

The task of civilisation is to protect us against nature – Sigmund Freud



### feedback

Dear Sirs

I am 11 years old and I had to do an assignment on 'sea slugs' and after days of searching the internet (where I found lots of pretty pictures of 'nudibranches'), it was not until I found your site that I got some real facts and understood what nudibranch (and the other strange names I was reading on the pictures) really meant.

I really appreciated the way you explained the Class and sub classes as well as the diet and defence systems.

If I get a good mark for this assignment it is thanks to you  
Julia Eggleston

Dear Wayne:

I just wanted to correct something. In the text of Miquel Pontes & Josep Dacosta about *Marionia blainvillea*, they state this species is endemic to the Mediterranean, but it is not.

There are recent and confirmed records of this species at the shores of Portugal, Madeira and the Azores (Wirtz, 1998) and I also have a few specimens collected by me at the Azores (Ávila et al., 1998; 2000).

With very best wishes  
Sérgio

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# readers nudibranchs



**Michael  
Morris**



I came across your website and I thought I would send you a few photos of Nudibranch's I have found at **Rapid Bay Jetty** in South Australia.

I am particularly interested in identifying each of them as I have been unable to find names for them. In particular, the Nudi 1 which I found on the weekend. I have never seen anything like this before here in Adelaide.

Rapid Bay is a Jetty south of Adelaide. Maximum depth is 10m. These nudibranch's are found underneath the T-section of the Jetty on the sea bed floor. Sometimes a few metres up the pylons as well.

*Ceratosoma brevicaudatum*





***Chromodoris sp.*** 'haloed' chromodoris of Neville Coleman's 1989 book. Also in the new book on page 75 from Rapid Bay. The Western Australian ones seems to be a bit lighter.



***Flabellina sp.*** Undescribed species from Southern Australian waters

# nudibranchs



**miquel  
pontes**

***Trapania maculata***

**By Miquel Pontes**

**Pictures by Lluís Aguilar and Albert Ollé**

Described by Haefelfinger back in 1960, this is a small nudibranch, at most it achieves 15 mm, but in some cases it has been observed individuals up to 19 mm.

Very characteristic of the *Trapania* gender, this nudibranch has backward oriented processes flanking both rhinophores and the branchial plume. *Trapania maculata* is easily identified by its white translucent body with some orange coloration that extend to these processes, together with rhinophores, oral and propodial tentacles, and some parts of the sides of the body. Orange spots on the body are of irregular shapes, but they follow a basic pattern of an orange band on the dorsum that begins on the head and continues to the tail.

*Trapania maculata* can be misidentified with other members of the gender, like *Trapania hispalensis*, which lacks of orange spots on the body, or *Trapania lineata*, which has white lines along the body and no orange spots.

There's a bit of confusion about this nudibranch feeding habits. Many authors report it feeds on *Ircina sp.* sponges, while others report it feeding on *Eudendrium sp.* hydroids and others on *Scrupocellaria sp.* bryozoans. Recent investigations reveal that *Trapania maculata* really feeds on kamptozoans, which are tiny animals originally classified as bryozoans, and which live attached to sponges, bryozoans and hydroids.

On the Western Mediterranean *Trapania maculata* can be found on rocky bottoms at medium depths. According to some authors it is a common species, easy to find on *Ircina sp.* sponges down to 20 meters of depth, on shadowy rocky walls and in holes. Other authors state that it can be found on *Chondrosia reniformis* sponges as well and on rocky bottoms rich on bryozoans.

*Trapania maculata* has been reported as well on the Eastern Mediterranean, as it seems to be common in shallow waters of Northern Aegean islands, where it is possible to see them even while snorkeling. This species has been reported too on the Atlantic Ocean, around the Iberian Peninsula and along the French coast, but it seems a rare finding in the South England and Wales coasts.

The origin of the gender name *Trapania* could be related to *Drepania*, that comes from the Greek *drepane* –sickle– and presumably refers to the sickle-shaped processes beside the rhinophores in *Trapania* nudibranchs. *Maculata* derives from Latin *macula* meaning spot.

**More information**



Readers can find more interesting information and pictures in the following links:

**M@re Nostrum:** <http://marenostrum.org/opistobranquios/tmaculata>

**SeaSlug Forum:** <http://www.seaslugforum.net/trapmacu.htm>

**MedSlugs:** [http://www.medslugs.de/E/Mediterranean/Trapania\\_maculata.htm](http://www.medslugs.de/E/Mediterranean/Trapania_maculata.htm)

**Nudibranchs of the British Isles:** <http://www.pictonb.freemove.co.uk/nudibranchs/tramac.html>

**Opistobranquios de la Costa de Granada:** [http://www.ugr.es/~lstocino/pagina\\_nueva\\_18.htm](http://www.ugr.es/~lstocino/pagina_nueva_18.htm)

**Lista completa de las especies ibéricas y canarias de Opisthobranchia:** <http://mfrbio.topcities.com/animales/opisthobranchia.htm>

**A List of the Worldwide Food Habits of Nudibranchs:** <http://people.ucsc.edu/~mcduck/nudifood.htm>

And in the following publications:

**Cervera J.L. & Garcia-Gomez J.C.** Redescrición de *Trapania maculata* Haefelfinger, 1960 (Gastropoda, Nudibranchia). [161-172]

**Ocaña, Sánchez-Tocino, López & Viciana.** Guía Submarina de Invertebrados no Artrópodos. Editorial Comares 2000

**Picton, B. & Morrow, C.** A field guide to the Nudibranchs of the British Isles. Immel Publishing 1994



# 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 Dorididae (1) – Genus *Halgerda*

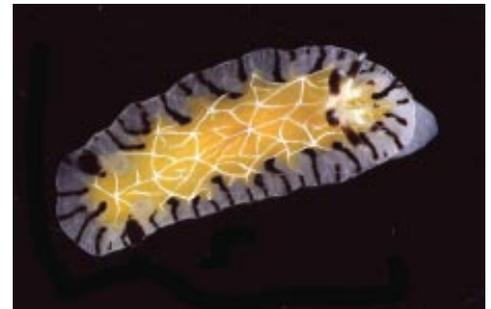
A description of the characteristics of the reef crest at Heron Island appeared in the November 2001 issue. It is the highest part of the intertidal section of the reef and several members of the genus *Halgerda* can be found crawling in the open or under the dead coral slabs that litter the crest.

*Halgerda* species have a high, oval body outline and are firm yet gelatinous to touch. Their mantle has a reticulate pattern of dorsal ridges, which can be sharply angled in some species, and there are usually pustules where the ridges intersect.

### *Halgerda albocristata* Gosliner & Fahey, 1998

This is a small species which ranges in size up to 19 mm but is quite distinctive because of its bright yellow mantle with numerous intersecting opaque white lines. The mantle margin is translucent white with numerous blackish brown lines - usually one long line and then three short ones. In their original description of this species, Gosliner and Fahey considered that the number of lines was a distinguishing feature between this species and *H. elegans*, with *H. albocristata* having more numerous narrower lines and *H. elegans* having wider fewer lines. The three animals illustrated here show that the number of lines can vary greatly between animals and that there is no marked difference in this respect between the two species. The pictured animals measured 11, 15 and 19 mm respectively. The other photo shows the undersurface of the mantle and the sides of the foot which are white and spotted with blackish brown.

*Halgerda albocristata* has a wide distribution in the tropical western Pacific Ocean ranging from Okinawa to the Great Barrier Reef.



*Halgerda elegans* was originally described from Indonesia and is found throughout the tropical western Pacific Ocean. It is most similar in appearance to *H. albocristata*, the major difference being that *H. elegans* has a translucent mantle with numerous intersecting, orange-yellow lines on the dorsal ridges, whilst *H. albocristata* has white lines. *H. elegans* also has short yellow lines in the spaces between the ridges. Like *H. albocristata* it has a series of radiating black lines round the mantle edge. The illustrated animal was 28 mm but generally animals range from 5-10 mm (Gosliner & Fahey, 1998).



*Halgerda tessellata* (Bergh, 1880)

This species has a wide Indo-Pacific distribution and can be variable in colour. It is easily recognised from the previous species by its prominent, triangular ridges, which form prominent pustules where they join. *H. tessellata* has a brown body with numerous white spots in the depressions between the ridges. The crests of the ridges are burnt orange and can be edged with chocolate brown. The mantle edge and foot are edged with gold. There is a broad, triangular chocolate brown streak on the upper surface of the tail. The undersurface of the mantle and the sides of the foot are white and spotted with purple-brown. Generally animals range in size to 30 mm but Ono (1999) has illustrated a 50 mm animal.



Gosliner, T.M. & Fahey, S.J. 1998. Description of a new species of *Halgerda* from the Indo-Pacific with a redescription of *Halgerda elegans* Bergh, 1905. *Proceedings of the California Academy of Science*, 50(15): 346-359.



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.

Ono, A. 1999. *Opisthobranchs of Kerama Islands*. 183 pp.



## Asia Pacific Reef Guide – 2001. Helmut Debelius

This is the latest addition to IKAN "Reef Guide" series. Essentially this book replaces "Southeast Asia Tropical Fish Guide" by Rudie Kuitert and Helmut Debelius (or the Red Book as some call it) adding invertebrates to its coverage. The book follows the format of all the reader friendly IKAN guides, each page containing 2-3 species with large color photographs, with smaller inserts showing closely related species (see page spread shown below).

Focusing on the reef species found throughout the more than 20,000 islands and reefs making up Malaysia, Indonesia, Palau, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and tropical Japan, the book contains over 1000 spectacular color photographs describing that many species. The book is divided into fishes (about 240 pages) and invertebrates (the remaining 80 or so pages). Distributed throughout the text you will find 21 of those fascinating and instructional "picture stories" of which the IKAN guides are becoming famous for. These include editorials on such topics such as chemical poisoning for exotic fish species for the live purchase oriental restaurant market, anglerfish stings, population declines in humpheaded parrotfish, the many commensal relationships of the stinging urchin, masters of mimicry, goby shrimp and more.

The cast of contributing photographers is impressive and adds to the visual quality and diversity of the book. For the nudibranch aficionado Helmut has included presentations of an impressive 41 species. I am pleased to see so many recently described species including *Nembrotha chamberlaini*, *Notodoris serенаe*, *Chromodoris hintuanensis* and *C. michaeli*. In only one instance is the book overcome by a newly described species name, that being the description of the gorgeous pink color variation of *Hypselodoris bullocki* (middle of page 282) which is now named *Risbecia apolegma*.

For divers traveling to these waters this book offers an all in one, compact and sturdy guide to the more common species. When not using it to identify today's exciting discovery, just sit back and use it to for a relaxing evening read.

Hardcover, 321 pages, over 1000 color photos

6x9 inch format

Retail - \$44.95 USD, \$85.00 Aust.

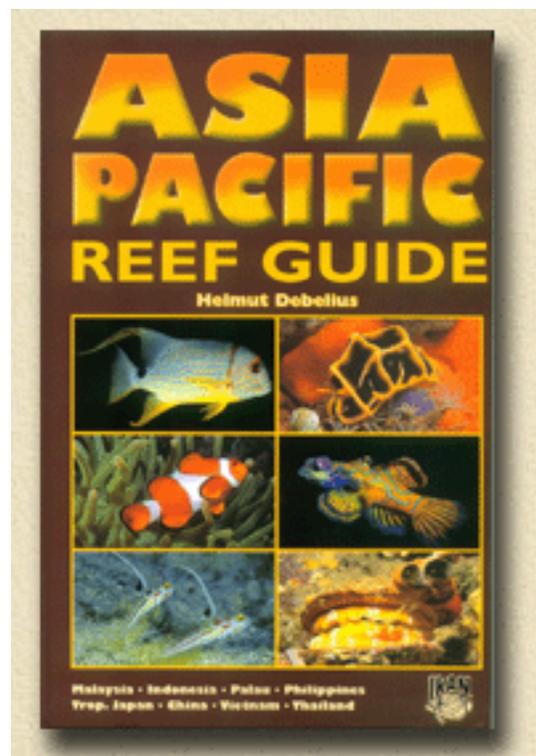
Available from Sea Challengers at – [www.seachallengers.com](http://www.seachallengers.com)



# book Review



**dave  
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