



Dear Neville,
I recently saw this nudibranch in Mabul around 2-3 metres depth around a seagrass area during a night dive. I checked your 1001 Nudibranchs but didn't find any species the same. It may be in Polybranchiidae family. Could you help me ID this nudibranch, please? Thanks, Richard Usah



Dear Richard,
This is an excellent find and I can certainly help out. FAMILY: Caliphyllidae COMMON NAME:

Elegant cyerce
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Cyerce elegans*
REMARKS: Found from the Red Sea to the Philippines and down to the east coast of Australia, this beautiful little opisthobranch grows to around 60 mm. I have never found it to be common and have only seen it on several occasions. The cerata may be flat or inflated and it comes in several colour variations. (see page 66/6,7,8, Nudibranchs Encyclopedia).
Best wishes, Neville

Hi Neville,
It's your favorite divemaster from Albany dive. After you left I purchased a camera, snapping nudibranch after nudibranch, and happily identifying them and reading



up on how rare they were. But I've run into a brick wall with these two little guys. Could you help me out. Also how common are they? Cheers, Brandon Darby

now a definitive part of science, many of the early species may change in the future.

Pic 0192 FAMILY: Chromodorididae
COMMON NAME: Albany thorunna
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Thorunna* sp.



Dear Brandon,
You see, there is life beyond dive instruction. Very little is known about the nudibranchs in your area. I did my best over the years but you're on the spot and have opportunity far beyond mine. You could

REMARKS: Congratulations! I know of nothing which resembles this nudibranch you've discovered and I'm not able to find any reference to it at all on any slug sites of the world. I feel sure it's an undescribed species and you have the only images of it. Not bad for your first ventures into nudibranchs and underwater photography.

Pic 011 FAMILY: Phoxichilidiidae
COMMON NAME: Sea spider
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Anoplodactylus* sp.
REMARKS: This genus is widespread along the southern coastline of Australia. Adults grow to around 25mm and are known to prey on small opisthobranchs, though most species of pycnogonids eat hydroids and bryozoans. Keep up the good work Sincerely, Neville



become the nudibranch 'expert' of the southwest in no time. By the quality of your images here you're well on the way. Many thanks for sending in your shots. I've never seen the nudibranch before and would love to squeeze it into the new book, it's brilliant!
Pic 0083 FAMILY: Pseudocerotidae
COMMON NAME: Southern flatworm
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Thysanozoon* sp.
REMARKS: There are quite a few species of southern dwelling flatworms but little work has been done on them over the last 20 years. Early workers such as Prudhoe in the UK researched and named a number from my collections but as techniques have improved and DNA is



Hi Neville,
As the pics say I'm sure it's a *Flabellina* of some sort it's just the colour that's throwing me off. I'm thinking maybe red lined? As you can see here are two individuals but they were within a metre of each other but no sign of any eggs. Also can you tell me which issue the shots of the *Tambja* will be appearing in as I can't get it here on the island and have to get friend to buy and keep for me in Singapore. It's possible that I will be going to Maumere in Flores for a week at the end of the season and maybe on to Dili in Timor so may really plague you with pics after that. All the best Rory

Dear Rory,
This is certainly an excellent discovery and your images are excellent giving us every opportunity to try and identify your critter. You were correct in your identification to genus as anybody could be. Your discovery is a new species, congratulations. Diving in Flores, Indonesia is brilliant and you will surely find some excellent species. I saw some really nice critters on the DVD the Dili dive people had at ADEX, it sure looks like there's some brilliant diving there.
FAMILY: Flabellinidae
COMMON NAME: Rory flabellina
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Flabellina* sp.
REMARKS: Needed to check this with Dr Richard Willan and he agrees that your find is undescribed as there is no animal recorded of this specific nature. He also congratulates you on your photography. Keep up the great work, Neville

Hi Neville,
I have a few images of mating cuttlefish for your viewing pleasure. Do you know what species this is? All the best, Nigel Marsh



Dear Nigel,
What a nice little series! Bloody difficult to get unless one is in the right place at the right time. Congratulations. As they're from the Broadwater at the Gold Coast and local I should be able to sort them out.

FAMILY: Sepiidae
COMMON NAME: Mourning cuttlefish
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Sepia plangon*
REMARKS: Since I published some of the first identified images of Cephalopods in *What Shell Is That?* In 1974 we've seen a wealth of live images of cephalopods published and for the colour patterns displayed in books and their interpretations for the most part, science in the form of Dr Mark Norman and a variety of the diving public have contributed a great deal of knowledge to our understanding of cephalopod identification and behaviour. The male mourning cuttlefish is known to display wavy white lines across the back when courting and as such is easy to identify.

However, in my experience the wavy white lines are only present when there is another male in the vicinity. The pattern is actually a warning pattern to other males to keep away from their female. One can see this when there are two males competing for a female they both have the same patterns. On the other hand your courting couple are alone and the male does not have his 'piss off' pattern displayed. That is why you were not able to recognise the species so easily, even with the green iridescent edge along the base of the fins. In general it is the male that takes on the assertive role during courtship and mating. In the case of your two, the

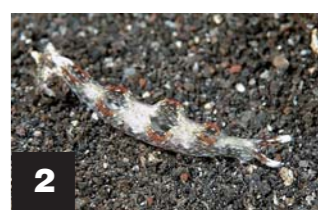
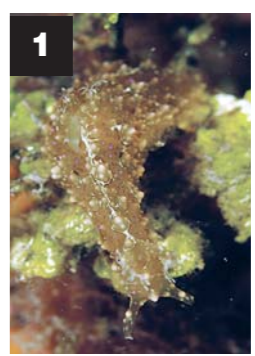


so called 'plain' female seems to be taking the affirmative? This species is only found along the east coast of Australia and grows to around 130 mm. Sincerely, Neville

Hi Neville,
These specimens are from Indonesia, and relatively shallow waters (8-12m). No. 1 is from Lembeh; No's. 2, 3 and 4 are from Bali; No. 5 is from Batam. Again, I can't put a name to these cuties. Thanks. Mathieu Meur

Dear Mathieu,
I've collaborated with Dr Richard Willan and we agree on the following ID's. They're all in the new *Nudibranchs Encyclopedia* and your images are excellent. However, many things remain undescribed and you've found a couple.
Pic 1 Lembeh Str, Sulawesi Indonesia
FAMILY: Aplysidiidae
COMMON NAME: Ramose sea hare
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Petalifera ramosa*
REMARKS: Grows to around 40mm, is found from Japan to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and across to Australia. (see page 126/14,15 1001 Nudibranchs).
Pic 2 Bali Indonesia
FAMILY: Plakobranchidae
COMMON NAME: Pink vents elysia
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Elysia* sp.
REMARKS: I have it from several locations across the Asia/Indo-Pacific. It looks different to the more common form but

we'll have to wait until the taxonomists sort them out further.
Pic 3 Bali Indonesia
FAMILY: Discodorididae
COMMON NAME: Dappled discodoris
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Discodoris* sp.
REMARKS: This species appears to be undescribed and currently there doesn't seem to be a published description. Until science advances and more information is available, this is it.
Pic 4 Bali Indonesia
FAMILY: Plakobranchidae
COMMON NAME: Blue elysia
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Elysia* sp.
REMARKS: We're in the same boat on this one. It doesn't appear to be described as yet. It's a very nice little species.
Pic 5 Batam Indonesia
FAMILY: Chromodorididae
COMMON NAME: Glandular chromodoris
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Chromodoris tumulifera*
REMARKS: This species has emerged in a number of places over the last couple of years. Roger Steene



captured some of the first images at Rabaul in Papua New Guinea in 1987. I've had images from Perhentian Islands in Malaysia and it's also been recorded in Darwin Australia and Fiji, so it has a fair distribution. Best wishes, Neville

indopacific IDENTITY CRISIS

Dear Mr. Coleman,
Recently in Manado, North Sulawesi I came across this nudibranch. I've been trying to identify it, but haven't had any luck. I've consulted your books and internet. I also found peculiar behaviour by a juvenile lionfish clinging to a thorny seahorse. I hope you can help identify this species and explain the behaviour of the juvenile lionfish.
Best Regards, Fredi Tansari



California. The specimen in your images is extended in search of either food or a mate; this is what makes it appear different to those in most books.

No 2
The juvenile lionfish has no specific relationship with the seahorse. To the lionfish, the seahorse is just another piece of stationary bottom growth similar to what it uses to ambush the small shrimps or

Dear Fredi,
All is ok and I can sort out your query.
No 1
FAMILY: Aplysidiidae
COMMON NAME: Little sea hare

SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Aplysia parvula*
REMARKS: This species grows to around 25 mm and comes in almost every colour variation, from white through to black and is found throughout the Asia/Indo-Pacific and from the Red Sea to

fish it feeds on. There are many similar examples where bottom-dwelling animals that don't move much are incidentally crawled on or utilized by others.
Best wishes, Neville



COMMON NAME: Brown spotted dermatobranchus
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Dermatobranchus* sp.
REMARKS: Similar to most of these we find this is another undescribed species.

Pic 2 FAMILY: Arminidae
COMMON NAME: Blue dermatobranchus
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Dermatobranchus* sp.
REMARKS: The cerata you noticed to be like an aeolid do not stand up but lay along the back. We have a number of this type in the new *Nudibranchs Encyclopedia* and like your's they are not described either. Many have only been photographed a few times.

Pic 3 FAMILY: Chromodorididae
COMMON NAME: Spot margined chromodoris
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Chromodoris* sp.
REMARKS: Yes, your first observation was the best one. Your one has orange spots along the mantle edge and others have yellow. This species has been found in a number of different areas now and like most of the rest, it is variable.
Best wishes, Neville

Hi Neville,
At the Franklin Island group about 6 miles offshore I found some good nudibranchs and a couple of puzzles. Image 1 & 2 I thought were the same branch, but on the big screen I'm not so sure, they look the

same but nudi 2 seems to be an Aeolidiidae, but nudi 1 doesn't. Both pictures taken in 12 metres, mixed habitat, a lot of algae, silt, some hard coral, abundant soft coral, the water is often turbid. I reckon Nudi 3 is a Chromodoris, looking a lot like your spot-margined, but I think not. I'd appreciate your thoughts and time.
Best wishes, Phil

Pic 1 FAMILY: Arminidae

Hi Neville
I found this lionfish southeast of Scuba Sureya, Bali around noon at about 18m in a sandy area with small outcrops of corals and rocks. It's smaller than other lionfish I've seen, approx 12cm and with almost non-existent dorsal fin spines. Photo was taken with an Olympus C-5050 in an Olympus Case.
Many thanks, Gail Rapley



Dear Gail,
Your image is excellent.
FAMILY: Scorpaenidae
COMMON NAME: Shortfin lionfish
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Dendrochirus brachypterus*
REMARKS: This beautiful little fish is generally nocturnal and may be brown, red, or yellow. Your yellow one is the most uncommon form. Congratulations. It's found on sandy mud bottom around muck diving sites and can be found around old logs or wrecks out on the mud. This species occurs across the Indo-Pacific and grows to 17 cm.
Best wishes, Neville

Hello Neville,
On Undersea Explorer diving on the Ribbon reefs, I came across a nudibranch which I and my dive instructor had never seen. After looking through your 1001 Nudibranchs, we were able to identify it, though the book suggested this species was only ever recorded once or twice in Papua New Guinea. Has this species been recorded in Australian waters since the publication of your book or is this a new discovery? The image is by Clare Omodei. Looking forward to your reply, James Balog, North Queensland.

Dear James,
Your image is excellent.
FAMILY: Chromodorididae
COMMON NAME: Sinuate ceratosoma
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Ceratosoma sinuata*
REMARKS: Yes, when 1001 Nudibranchs was written only a few specimens had been found and it was not determined as to what the species was. In the ensuing years more have been found and science has decided that this is a juvenile form of the above species. There's a series of images on page 134 *Nudibranchs Encyclopedia*. The species is by no means common but is



widespread throughout the Indo-Pacific region. It grows to around 50mm and feeds on sponges.
Best wishes, Neville



Hi Neville,
I was wondering if you could identify this nudibranch. It was taken at Lembeh Straits and I have referred to your book, 1001 Nudibranchs but am still unable to identify it.
Regards, Caroline Lim, Brunei

Dear Caroline,
Yes, I can ID your critter. Your image is very good.
FAMILY: Aplysidiidae
COMMON NAMES: Eared sea hare
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Dolabella auricularia*
REMARKS: This species is widespread in the Asia/Indo-Pacific from the Red Sea into the South Pacific and Galapagos Islands. It grows to around 300mm and feeds on algae. The common name refers to the shape of its internal shell, not that it has ears. It exudes purple dye as a defence and is sometimes eaten by Pacific Islanders as food. Specimens found on muddy or soft bottom often bury during the day.
Best wishes, Neville

Hello,
I was in Lembeh and took some pictures of this crab. It looks like an orang utan crab, but doesn't seem to be hairy. Could you please tell me what it is? Thanks and very best regards.
Dominique (from France)



SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Oncinopus aranea*
REMARKS: This species ranges from Japan to Indonesia and grows to 25 mm. Like many spider crabs it transplants

Dear Dominique,
You're correct, it's a close relative of the orang utan crab, your image is very good.
FAMILY: Majidae
COMMON NAME: Spider crab

small pieces of sponge onto its exoskeleton and the sponge grows over the entire crab protecting it from being eaten by fish.
Best wishes, Neville

Hi Neville,
Can you please help us identify this fish? It was under Rye Pier, Victoria, near a pylon. It was small and the lower part of



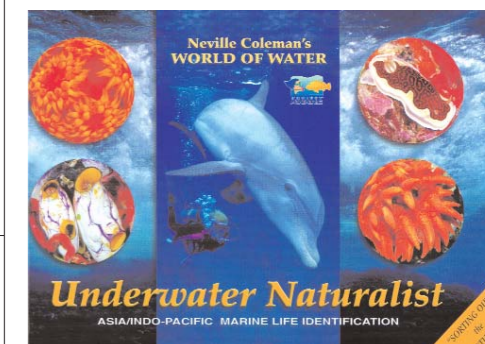
its body was transparent. This shot was taken with a Sea&Sea MM1 I with a 1:2 macro lens.
Thanks, Rob Peating

Dear Rob,
This took a while to work out. I wasn't able to find it in any reference but Rudie Kuitert has solved your mystery.
FAMILY: Cheilodactylidae
COMMON NAME: Jackass morwong
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Nemadactylus macropterus*
REMARKS: Your specimen is a juvenile of this species. The fish is found along Australia's south coast from NSW to S/W Australia. It grows to 70cm and adults are generally seen in deeper water, often in big schools. Juveniles are seen in bays and estuaries. Best wishes, Neville

Neville Coleman's discoveries include over 450 new species of sea creatures and thousands of new records. His Australasian marine photographic index contains over 100,000 images and he's published 65 marine natural history books.
Submissions: Send scanned photographs or digital images with your relevant details to *Identity Crisis*
worldofwater@nevillecoleman.com.au
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Asia/Indo-Pacific Marine Life Identification by Neville Coleman

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