

The Inaugural Coffs Coast Sea Slug Census

18-20 January 2019

Thanks to everyone who participated in the first Coffs Coast Sea Slug Census. Despite the strong winds and cold water temperatures (18°C on Friday and Saturday), many people ventured out into the marine habitats of the survey area between Brooms Head and Sawtell. We also had a great turn-out for the Marine Discovery Series talk on Thursday 17 Jan which set the scene for the Census.

HOW MANY NUDIS? The **27 participants** who submitted photos recorded **97 species** of sea slugs over the 3 days from across the entire search area. *Doriprismatica atromarginata* was the species that was sighted the most and this was closely followed by the sea hare *Aplysia juliana* and the small orange *Rostanga arbutus* which were found in rock-pools. With **26 species, Craig and Alex Lewis** comprised the citizen science team that documented **the most species**. Congratulations – bragging rights for 12 months 😊

MOST INTERESTING SPECIES – There were lots of very interesting species photographed including some that have been seen only sporadically in the region. There were 3 primary contenders – *Janolus* sp. found by Nicola and Tom Davis, *Herviella claror* found by James, Euan, Lea and Sophie and *Sagaminopteron psychedelicum* found by Craig and Alex Lewis. To our knowledge, this is only the third sighting of *S. psychedelicum* which is one of the “holy grail” species for many slug hunters. Therefore, the judges nominated this find as the most interesting for the census.

BEST PHOTO – Congratulations **Ian Shaw** for his prize-winning image of *Goniobranchus cf fidelis* taken at Pig Island (see back page).

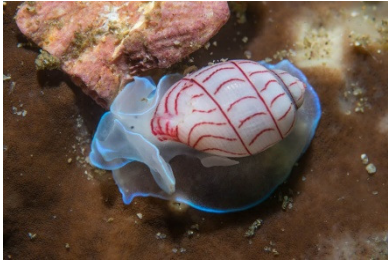
To help hone those identification skills, and to alert you all to some of the species you may have overlooked, we have selected an image of each species found. The initials of the participant/team that took the image are shown in brackets (a list of participants who submitted images appears at the bottom of this page).

Also, because of the poor sea conditions on Friday and Saturday, we cancelled scheduled trips to South Solitary Island. However, we managed to dive there a few days later and have included images of 3 of the more interesting species we found (not included in the census data).



Sagaminopteron psychedelicum
– the most interesting find by
Craig and Alex Lewis.

Participants/teams: BE – Bob Edgar; C&A – Craig & Alex Lewis; EH – Elizabeth Hardaker; ELSJ – Euan Provost, Lea Malmo, Sophie Pryor & James Tucker; H&L – Helen Crawford & Lawrence Wilkes; IS – Ian Shaw; JI – Jordan Ivey; KC – Kerry Cranney; KBGJA – Kerry, Grant, Jim & Ally Cameron & Bonnie Mirisch; KH – Karen Hutchings; MN – Matt Nimbs; SS – Steve Smith; T&N – Tom and Nicola Davis; TNYD – Tom Mair, Neil & Yvonne Vaughan, Darryl Wong.



Bullina lineata (SS)



Hydatina physis (ELSJ)



Chelidonura electra (SS)



Chelidonura hirundinina (EH)



Mariaglaja inornata (SS)



Sagaminopteron ornatum (TNYD)



Sagaminopteron psychedelicum (C&A)



Siphopteron sp. (EH)



Haminoea sp. (KC)



Aplysia argus (H&L)



Aplysia juliana (SS)



Aplysia parvula (C&A)



Aplysia sydneyensis (KBGJA)



Dolabella auricularia (EH)



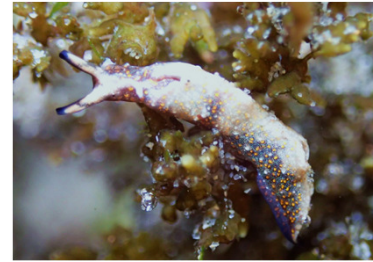
Dolabrifera brazieri (ELSJ)



Stylocheilus striatus (TNYD)



Elysia australis (T&N)



Elysia furvacauda (KC)



Elysia maoria (T&N)



Elysia sp. (blue spot) (BE)



Elysia sp. (SS)



Elysia yaeyamana (C&A)



Thuridilla carlsoni (TNYD)



Placida cremoniana (KBGJA)



Tyrodina corticalis (MN)



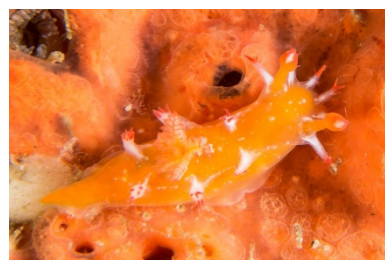
Umbraculum umbraculum (EH)



Pleurobranchus peronii (KC)



Hexabranhus sanguineus (C&A)



Kaloplocamus acutus (SS)*



Polycera sp. (SS)



Tambja tenuilineata (C&A)



Okenia atkinsonorum (TNYD)



Gymnodoris alba (BE)



Cadlinella ornatissima (SS)



Ceratosoma amoenum (C&A)



Ceratosoma brevicaudatum (BE)



Ceratosoma tenue (TNYD)



Miamira sinuata (TNYD)



Diversidoris sulphurea (SS)



Doriprismatica atromarginata (IS)



Glossodoris angasi (BE)



Goniobranchus collingwoodi (IS)



Goniobranchus setoensis (MN)



*Goniobranchus cf fidelis*¹ (IS)



Goniobranchus geometricus (SS)*

* = found in census but image substituted for clarity

¹cf = "compare with" which means it is similar to the nominated species, but not necessarily the same



Goniobranchus splendidus (IS)



Goniobranchus tinctorius (SS)*



Goniobranchus verrieri (IS)*



Goniobranchus woodwardae (SS)



Hypselodoris bennetti (BE)



Hypselodoris jacksoni (IS)



Hypselodoris maculosa (SS)



Hypselodoris maritima (MN)



Hypselodoris obscura (KC)



Hypselodoris sp. (SS)*



Hypselodoris tryoni (BE)



Mexichromis festiva (BE)



Verconia haliclona (MN)



Aphelodoris varia (SS)



Doris cameroni (SS)

* = found in census but image substituted for clarity



Doris chrysoderma (SS)



Doris immonda (SS)



Atagema albata (JI)



Atagema sp. (T&N)



Atagema osseosa (BE)



Jorunna parva (MN)



Jorunna ramicola (SS)



Jorunna sp. (black spots) (M&C)



Carminodoris nodulosa (BE)



Peltodoris murrea (SS)



Rostanga arbutus (M&C)



Rostanga sp. (ELSI)



Tayuva lilacina (SS)*



Dendrodoris fumata (SS)



Dendrodoris krusensternii (T&N)

* = found in census but image substituted for clarity



Dendrodoris nigra (KC)



Doriopsilla miniata (EH)



Phyllidiella pustulosa (MN)



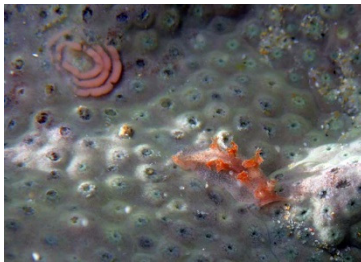
Dermatobranchus cf *albus*¹ (KC)



Madrella sanguinea (ELSJ)



Janolus sp. (yellow) (T&N)



Marionia platyctenea (MN)



Tritonia sp. (*Carijoa*) (SS)



Tritoniopsis elegans (C&A)



Melibe australis (SS)*



Flabellina sp. 1 (C&A)



Baeolidia australis (SS)



Bulbaeolida alba (T&N)



Spurilla braziliana (EH)



Pleurolidia juliae (C&A)

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Austreaolis ornata (MN)



Cratena lineata (T&N)



Herviella claror (ELSJ)



Phyllodesmium crypticum (MN)



Phyllodesmium macphersonae (JI)



Phyllodesmium poindimeii (MN)



Pteraeolidia ianthina (IS)

Notable extras from South Solitary Island (each at their southern range of distribution)



Janolus sp. (SS)



Chromodoris sp. 11 (SS)



Chromodoris strigata (SS)

Finally, a very big THANKYOU to:

- all of you for your enthusiastic participation
- our local organisers – the team from the Solitary Islands Underwater Research Group
- Solitary Islands Marine Park for permits
- our sponsors – Jetty Dive and Divequest Mullaway who donated the prizes
- our photo judges for Best Photo - Gary Bell and Mark Spencer.

Happy slug hunting and hope to see you all again in 2020 for another Coffs Coast SSC.

Remember, there are also events in other parts of the country – notification of these will be made through the network of Facebook pages and web sites.

There are some excellent resources for additional information about sea slugs including the most recent (2018) version of *Nudibranch and Sea Slug Identification Indo-Pacific* available as a hard copy or PDF (<http://fishid.com/store/product/reef-nudibranch-identification-tropical-pacific-pdf-ebook/>). Also, here's a link to a **FREE** download which provides an illustrated summary of data on sea slug distribution patterns in NSW - <http://www.publish.csiro.au/rs/RS16011>. Also, for local species, check out the SURG web pages - <https://www.surg.org.au/species/nudibranchs-and-sea-slugs/group-photographs>.

Don't forget to post any interesting finds from the region to the *Sea Slug Census* Facebook site (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/seaslugcensus/>).

You can also email them to: seaslugcensus@scu.edu.au

Steve Smith (steve.smith@scu.edu.au) and Matt Nimbs (matt.nimbs@gmail.com)



The judges' award for Best Photo went to this great image of *Goniobranchus cf fidelis*¹ by Ian Shaw.

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