

[ID CRISIS]

Neville Coleman

worldofwater@nevillecoleman.com.au

Hi Neville,
We found this critter when we were out diving in Pattaya, Thailand. It was a jelly-like substance, translucent, about 25cm long and moved along the sand bottom. It had a large mouthpiece which it would open up and siphon water and nutrients from the bottom. The frills at the bottom acted like legs which it used to move forward. Beige, with white and black spots. Never seen one before and have asked a few friends (divers) and we are all stumped. Thanks and we enjoy your pages immensely! Regards, Gwyn Mills



Dear Gwyn,
Many thanks for your submission and kind words. Yes! This is one of the weirdest species of nudibranchs. FAMILY: Tethydidae
COMMON NAME: Wonderous melibe
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Melibe mirifica*
REMARKS: Although I've not seen this colour variation before, your creature appears to be this species. It is a widespread species which generally occurs on soft bottom across the Indo-Pacific. It grows to 180mm and feeds by way of its expanded oral hood spread across the substrate.

Hi Neville,
Here's two critters I'm unsure of. **Pic 1** The black fella is at Baldwin's Bommie. **Pic 2** The other I'm not sure, but it is about 3mm long so the photo is not the best. Regards, Jan van der Kevie



Dear Jan,
Your images are excellent and no problem to ID. I spent a great deal of time diving at Loloata Island in PNG and compiled the first Marine Fauna Listings for the area, so I'm always interested in what's been discovered since. **Pic 1** FAMILY: Vetulinidae
COMMON NAME: Semper's chelynotus
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Chelynotus semperi*
REMARKS: This group of molluscs are known as lamellarids and are related to the small cowry-like molluscs belonging to the family triviidae. They're generally nocturnal and feed primarily on ascidians. This species grows to 70mm and occurs across the Indo-Pacific. **Pic 2** Your family ID is spot on. FAMILY: Plakobranchidae
COMMON NAME: Splendid thuridilla
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Thuridilla splendens*
REMARKS: This is one of the most colourful of this genus and a gem to find. It doesn't appear to be common at any one location and ranges across the Pacific region, from Japan to at least Lord Howe Island. It grows to 40mm and can be variable in the design of its colours.

Hello Neville,
Thanks for the autographed "Sea Stars" book. It was useful in identifying the sea stars – velvet, vermilion, biscuit, eleven-armed – spotted on a recent dive trip in South Australia. Would you mind confirming my ID of the attached 2 sea stars as beaded star (*Uniophora granifera*)? The orange one with the biscuit star



was at Port Noaralunga; the other one was at Edithburgh. Thanks, Christopher J. Crowley

Dear Chris,
Thanks for your feedback. FAMILY: Asteroidea
COMMON NAME: Beaded sea star
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Uniophora granifera*
REMARKS: Yes, these appear to be the same extremely variable species. At one time there were thought to be a number of species and that still might be the case, BUT until all the forms are collected and tested for DNA, we are stuck with what is the closest identities according to science.

Hello Neville,
How about this one? Thanks for your help. Jay Burreson



Dear Jay,
That sure is a cute little critter. FAMILY: Chromodorididae
COMMON NAME: Geometric chromodoris
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Chromodoris geometrica*
REMARKS: This species like all others is subject to a lot of variation from locality to locality. I have not seen your particular variation before, but it has greenish rhinophores and greenish-white speckled gills and I think the ID is a safe bet.

Dear Neville,
This species seems very similar to californica, but californica has not been reported previously that far south and in that isolated area in the northern sea of Cortez. Photographed in about 50 feet (15m) of water on sand, October 2010 on a dive site called El Caballo, Salsipuedes. Thanks, Jonathan Lavan



Dear Jonathan,
Your image is excellent but your species

does not appear to be *Armina californica* and may well be an undescribed species. Check Sea Slug Forum for images of that species. COMMON NAME: El Caballo armina
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Armina sp.*
REMARKS: I can find no available reference image that is the same as yours.

Hi Neville,
On a dive to Blairgowrie I found these two specimens, which I have not been able to identify. I have done a number of dives here and have never seen either of these here before. Are you able to help? Dive Site: Blairgowrie Pier, Blairgowrie, Victoria, Australia. Date: 28th January 2011. Depth: 6m. **Pic 1** Size: 25cm across
Pic 2 25mm in length. Camera System: Canon A85. Photographer: Jamie Gifford. Many thanks, Jamie



Dear Jamie,
Thank you for your submissions, your images make them quite easy to identify.

Pic 1 FAMILY: Pleurobranchidae
COMMON NAME: Hill's pleurobranchus
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Pleurobranchus hilli*
REMARKS: Grows to 120mm and is found from NSW around to southern WA. Very variable in colour; feeds on ascidians.

Pic 2 FAMILY: Facelinidae
COMMON NAME: Made-up phyllodesmium
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Phyllodesmium serratum*
REMARKS: Occurs throughout the Indo-Pacific where it grows to 30mm and feeds on soft corals.

Hi Neville,
This was taken by my business partner, on our house shore dive we call 'Mucky Pirates Bay' in Pemuteran, NW Bali. Is it of the sea hare family? Any info would be much appreciated. Images by Paul Turley © 2011. Kerry Keene



Dear Kerry,
Yes, your critter is well known BUT very difficult

to find and also to recognise when it is in an expanded position. FAMILY: Oxynoidae
COMMON NAME: Souverbie's lobiger
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Lobiger souverbii*
REMARKS: Generally found on caulerpa algae. The species grows to 15mm and is distributed throughout the Pacific and also occurs in the Caribbean.

more of your critter finds are on divetheblue.net

Dear Mr. Neville,
Hope you are fine and well. As usual need you to verify and identify nudi for me. **Pic 1 & 2** I found this nudi on the sand area at about 12-13m. Size: 15-20mm. My guess is thecacera group but I cannot find the pattern - white base and small brown patches.



Pic 3 Saw this on the sandy bottom at 18m in Semporna. Size: 8mm. Is this the rostanga group? Thank you, Leonard Lai William Jr (Malaysia)



Dear Leonard,
Yes, it appears that you have done it again. Congratulations! **Pic 1 & 2** FAMILY: Polyceridae
COMMON NAME: Semi-spotted thecacera
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Thecacera sp.*
REMARKS: I agree and can find no visual reference to any published image of this species and it appears to be undescribed. **Pic 3** I agree with your preliminary identification. FAMILY: Discodorididae
COMMON NAME: Brown rostanga
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Rostanga sp.*
REMARKS: I can find no published identical image of this species and must assume that it is so far undescribed. Congratulations!

[ID CRISIS]

Neville Coleman

Hi Neville,
Did a night dive and found this crab at 18m at Nusa Island, about 15cm diameter. Not sure if this is just some kind of decoration but never seen anything like it before. Can you help ID this critter? Dorian, Scuba Ventures, Kavieng

Decorated spider crab
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Camposcia retusa*
REMARKS: In general this species decorates itself with sponges and is rarely seen out in the open in the daytime. It is a nocturnal species using repugnant sponges as a form of camouflage and to repel any predators. It is found throughout the Indo-Pacific and may be up to 150mm

Dear Dorian,
Although your image is excellent we don't have every critter and every mode of disguise photographed and researched as yet, so some things take a great deal of time to get sorted, as in your image there is only one eye to go on.
FAMILY: Majidae
COMMON NAME:



across the body and legs. Although I have never seen one with decorations such as yours, the general shape of the outline appears to be conversant with this species.

Dear Neville,
My dive buddy Bill found this critter and we couldn't find it in our nudi ID books; is it a phyllinopsis? Location: Torpedo Alley, Nusa Kode, Komodo, Indonesia. Depth: approx 12m. Time: morning, June 2011. Thank you for your help! Kind regards, Lauren Siba



Dear Lauren,
Your image is certainly good enough for an accurate ID.
FAMILY: Gastropteridae
COMMON NAME: Ornate sagminopteron
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Sagminopteron ornatum*
REMARKS: Grows to 15mm and feeds on sponges. It occurs across the Pacific and can swim by flapping its parapodia.

Hello Neville,
I photographed these at Wakatobi.
Pic 1 I have little idea what it is? Maybe it's a Zoantharian? The cluster was fist-sized and was at about 10m. Photographed with my Nikon D300.
Pic 2 This tube worm seems not to be worried about the proximity of the lion fish. Best wishes, Jan Brown

FAMILY: Nephthidae
COMMON NAME: Spikey soft coral
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Dendronephthya sp.*
REMARKS: You can tell this is a soft coral as there are eight tentacles and they are all fringed.
Pic 2 In reality the tubeworm does not recognise the zebra lionfish as a predator on itself as it might, say, a coral fish that eats tubeworms. The zebra lionfish is a predator on mobile vertebrates (fish) and mobile invertebrates such as crabs and shrimps, and poses no threat to the tubeworm.

Dear Jan,
Thank you for your inquiry and submission. **Pic 1** This is a great little close up image and shows the polyps very well.



Dear Neville,
Thanks for your support to ID this creature. It was not attached to the bottom. And when it was turned around it showed some sort of white tentacles at the bottom side. Do you have any idea what this might be? It was found at Rapid Bay in southern Australia. Best wishes, Peter H. van Bragt



Dear Peter,
Yes, I can certainly help you out on this one.
FAMILY: Actiniidae
COMMON NAME: Swimming anemone
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Phlyctenactis tuberculosa*
REMARKS: This species of sea anemone is found throughout southern Australia on reefs and amongst sea grass. It has an adhesive foot and can climb up objects on the bottom. The feeding tentacles are brown and these are generally only expanded for feeding at night. The species is very variable in colour.

Dear Neville,
I have recently returned from a trip to the Philippines and I am struggling with the ID of some photos. **Pic 1** *Corythoichthys intestinalis*? Found at approx 6m on 'House Reef',



Moalboal. It was approx 120mm. **Pic 2** I have no idea what this is, I thought I had seen it in your Encyclopedia previously but I am unable to find it anywhere. Found at approx 20m on 'Deep Rock', Malapascua. It was approx 70-80mm. **Pic 3** *Cerastoma tenue*? Found at approx 25m on 'Deep Rock', Malapascua. It was approx 100mm. **Pic 4** *Cerastoma trilobatum*? Found at approx 6m on a night dive at 'Lighthouse', Malapascua. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Many thanks, John Hannaford



Dear John,
For struggling, you have done very well.
Pic 1 FAMILY: Syngnathidae
COMMON NAME: Messmate pipefish
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Corythoichthys intestinalis*
REMARKS: Common throughout the Indo-Pacific, grows to 18cm and is often

seen in pairs, or small groups.
Pic 2 FAMILY: Velutinidae
COMMON NAME: Hiby's coriocyte
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Coriocytele hibyae*
REMARKS: Distributed across the Indo-Pacific, this species has an internal shell and is more likely to be seen during night dives. It grows to 70mm. It is not an opisthobranch, but a lamellarid mollusc.
Pic 3 & 4 FAMILY: Chromodorididae
COMMON NAME: Three-lobed ceratosoma

SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Ceratosoma trilobatum*
REMARKS: Widely distributed, it grows to 70mm and feeds on sponges. Has multiple colour variations. (see pages 135/136 *Nudibranchs Encyclopedia*).



Hello Neville,
My dive buddy and I recently came across this nudi at Blairgowrie Jetty in Victoria. We have not seen it before and we hoped we'd found a new species, but in looking

at your catalogue we think it might be limapontiidae – emerald stiliger. Can you confirm this for us please? Regards, Margaret and Deb

Dear Margaret and Deb,
That's a great little shot, I have never found it in Victoria, but it does occur there.
FAMILY: Limapontiidae
COMMON NAME: Emerald stiliger
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Stiliger smaragdinus*
REMARKS: Very widespread species, it occurs from Japan to Okinawa, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, New South Wales and all southern states in Australia and extends to New Zealand. It is generally found in conjunction with the green algae *Caulerpa racemosa* and grows to around 20mm.

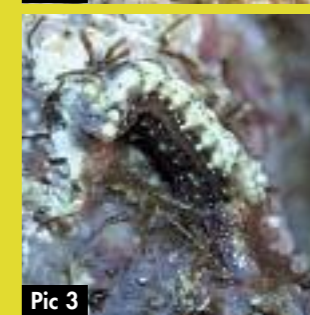
Hi Neville,
Can you kindly identify this for me? I've been browsing through your *Nudibranchs Encyclopedia* but can't find it.

Pic 1 Locality: Kemaman Terengganu, Malaysia Artificial Reef. Depth: 20m. Date: 26 August 2010. Camera: Nikon D90. Photographer Name: Ismadi.
Pic 2 Locality: Raja Ampat Indonesia, Rocky Reef. Depth: 16m. Date: 23 February 2010. Camera: Sea & Sea DX 2G. Photographer Name: Ismadi.
Pic 3 Locality: Raja Ampat Indonesia, Rocky Reef. Depth: 18m. Date: 24 February 2010. Camera: Sea & Sea DX 2G. Photographer Name: Ismadi.
Thank you for your time, Ismadi, Malaysia

Dear Ismadi,
Thank you for sharing your discoveries with our readers.
Pic 1 FAMILY: Chromodorididae
COMMON NAME: Three-lined pectenodoris

SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Pectenodoris trilineata*
REMARKS: This very small species only grows to 10mm and is not easy to photograph. It feeds on sponges and is recorded from Pacific areas. You will find it on page 192/1,2,3,4 *Nudibranchs Encyclopedia*.

Pic 2 FAMILY: Euryleptidae
COMMON NAME: Sulawesi euryleptid
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Euryleptid sp.*
REMARKS: This appears to be an undescribed species which was first discovered by Jim Black at Sulawesi in 2002. There are a number of variations, yours is spectacular!
Pic 3 FAMILY: Chromodorididae
COMMON NAME: Spotted hypselodoris
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Hypselodoris maculosa*
REMARKS: Very variable in pattern, this species grows to 25mm and is known across the Indo-Pacific where it feeds on sponges.



[ID CRISIS]

Neville Coleman

★ Hi Neville,
I found this nudi at Pulau Chebeh, Tioman, Malaysia, 30m deep, sand, 3cm length, Fuji FinePix camera. It looks like a type of nembrotha, but I don't see any quite like it in your Encyclopedia. Maybe a color variation of the dusky nembrotha or crested nembrotha? Thanks for your help! Jon Grevich



Dear Jon,
Nice little specimen; the colours come up very nicely.
FAMILY: Polyceridae

COMMON NAME: Sagami Bay tambja
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Tambja sagamiana*
REMARKS: It appears that this species (at this point in time) can be blue with orange spots, or orange with blue spots. The only other one I've seen with your colour pattern came from Japan, so it is interesting to know that your one came from Malaysia. Congratulations, your colour pattern may well turn out to be another species one day. Check page 366/2 *Nudibranchs Encyclopedia*.

Hello Neville,
Can you please advise on these pics? Thank you very much, Allister Lee



Pic 1

Dear Allister,
As you haven't given any details or data I will just have to guess.

Pic 1 FAMILY: Flabellinidae
COMMON NAME: Red-lined flabellina



Pic 2

SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Flabellina rubrolineata*
REMARKS: Distributed throughout the Indo-Pacific area this species feeds on hydroids.
Pic 2 FAMILY: Amphinomidae
COMMON NAME: Bristle worm
SCIENTIFIC NAMES: *Chloeia* sp.
REMARKS: Stings.

Hello Neville,
Can you please help me ID these. Six years ago I discovered them on a whip coral at Bikini but never managed to get a decent photo. When I went back recently they were still on the same whip coral! Best wishes, Barbara Louw



common species not difficult.
FAMILY: Palaemonidae
COMMON NAME: Sea whip shrimp
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Pontonides unciger*
REMARKS: This species is found across the Indo-Pacific and is always a resident commensal on black coral sea whips. There are generally two in residence, with the female being the larger.

Dear Barbara,
Your image is excellent and making an ID of this

Thank you all for sharing your critter finds with us. We try to publish as many contributions as possible, but we can't ID or print out-of-focus or lo-res images. PLEASE ONLY SEND CLEARLY RECOGNISABLE SUBJECTS IN THE BIGGEST FILE SIZE POSSIBLE.



Please include locality, date, depth, habitat, size, camera system, name of photographer and/or discoverer. Your submission advises permission to publish. Submissions received will assume image copyright belongs to the contributor unless otherwise stated in writing.

Submissions and enquiries: Identity Crisis, Attention Neville Coleman worldofwater@nevillecoleman.com.au



NEVILLE COLEMAN'S
NUDIBRANCHS ENCYCLOPEDIA

A\$33.00

AVAILABLE FROM MOUNTAIN OCEAN & TRAVEL PUBLICATIONS
books@motpub.com.au Tel 03 5944 3774 Fax 03 5944 4024
PRICE INCLUDES 10% GST FOR AUSTRALIAN RESIDENTS • ALLOW 2-4 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY • MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED