

# Opisthobranch Newsletter

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## READER FORUM

**From Bill Wright:** We have kept *Dolabella* for several years in a tropical salt-water tank. Not a single animal has yet died (out of 2 for 3 years and 8 for a year). They graze the algal scum off the glass, though not as fast as I would wish. But their longevity is truly breathtaking relative to other tropical opisthobranchs I have tried (Spanish dancers, *Dolabrifera*, *Bursatella*, *Stylocheilus*). - Biology, Colorado State University; Ft. Collins, CO 80523

## PERSONAL NOTES

**From Alan Grant:** I'm sorry to be remiss in giving you my new address. It's [dentadiv@fea.net](mailto:dentadiv@fea.net). This replaces [dentadive@aol.com](mailto:dentadive@aol.com) (Alan Grant). The world needs more slug aficionados! Most of my friends don't even know what a "sea slug" is! Believe it or not, quite a few recreational divers don't either. To me they represent an amazing morphological and coloring experiment by mother nature, and an obvious subject for those of us who wish to bring images back as underwater treasures. I could go on at least another lifetime looking for more of these critters to take videos of! Any suggestions of new sites to look on the Pacific coast would be appreciated. I'm shooting with a new Sony digital 3 chip camcorder now, but southern California has suffered from warm water, so subjects are less abundant. I found a huge *Tylodina fungina* (approx. 40mm) and a tiny *Hopkinsia rosacea* just two blocks from me in Laguna Beach. Trying Dave Behrens' suggestions, I fixed in Ethanol and preserved in Formaldehyde. Unfortunately the EtOH was denatured (with MEK I think). Both specimens lost their color almost immediately. Any tips on preserving color? I think I should stick to video *in vivo* rather than preserving. The beautiful rose color dissolved almost immediately upon immersion in alcohol. Do I need pure, un-denatured ethanol? The same thing happened with *Tylodina fungina*, leaching out the bright yellow almost immediately. - 592 High Dr., Laguna Beach, CA 92651

**From Kathe Jensen:** I am just about to finish a database registration of the type specimens described by R. Bergh present in the Copenhagen Museum (ZMUC). Also, I was just awarded my Danish D.Sc. degree - Terry Gosliner was one of the official "opponents" at my defense. I think these are the major news. I will go to

another workshop in Hong Kong in April. - Zoological Museum, University of Copenhagen, Universitetsparken 15, DK-2100 Copenhagen OE, Denmark

**From Annette Klussman-Kolb:** After four very interesting and successful months working with Gillianne Brodie at James Cook University, Townsville, Australia, I have not only changed my last name but have also moved to a different institution. I am still working on opisthobranch reproductive and egg masses but from now on at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany. My new email address is: [Annette.D.Klussmann-Kolb@ruhr-uni-bochum.de](mailto:Annette.D.Klussmann-Kolb@ruhr-uni-bochum.de). - Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Spezielle Zoologie, ND05/755, 44780 Bochum, Germany

**From Ángel Valdes:** I am now working on a paper for the Washington meeting on the phylogeny of the Porostomata. Terry and I have found new evidence that supports that it is a monophyletic group as we suspected. We are paying special attention to the digestive system and central nervous system to confirm our hypothesis. - California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118

**From Anna Maria Domènech i Coll:** I am biologist of the Biological Science Faculty of the University of Barcelona (Spain). I am studying opisthobranchs to make a degree thesis with Dr. Manuel Ballesteros and Dra. Conxita Avila. I am working on the biology and classification of the doridae and their chemical ecology. I am specially interested in *Taringa*, *Thordisa*, *Jorunna*, *Baptodoris* and *Paradoris*. I would appreciate any information or references about this subject. - Universitat de Barcelona, Facultat de Biologia, Departament de Biologia Animal, Unitat d'Invertebrats, Avinguda Diagonal, 645, 08028 Barcelona, Spain

**From Marcel Koken:** Hello, I am a French CNRS biologist, and momentarily I am working on genes implicated in human leukaemogenesis. Although, as a scuba diver I am admiring nudibranchs already for many years, I recently became also professionally interested in these marvellous animals. First, I have to say that, at present, I am completely ignorant about the biological details of these animals. As I am working in a hospital environment, it is very difficult for me to find/get relevant literature on nudibranch subjects.

Dr. Rob Dekker (at N.I.O.Z./The Netherlands) which I contacted, advised me to ask the "list" for help.

I wonder if someone could tell me whether it is known how the coelenterate-eating nudibranchs transport their victim's nematocysts to their skin, by which route they do this, and how they avoid problems with their defense system. Do there exist nematocyst-bearing nudibranchs which can easily be grown in aquaculture, which preferably grow quickly and which have a "good" size (i.e. not enormous, nor almost microscopic), and finally which have a nicely ordered anatomy? Can the animals which this "ideal" nudibranch preys on be propagated in aquaculture? - CNRS UPR 9051, Hôpital St. Louis, 1 Av. Claude Vellefaux, 75475 Paris cedex 10, France

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**From Alan Grant:** Inquire to a person by the name of Amit Lotan, Ph.D, who is president of a company called PharmaSea. His email is [stav@ns.net](mailto:stav@ns.net) and his web page is at <http://www.ns.net/~stav>. He makes a sunscreen product for humans to use which apparently blocks nematocysts from firing and therefore protects swimmers from jellyfish stings. He may have some interesting techniques to share with you concerning growing these critters and studying their nematocyst storage techniques. - 592 High Dr., Laguna Beach, CA92651

## INFORMATION EXCHANGE

**From Nelsy Rivero:** At the moment I am working with the 1 genus *Aplysia* (Opisthobranchia) in the coasts from Venezuela, and I have had several problems as for the identification of one of the opposing species. The only that I could say am that it is of the subgenus *Aplysia* since it possess a sucker in the posterior part of the foot, which is characteristic of this subgenus. I would like to know if some of you could help me get information on the taxonomy of this subgenus, since here in Venezuela it is very difficult to find information on the genus and the subgenus. Another of the aspects in which there is difficulty -- migration of the genus, which are the causes of migration? Toward where do they go, toward another platform where is there available food or toward the zone intertidal?. - Universidad Central de Venezuela, Facultad de Ciencias, Instituto de Zoología Tropical, Laboratorio de Invertebrados, Los Chaguramos Caracas-Venezuela, Aptado 47058 C.P. 1040-A, Venezuela

**From Roberto Cipriani:** I am currently working on "Lower Heterobranch" gastropods. This group includes several families of snails, such as architectonicids, mathildids, valvatids, and pyramidellids, among many others. My research focus primarily on the latter. I am studying diverse aspects of the shell, anatomy and functional morphology of pyramidellids, as well as on the phylogenetic relationships of some of their genera. As many of you already know, these critters are usually very small (1-2 mm in shell length) and live mostly associated to other invertebrates, such as other snails and bivalves. For these reasons, it is sometimes easier to find them when looking for larger mollusks.

Here are some of the many possible examples where most of these small guys like to hang around:

- 1- I have found them on the hairy periostracum of the bivalve *Arca*, close or on the aperture where the byssus is located (barbs). Removal has to be done using a tiny brush, a needle or very carefully, using forceps. Shaking the bivalve in water seldom works, because pyramidellids attach themselves to the substrate (the shell) using a very strong but short mucus thread.
- 2- Samples have been found also between the hairy periostracum of *Cymatium* and other ranellids. They

can be positioned anywhere on the shell, and without careful inspection, they look like a grain of sand.

3- On Thaidids, these guys seem to like to be close to the posterior (anal) canal, on the external side of the shell.

Larger pyramidellids, such as *Pyramidella*, can be found on seagrass beds, and sometimes in clearer coralline-sand bottoms, close to seagrass beds and/or corals.

I would really appreciate if some of you would like to send me some preserved pyramidellids (if you happen to find them). I could cover mail expenses. Essentially, when I say preserved I refer to putting the animal in absolute alcohol (ethanol). If some samples could be preserved in formaline (1 part of formalin and 9 parts of sea water) it would be great, specially if the sample belongs to the genus *Pyramidella*, one of my favorites. - Field Museum, Department of Zoology, Division of Invertebrates, Roosevelt Road at Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60605

**From Jeff Goddard:** I found two small errors (my own) in my article last month on the prey of Cape Arago nudibranchs. Here are the corrections: (1) The *Botryllus aurantius* record for *Hermisenda crassicornis* should be followed by '(bay)', and (2) the citation for Goddard (1996) should read "...review of developmental mode in the genus..." - Oregon Institute of Marine Biology; University of Oregon; Charleston, OR 97420

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## CURRENT EVENTS

**25 March 1998** - The Malacological Society of London Annual General Meeting. Feeding & Foraging Strategies in Molluscs - Held at the Ecology Centre, University of Sunderland, UK. Contact: <http://www.sunderland.ac.uk/~esOmda/msl1.htm>

**4 April 1998** - The 1998 Bay Area Malacologists (BAM) gathering will be held at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. For further information contact: Matt James [matt.james@sonoma.edu](mailto:matt.james@sonoma.edu)

**10-15 August 1998** - The 8th International Congress On Invertebrate Reproduction And Development. Contact: W.J.A.G. Dictus, [W.J.A.G.Dictus@POBox.RUU.NL](mailto:W.J.A.G.Dictus@POBox.RUU.NL), Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. <http://www.bio.vu.nl/vakgroepen/od/onb/icir>

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## Malacological works of Italo Nofroni on Pyramidellidae (chronological order)

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

I was recently sent a large manuscript, originally from Carlos J. Risso-Dominguez. The working title is "On the new genus *Puelchaeolidia*, with notes on the taxonomy of the Aeolidioidea (Mollusca Nudibranchia)." To the best of my knowledge this has never been published and I have no idea how to contact the author as he has not corresponded for at least 15 years. Please contact me with his current address or status.