and we now have our winter wood supply. Makes one wonder if *divine intervention* was at play, the tree had to be removed as it was dying and think twice about collecting *Elysia* again, don't want to upset the **Elysia Gods**.

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nudibranchs



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***Facelinopsis marioni* (Vayssière, 1888)**

Facelinopsis marioni is a beautiful aeolidacean nudibranch. It is small, as it can grow up to 1.5 cm long. It has a pink coloured body with an iridescent line across the dorsum. Oral tentacles and rhinophores are also pink with a lighter shade of colour on the tips. *F. marioni* has curved cerata, a quite characteristic trait, with the front part of them coloured white.

It is considered to be typical of shallow waters, from 3 to 15 meters, and is usually found in dark places or overhangs, but almost invariably on rocky substrate. Due to its small size and colour, it is quite difficult to spot in its habitat.

As a member of the Aeolids (pronounced 'Eye-Oh-Lidz'), it shares many of their characteristics: it is beautifully coloured and has many characteristic elongated dorsal structures -called cerata- on the back which are used for protection.

These nudibranchs eat stinging lifeforms, such as hydrozoans and anemones, and they pass the nematocysts (stinging cells) through their digestive tract into pockets at the tips of the cerata. When attacked, the nematocyst is released as a defence mechanism. No wonder they're not often eaten.

Just like their fellow nudibranchs, *Facelinopsis marioni* is an hermaphrodite (both male and female) and reproduce by internal fertilisation.

The etymology of the gender name "*Facelina*" suggests a "striped face", according to Bernard Picton's book "Nudibranchs of the British Isles". The suffix "-opsis" refers to something similar to another thing, so *Facelinopsis* could be interpreted as "similar to striped face" nudibranchs.

The species name "*marioni*" seems to be dedicated to **Antoine-Fortuné Marion**, (1846-1900) French zoologist and conservator of the Marseille Natural History Museum, according to the following reference that we include in the original French version:

"*marioni*": "Nous sommes heureux de dédier à notre maître, le professeur Marion", en "Recherches zoologiques et anatomiques sur les Mollusques opisthobranches du golfe de Marseille", Deuxième partie. Annales du Musée de Marseille. Tome III, 1886-1889. Marseille."





For more information and pictures about *Facelinopsis marioni* visit:
Medslugs: http://www.medslugs.de/E/Mediterranean/Facelinopsis_marioni.htm
M@re Nostrum: <http://marenostrum.org/opisthobranchios/fmarioni>
SeaSlug Forum: <http://www.seaslugforum.net/facemari.htm>
Opisthobranchios de la costa de Granada: http://www.ugr.es/~lstocino/f_marioni.htm

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.

Nudibranchs of the Reef Crest: Family Chromodorididae (3) – Genus

Hypselodoris

Members of the genus *Hypselodoris* have a relatively high body with a narrow mantle overlap. The side of the body is also usually visible when the animal is crawling. Like all Chromodorids they feed on sponges.

Hypselodoris maculosa (Pease, 1871)

This small nudibranch (usually around 20 to 30 mm in length) has a creamish mantle with narrow, white longitudinal lines (which are sometimes interrupted), and a dull red marginal band. The mantle also has white and reddish-purple spots, and there are reddish-purple areas near the margin. The rhinophores are cream with two red rings and a white tip. The colour of its spawn can vary. I have observed it laying a white spawn mass (see second photo) but Johnson & Boucher report that in Hawaii it lays a pale pink spawn mass.

Hypselodoris obscura (Stimpson, 1855)



Hypselodoris obscura is a larger species reaching up to 56 mm, with 30 to 45 mm being usual for adults. It is mainly restricted to New South Wales and Southern Queensland and there are two colour forms, one with a greyish background colour and the other with a dark, inky-blue black background colour which is pictured here. The blue-black colour form is found only in the northern part of its range. The mantle also has yellow spots or blotches and a creamish-yellow mid dorsal longitudinal stripe. The rhinophores have a blue stalk and a red clavus and the gills are bluish with red streaks on their axes. *H. obscura* probably forms part of a complex of related species including *H. infucata* which has a wide Indo-West Pacific distribution and *H. saintvincentius* found in South Australia and southern Western Australia (Rudman 1999).



Hypselodoris whitei (Adams & Reeve, 1850)

Gosliner & Johnson (1999) have resolved the confusion concerning the identification of this species which has sometimes previously been identified as *H. mouaci*. It is a small species with 20 to 28 mm being the usual size for adults. Its mantle is white with a series of five longitudinal maroon lines. These lines are joined by pale maroon bars which produce a regularly blotched (tessellated) appearance overall. The rhinophores and gills are orange with white tips.



Hypselodoris zephyra Gosliner & Johnson, 1999

This species, which we identified as *Hypselodoris* cf. *nigrostriata* in our book (Marshall & Willan, 1999), has now been named *H. zephyra*. It is similar in size to *H. whitei*. Its mantle is white with a series of narrow black lines and streaks, some with violet surrounds, and there are some pale yellow patches between the lines. The rhinophores are dark orange with white tips and the gills are dark orange.

The photo of this species was taken by Richard Willan.



References.

Gosliner, T.M. and Johnson, R.F. 1999. Phylogeny of *Hypselodoris* (Nudibranchia: Chromodorididae) with a review of the monophyletic clade of Indo-Pacific species, including descriptions of twelve new species. *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society* 125: 1-114.

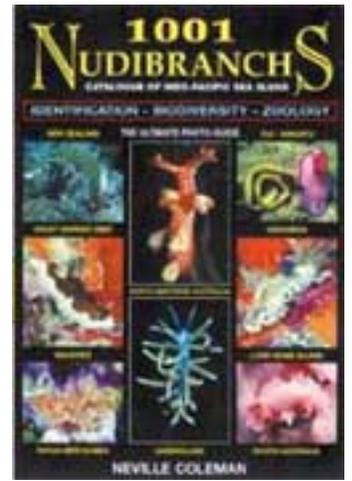
Marshall, J.G. & Willan, R.C. 1999. *Nudibranchs of Heron Island, Great Barrier Reef: a survey of the Opisthobranchia (Sea Slugs) of Heron and Wistari Reefs.* Leiden, Backhuys Publishers.

Rudman, W.B., 1999 (March 12). Comment on *Hypselodoris obscura* & *H. infucata* by Rebecca Johnson. [Message in] *Sea Slug Forum*. <http://www.seaslugforum.net/find.cfm?id=671>



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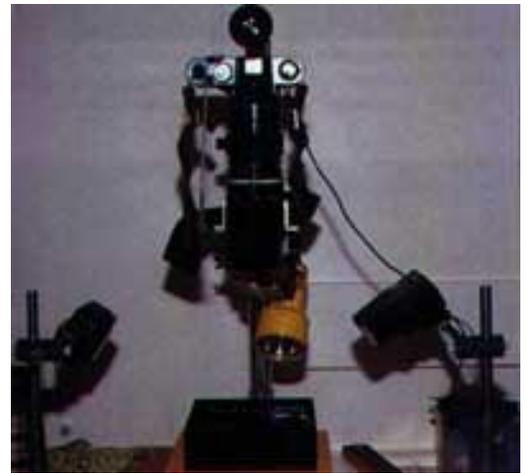
This column is an extract from Neville's recently released book "1001 Nudibranchs".



Intertidal Photography

Marine photography and equipment has come a long way in 30 years but the fact is that in regard to recording opisthobranchs the basics are still applicable. Any low tide adventurer can successfully photograph and record intertidal creatures with a single lens reflex camera, a macro lens (55mm, 60mm, 105mm) and an electronic lighting system. It can be done in rock pools but this is subject to conditions and the wind ripples on the surface. It is easier to go out and find the subjects and then photograph them in the controlled conditions of an aquarium, or in a dish on a suitable background rock.

If a taxonomic (black background) is required a black perspex tank may be used and for this it is best to shoot on manual exposure. With TTL metering it is necessary to have the subject on a natural background so that the frame can be filled and the right exposure made automatically. With either method the flash can be held or supported over the subject at an angle, or with two flashes they must be aimed at around a 45 degree angle so as not to produce reflections from the surface of the water, or the glass.



Snorkelling or Rockpool Photography

Capturing pictures of opisthobranchs in natural habitat is a challenging and rewarding experience and the best cameras I've found for this type of recording are the range of Nikonos cameras. This is mainly because they were the first 35mm amphibious cameras available and I found them very reliable and easy to use with various close up lenses and tubes. I use two Nikonos III cameras with 28mm lenses and extension tubes to produce 1:2 and 1:1 images on manual exposures, and a Nikonos V with a Nikonos dose up system at 1:3 with a Nikonos SB105 on automatic.



Because I may take three to four camera systems with me underwater they must all be simple and easy to use. With set distances I don't have to remember the size of any animals as each is on a fixed distance relative to each system, and each subject can be measured within the framer on the film.

Scuba Diving Photography

Fixed systems are much easier to use than single lens reflex cameras, especially in swell surges, strong currents and when using multiple systems recording small nudibranchs, as focusing and depth of field are known factors. There is no doubt my Nikon F4 in its Nexus housing and twin SB105 strobes and other SLR setups take extremely good pictures, but when dealing with small subjects of 5mm to 20mm, good conditions are required to obtain focus as the depth of field is so small and time underwater is so limited. I guess it's a matter of preference. Many of the contributors to this book and other nudibranch books use various housed SLR underwater camera systems with close up lenses and tubes to obtain their excellent pictures.

Some nudibranchs are so well camouflaged on their hosts or food sources that their true nature cannot be seen. Very often it's necessary to provide a contrasting background to the subject so that its shape and colour can really be appreciated and it can be identified. In situ scientific recording is important if we are going to learn more about these amazing creatures and their natural history. However, I've come to realise through the years that natural habitat is of little consequence if no-one can see the animal. In my own case I take a complete range of shots to record both sides of the story. Whichever method one chooses to record, highlighting the existence of nature's wonders and preserving their images in a way everybody can appreciate and share by far outshines any pedantic human opinions as to what is a right or wrong form of expression.



Film

I use Kodachrome 64 ISO for in-water close ups and Kodak Elite or Ektachrome 100 ISO for all other photography.



Living Reefs of the Indo-Pacific - A Photographic Guide

2001. By Rob van der Loos.

Paperbound. 176 pages, 6 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches. New Holland Publishers, Australia.

The old idiom "you can't tell a book by its cover" really applies here. Rob's new book is quite different from the many Indo-Pacific field guides and coffee table books, both. It is in fact neither a field guide nor a colourful coffee table book, even though the species coverage and taxonomy and the spectacular photos suggest it might be. Rob, an Australian divemaster with 25 years experience working a dive charter in Papua New Guinea, has produced a guide all right, but a guide to where to find a certain species and how best to photograph them underwater.

This book echos my many sermons encouraging divers to slow down and look closer. Rather than show you a pretty picture of that particular symbiotic relationship you have been trying to get a shot of for years, Rob guides you to the spot you are most likely to achieve this. He then suggests, in detail, how to get the best shot given your conditions.

For example, if its nudibranch shots you are after, as all you ANN readers are, Chapter 3 - Sea Slugs, discusses where they are most likely to be found, and then what behaviour or interesting situation to look for. The chapter presents examples for 49 species - where to find them and how to get that killer shot you've been dying for. Rob presents depth, distribution and even what lens to use. Two pages are included here to give you a feel for the quality of the photos and the kind of unique things Rob's teaches you to look for.

For those of you with broader interests, the book covers "living habitats" such as crinoids, black colours, soft corals, sea stars, whip corals etc., that provide protection and hunting grounds to other species, as well as in-depth coverage on how to shot cowries, scorpion-fish, anemones and their residents, and where to look on sandy, weedy and rubble bottoms. Incidentally the last three sections include a number of additional opisthobranch subjects to watch out for.

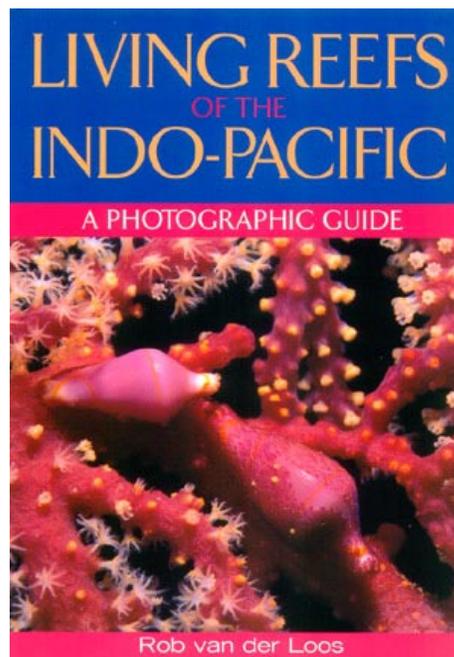
From a taxonomic standpoint I couldn't find an error, so I guess the book could serve as a field guide also. The quality of the photos ranks the book with any underwater art book, so it evens falls into the coffee table book category. Where it excites me is, it presents a fresh new approach, directing you to the subject, and suggesting how to get the pose of the perfect shot.

book



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review



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