

Opisthobranch Newsletter

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EDITOR'S NOTES:

I would like to put together an issue of the ON with a compilation of the techniques useful with opisthobranchs. Some examples would be slide preparation, fixing, radula removal & preparation, vinyl acetate injection, color preservation. Please send notes and articles and I will put them all together in a reference issue with credit to authors.

I left July on pages 28, 29 & 30 of the August issue. I didn't notice it until after I managed to lose all of the files for Bibliography, Taxa & Systematics (years of work). Computers are great -- software companies are not. I did recover most of the data. Was unable to recover about 2 pages of this, September, issue. If I left someone out, more apologies are due.

Before I forget, I need to thank Arie W. Janssen, Gary McDonald, Daniel Geiger, Paul Katz and others for help with the issue. Not to forget Mark Rushing & Don Wood for help getting my system up on Windows95 and Curtis Hanner for upgrading my hardware.

I should mention, the Opisthobranch Site has been simplified to make it load faster by removing the photograph and keeping the text to a minimum.

FIELD NOTES:

From Sandra Millen: I read the controversy in the recent O.N. about *Flabellina fusca* and *F. verrucosa*. I am currently describing a number of *Flabellina* species, three of which are from B. C. waters. (#163 and #174 in the latest Behrens, plus one other).

Don't think for a minute that *fusca* and *verrucosa* are the same species. They have lots of internal and external differences. *F. fusca* (or *triphina*) is primarily a winter-spring species and is usually in water 10-20 meters. It particularly likes to sit on Chaetopterid polychaete tubes on mud bottoms and lays its eggs on the tubes. It is a generalized carnivore and eats everything from hydroids to other nudibranchs. It is larger (to 14 cm.), usually has darker purplish cerata which are in continuous rows towards the edges of the body, leaving a large area of notum bare, and as noted, it has a projecting snout and weakly perfoliate rhinophores. The spawn is a pinkish white coil with an evenly folded egg string.

Flabellina verrucosa is usually in the shallow subtidal around 5-10 meters. It rarely gets as large as 6 cm, has wrinkled (verrucose) rhinophores and cerata in several ill defined clusters

which leave only a narrow strip in the center of the notum bare. It is found in the winter and spring and appears to eat only hydroids locally, usually *Tubularia*. The cerata are usually red, sometimes pinkish or brownish. The spawn is a neat white coil with an unfolded egg string. I hope this helps sort them out.

From Kerry Werry: Sandra, Thanks for jumping in and adding some clarity to this. Don't worry, I never thought of them as the same species but I certainly have trouble distinguishing them externally in the wild. I think all along my "intuition" about which was which seems to have been correct but I may have been over-analysing the data. I had in the past been using colour and size and grouping of cerata as the main external differences, I just can't tell much from the rhinophores (must be my eyes). I also think part of my problem is I don't see all that many *Flabellina verrucosa*. On the other hand locally (Vancouver) I often see large numbers of seasonally abundant *fusca*. The information about food sources is also very useful, and correlates very well to my last few sightings of both species. Thanks again for the information.

ON THE INTERNET:

From Arie W. Janssen: You could now have a look at my Homepage on holoplanktonic Mollusca, still a quite primitive page, but I intend to improve it in time. You find it at the following site: <http://www.bart.nl/~ariewe>
If you like it maybe you will include the link in your Opisthobranch pages! [Ed. - done!]

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