

Melbourne Sea Slug Census IX 2 - 5 July 2021

Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2021 Winter Melbourne Sea Slug Census (2-5 July). While Covid-19 restrictions and weather conditions limited the number of people who were out and about over that weekend we were still encouraged to see photos from new locations as well as good representation from sites that have been consistently popular throughout the years the Melbourne Census has been running. In all, we received photos from 8 individuals or teams from Beware Reef, Blairgowrie, Flinders Pier and West Head (Flinders), Kitty Miller Bay (Phillip Island), Point Lonsdale, Sorrento pier and Sorrento Back Beach. Together, we found a total of **57 species** of sea slug.

And now to the results you've all been waiting for...

BEST NUDI SPOTTER (with the highest count of the Census) – Nick Shaw, with 37 confirmed species from multiple locations, a fantastic effort. Nick's nearest competition came from Ian Scholey with 23 confirmed species, again across multiple dates and locations. Everyone who contributed photos spotted at least 3 species each.



BEST PHOTO (Awarded by Bob Burn) – Holly Baird, *Goniobranchus tasmaniensis*

Holly's *Goniobranchus tasmaniensis* from Beware Reef is such a clear and stunning photo of this species, and this large-spotted colour form is different to most individuals seen throughout the rest of the state - however, it is considered the "normal" form for NSW populations.

Bob also notes that this photo clearly shows 'the diagnostic red ring around each rhinophoral sheath and gill cavity'. Plus, you have to love the colourful shrimp posing for a pic in the background. Congratulations Holly!



HONOURABLE MENTION (Chosen by Steve Smith)– Peter Fuller, *Ercolania boodleae*

Great perspective and depth-of-field in this portrait of a common though diminutive local species.

With more and more photographers submitting wonderful images it is getting harder to narrow down just a handful of winners each time! Visit www.vnpa.org.au/sea-slugs to see a showcase of more fascinating and fabulous entries.

The awards for most interesting photos are on the following page.



MOST INTERESTING PHOTO (Awarded by Bob Burn) – Nick Shaw, *Eubranchus* sp. RB3

This tiny *Eubranchus* is described as 'A small white species with a red patch on the head and black spots on the cerata' and is known only from the rockpools of Point Lonsdale. Very few specimens have ever been recorded. Great find Nick.



HONOURABLE MENTIONS (Chosen by Steve Smith)

Steve selected the following images for a special mention as both show interesting biological/ecological features or behaviour.

1 – Holly Baird (Feeding pair of *Polycera capensis*)



2 – Ian Scholey (*Aeolidiella drusilla* with egg mass)

To help hone those identification skills, and to alert you all to some of the species you may have overlooked in the past, we have selected an image of each species found and provided the number of teams that found it (out of a total of 8).

The initials of the photographers that took the image are shown in brackets (key to all photographers who submitted images below).

Photographers:

Holly Baird and Jeff Cross (HB), Mervyn Dannefaerd and Derek Upward (MD), Peter Fuller (PF), Nicole Mertens (NM), Kade Mills (KM), Ian Scholey (IS), Nick Shaw (NS), Rebecca Lloyd (RL)



Ercolania boodlea (PF)
(4 sightings)



Austreaolis ornata (NS)
(3 sightings)



Ceratosoma brevicaudatum (MD)
(3 sightings)



Ercolania margaritae (NS)
(3 sightings)



Papawera maugeansis (NS)
(3 sightings)



Phyllodesmium serratum (IS)
(3 sightings)



Pleurobranchaea maculata (MD)
(3 sightings)



Thecacera pennigera (NS)
(3 sightings)



Baeolidia macleayi (NS)
(2 sightings)



Berthella medietas (IS)
(2 sightings)



Chromodoris alternata (RL)
(2 sightings)



Coryphellina poenicia (NS)
(2 sightings)



Discodoris paroa (IS)
(2 sightings)



Doriopsilla carneola (IS)
(2 sightings)



Doriopsilla peculiaris (IS)
(2 sightings)



Doris cameroni (NS)
(2 sightings)



Doto ostenta (NM)
(2 sightings)



Elysia furvacauda (NS)
(2 sightings)



Eubranchus sp. RB10 (PF)
(2 sightings)



Goniobranchus epicurius (IS)
(2 sightings)



Hermaea sp. RB1 (NS)
(2 sightings)



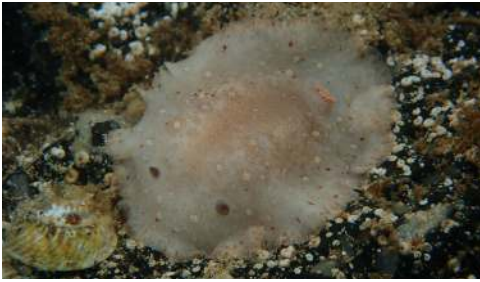
Lamellaria australis (NS)
(2 sightings)



Lamellaria ophione (IS)
(2 sightings)



Madrella sp. RB1 (NM)
(2 sightings)



Paradoris dubia (NS)
(2 sightings)



Polycera janjukia (NS)
(2 sightings)



Thorunna perplexa (NS)
(2 sightings)



Verconia aureopunctata (PF)
(2 sightings)



Aeolidiella drusilla (IS)
(1 sighting)



Ancula mapae (NS)
(1 sighting)



Aphelodoris sp. RB1 (HB)
(1 sighting)



Aplysiopsis formosa (NS)
(1 sighting)



Caldukia affinis (NS)
(1 sighting)



Ceratosoma amoenum (HB)
(1 sighting)



Dendrodoris aurea (IS)
(1 sighting)



Doriopsilla sp. RB3 (IS)
(1 sighting)



Doris chrysoderma (HB)
(1 sighting)



Doto pita (NS)
(1 sighting)



Elysia coodgeensis (NS)
(1 sighting)



Eubranchus sp. RB3 (NS)
(1 sighting)



Eubranchus sp. RB9 (PF)
(1 sighting)



Facelina sp. RB2 (NS)
(1 sighting)



Favorinus sp. RB1 (RL)
(1 sighting)



Goniobranchus tasmaniensis
(HB)
(1 sighting)



Janolus sp. RB2 (NS)
(1 sighting)



Madrella sanguinea (IS)
(1 sighting)



Okenia sp. RB1 (NS)
(1 sighting)



Onchidella nigricans (NS)
(1 sighting)



Philine angasi (NS)
(1 sighting)



Polybranchia pallens (IS)
(1 sighting)



Polycera capensis (HB)
(1 sighting)



Roburnella wilsoni (NS)
(1 sighting)



Rostanga crawfordi (NS)
(1 sighting)



Tambja dracomis (NS)
(1 sighting)



Tambja verconis (NS)
(1 sighting)



Trapania benni (RL)
(1 sighting)



Trapania brunnea (IS)
(1 sighting)



Trinchesia sp. RB10 (NS)
(1 sighting)

Finally, a very big THANKYOU to:



All of you for your enthusiastic participation!



Bob Burn for his invaluable assistance with identification and for imparting his knowledge and insights to help improve everyone's identification skills.

Happy slug hunting and hope to see you all again for the next Melbourne Sea Slug Census!

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

Sea Slug Census Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/seaslugcensus/>

Nicole Mertens (local organiser)

Victorian National Parks Association

Steve Smith & Matt Nimbs

National Marine Science Centre

Southern Cross University