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January 2001

nudibranchNEWS

editorial

This month we welcome Akos Lumnitzer as a regular columnist. Akos will be sharing the diverse opisthobranch life of the South-East Australian coastline, especially from around Sydney and central NSW. A regular contributor to Sportdiving magazine here in Australia he is about to have a sizable article on nudibranchs published.

Akos and his fiancée, Donata are to be married on January, 20th. Best wishes to them both.

Another new discovery is covered on page 33. The spawn of *Chromodoris sp.1* has until now been unrecorded (Marshall & Willan, 1999). The images show the spawn and the animal laying the eggs. On the same day *C. decora*, *C. daphne*, *C. verrieri* and *H. obscura* were encountered. All were crawling around in the open in less than 3 metres. Thanks to Nerida Wilson for her assistance identifying *C. verrieri*. It looked like *C. daphne* without the spots.

Miquel Pontes continues to show us the wealth of opisthobranch life in the Mediterranean.

Dave Behrens reviews Neville Coleman's new Maldives book.

Steve Grail is back on the Sunshine Coast and finding interesting nudibranchs on the offshore reefs. Steve photographed a nudibranch which resembles a cowry, showing another possible case of mimicry in the marine world.

Thank you and enjoy.
Wayne Ellis

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1001 Nudibranchs Publication Update (1) 13/1/2001

Welcome to 2001. Many thanks for your patience during the publication process of this title (my 50th book and largest project so far).

At the time I believed that 1001 pictures would adequately cover the subject matter and illustrate opisthobranchs within the geographical range of the book. However, during publication the enormous task has continued to grow and I am now committed to enlarging the book and content up to and beyond 1400 pictures. This, of course, increases my workload, extends the presumed publication date and will increase the eventual retail price. **However, your pre-paid, pre-publication order remains with no increase to you.**

I apologise for the extensions and hope that your interest increases with the additions as I believe they will make the book an even more valuable and comprehensive guide. I now estimate that completion will be around May 2001 and the then retail will be around Aus \$55 plus GST (where applicable) and postpak.

Sincerely
Neville Coleman

PS. Money back guarantee on all Pre-Publication orders should this new situation prove unsuitable

akos lumnitzer

Hi everyone! I will be introducing some of the wonderful nudibranchs and slugs along Australia's south-eastern coastline in this new regular column..

It can take decades to properly photograph and document the opisthobranch fauna from one geographical area. Over the last 5 years I have regularly photographed nudibranchs. In the process have built a useful library of the regular and visiting species.

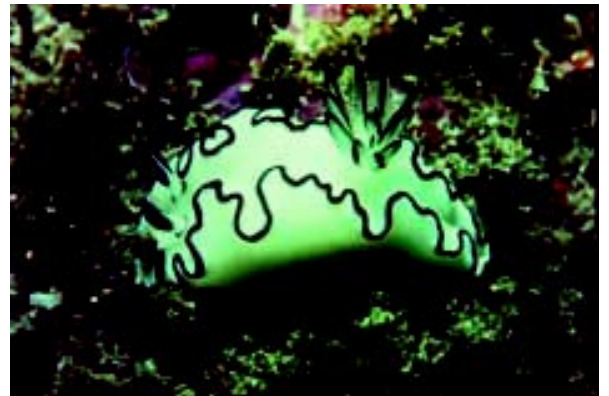
This month's column focuses on three *Glossodorids* found around Sydney.

***Glossodoris atromarginata* (Cuvier, 1804)**

This species is very conspicuous, seen at most popular dive sites. Reasonably easy to recognise, *G. atromarginata*, with it's a white body, black rhinophores and gills and numerous folds (giving it a frilly appearance) along the edge of the mantle. The edge of the folds but can be black, dark brown and even reddish-brown. The majority of cases it has many folds.

Occasionally an animal will have only one or two mantle folds, making it easy to confuse with *G. angasi*. However, of all the specimens I have observed the multiple folds is the most common characteristic.

The smallest specimens were 10mm long and perfect replicas of the textbook specimens. Most adults range from 40-80mm.



Glossodoris angasi Rudman, 1986

Since the first published accounts of Sydney's nudibranchs was made by George Angas in 1864, *G. atromarginata* and *G. angasi* have been mistakenly identified as the same species.

Dr. Bill Rudman in 1986 named the species in honour George Angas, who in 1864 collected and named many species from the waters of Sydney Harbour.

G. angasi has one mantle fold varying in colour from dark pink to reddish-brown. The average size is around 20mm.



Glossodoris averni Rudman, 1985

It is a predominantly tropical species with its distribution ranging from Papua New Guinea south to the mid-NSW coastline. The species possesses numerous mantle folds and the edges are anything from orange to bright red in colour. The older the animal, the more mantle folds it has.

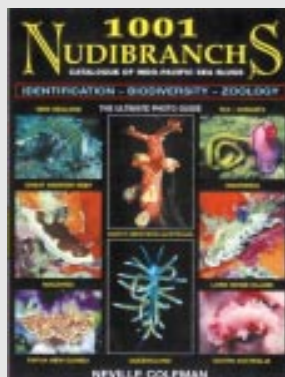
G. averni is very easy to recognise. I have only seen one specimen in Sydney for a six-month period on the same rock off Shark Point, Clovelly at 23 metres.

Then on a trip to Ulladulla (approximately 300km south from Sydney) we observed an adult specimen which according to Dr. Bill Rudman of the Australian Museum is furthest southern recording of this species.

Reachs 60mm.



photos ©2000 akos lumnitzer



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sunshine coast nudibranchs



**wayne
ellis**

Snorkeling Mooloolaba harbour recently uncovered some interesting finds and Steve Grail, local diver and shell collector recently called in to share his latest discoveries. Diving the Inner and Outer Gneering Reefs off Mooloolaba, Steve regularly photographs uncommon nudibranchs. This month he offers us three species:

1. A small dorid that resembles the Tan and White Cowry, *Cypraea cribaria*, found at 25m, south of the Pinnacles, the Outer Gneerings on open sand. Steve thought at first he was seeing a cowry. On closer examination he noticed the reddish rhinophores and gills. This may be yet another nudibranch/cowry mimic. See fig.1, the dorid and & fig.2., *Cypraea cribaria* shells.

2. *Chromodoris cf geometrica*. Steve firmly believes this is not *C. geometrica* and that possibly it is a new species. Found in 15-20m at the Pinnacles, Outer Gneerings off Mooloolaba. Specimen 50mm in length. See fig. 3

3. *Chromodoris magnifica* (Quoy & Gaimard, 1837). Steve photographed this beautiful species off Mooloolaba. See fig. 4.

During Steve's visit we updated the Sunshine Coast Opisthobranch List and it will be online soon.



Photos © 2000 steve grail & wayne ellis

Chromodoris sp.1 in Marshall & Willan 1999

An image of this species from Port Cartwright was included in issue 3.3. On a recent visit two more specimens were located, both at approximately 1metre. The first was laying eggs in an old oyster shell. The second was out in the open.

In the container one specimen again began laying eggs on the side of a rock. Over about a one hour period it continued to lay it's eggs in a counter clockwise direction spiralling from the outside whorl inwards. The pale orange/pink egg mass was firmly attached by one edge to the rock and was filamous in nature. This would indicate larval development probably occurs in this species.

The animals were 60 and 70 mm in length. Included are two images to show the differing size of the reddish patches that occur submarginally. One animal has small spots, the other large ones. The images are:

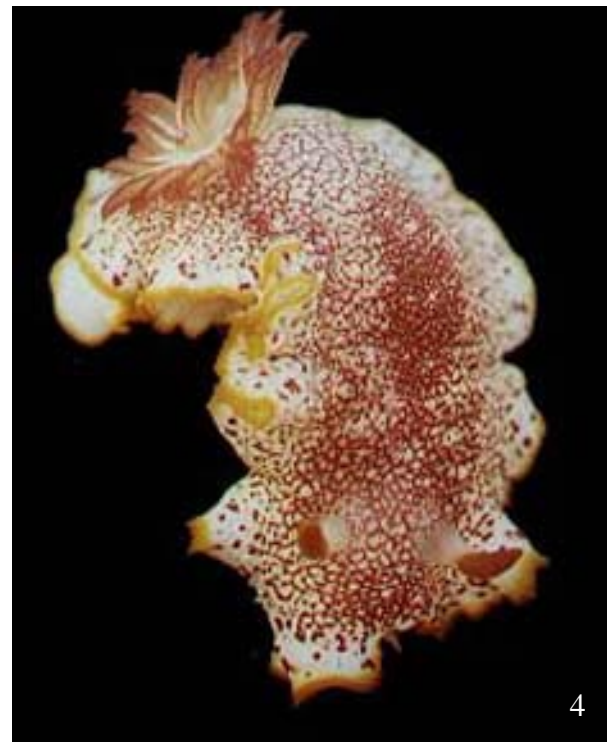
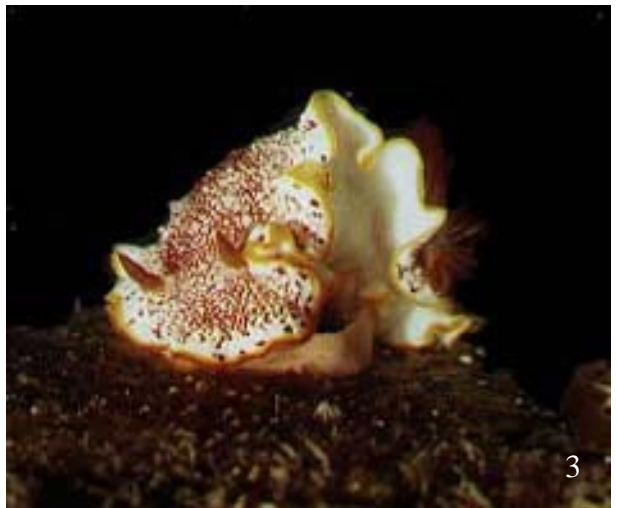
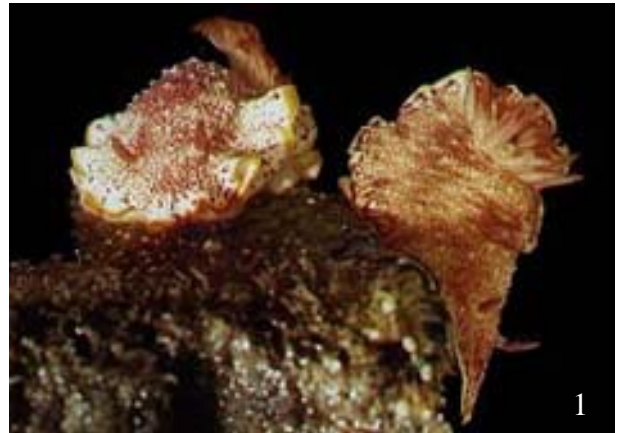
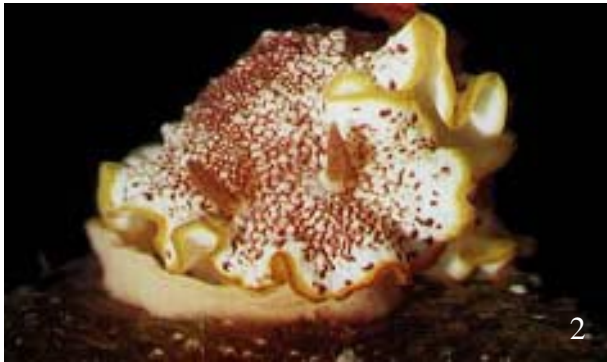
1. Both specimens on the rock, with one laying the outer whorl of the egg mass. At this stage the other specimen tried, unsuccessfully to mate with the one laying eggs.

2. Laying the second whorl, inside the first in a counter-clockwise direction

3. Another shot of the second whorl being laid down

4. The specimen with the small submarginal spots.

5. The specimen with the larger submarginal spots.



Photos © 2001 wayne ellis

mediterranean nudibranchs



**miquel
pontes**

Cuthona caerulea

The *Cuthona caerulea* is a small nudibranch described by Montagu in 1804. It was formerly known as *Trinchesia caerulea* or *Cratena caerulea*.

The body is elongated, reaching a maximum length of 25 mm, though generally is shorter, up to 10 mm. It is coloured transparent to white, and covered with distinctive cerata, which are short and fusiform, with yellow to orange or red tips.

The digestive gland beneath the cerata skin commonly produces a wide colored blue band on the mid section of these protuberances, and is the origin of the species name (caerulea means "sky blue"). There are wide colour variations on this band which sometimes is green or black or it is even absent. A third band, located beneath the blue one, is often found and it shows the same color as the cerata tips. Oral tentacles and rhinophores display yellow tips.

This species feeds on hydrarian *Sertularella polyzonias* and it is usually found on it, though it is difficult to spot at first because its homochromy with its food. Eggstrings are laid on the food, and usually form white short spirals, resembling rings.

Cuthona caerulea is commonly found in the western Mediterranean and in the Atlantic Ocean, from southern Norway and the British Isles down to the Spanish and Portuguese Atlantic coast.

Some authors cite this species in the Western Atlantic, from Brazil to Florida, but this is likely to be another species. Similar colouring in other species such as *Cuthona ornata* from Western Pacific suggests that there are similar species spread around the world oceans.

You can find more information on the Internet at the following URLs:

· Erwin Köhler's Medslugs:

http://www.medslugs.de/E/Mediterranean/Cuthona_caerulea.htm

· Bernard Picton's Nudibranchs of the British Isles:

<http://www.pictonb.freemove.co.uk/nudibranchs/cutcae.html>

· Bill Rudman's Sea Slug Forum

<http://www.seaslugforum.net/cuthcaer.htm>



photos ©2000 miquel pontes and albert ollé



mistaken identity

This month we look at another flatworm. This one was collected on the Sunshine Coast.

??*Thyanozoon sp.* - Light Brown with dorsal papillae. The identification was provided by Dr. Leslie Newman. The image can be viewed at Wolfgang Siefarth's Flatworm site ([http:// www](http://www)).





dave
behrens

Marine Life of the Maldives

2000. Neville Coleman

Well, while we thought Neville Coleman was busy working on “1001 Nudi-branches”, surprise **Marine Life of the Maldives** is released. The perfect companion to Rudie Kuiters’ “Photo Guide to the Fishes of the Maldives”, 1998, the two together provide complete coverage for the diver, snorkeler and biologist enjoying this archipelago, off the tip of India.

This book is **THE** complete guide to the invertebrates, marine plants, sea birds reptiles and mammals of the Maldives. Species accounts include a description of the Class or Subclass of each taxonomic group, family name, common name, scientific name, habitat preference, depth to be found at and the size one should expect to see.

A short narrative discusses colour variability and distribution.

The opisthobranch chapter (pages 152-169) includes 42 species, common to the island group. Species accounts include up to four of Nev’s fantastic photos each (sample shown here).

The book’s coverage of other invertebrate taxa is comprehensive and visually beautiful. I guess my favourite chapter (aside from the Branch’s, of course) is the Crustacean chapter, which contains 68 shrimp, lobster and crabs.

The book provides significant scientific value as it fills in geographical distribution gaps for many species thought to reside in the Maldives, but which lacked documentation. Neville’s careful species presentations also provide the reader with interesting close ups of important body anatomy, egg and larvae shots and habitat and substrate variability.

All in all, highly recommended.

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