

Nudibranchs of Seychelles



Christophe Mason-Parker



Goniobranchus albopunctatus

Credits

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Cover photo: *Hypselodoris pulchella*

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Introduction

The Republic of Seychelles is located in the Western Indian Ocean, between 4° – 10° south of the equator. The archipelago comprises of 115 islands scattered across an oceanic Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 1.374 million km². The entire landmass covers a mere 455 km², yet there is a spectacular diversity of landscapes above and below the water.

The islands of Seychelles are separated into two distinct groups; the inner granitics and the outer coralline islands. The inner islands are home to the majority of the country's population of 90,000 people and are most accessible to those wishing to visit the archipelago. The islands sit on the Mahé plateau, and are surrounded by warm, shallow waters rich in life.

The main island of Mahé is the largest at 155 km², and is home to the capital city Victoria. Praslin is the second largest island and together with neighbouring La Digue accounts for most of the remaining population. Despite only having a small resident population, Silhouette Island is the third largest within the group and is a designated national park as is Curieuse Island. Several other smaller islands make up the inner granitics, while the coralline islands of Bird and Denis complete the group.



Mahé Island, Seychelles

The outer islands spread across the EEZ towards Africa with the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Aldabra located furthest to the southwest. While a handful of these islands have hotel resorts, the majority still lack infrastructure and remain inaccessible.

The coral reefs, seagrass beds and rocky shores surrounding the numerous islands of Seychelles provide the ideal habitats for a rich diversity of opisthobranch species. Seagrass beds are excellent environments for locating sea hares and sarcoglossans, while rubble and rocky substrates are home to a variety of nudibranchs. Coral reefs in particular can be extremely productive, often with several species encountered on a single dive. In Seychelles, coral reefs are divided into granitic sites, with impressive boulders covered in sponges and Acropora corals, and carbonate reef sites that are usually found within protected bays. Local knowledge of these areas can be of significant benefit as certain species exhibit high levels of site fidelity and/or seasonal population explosions.

While some species are regularly encountered due to associations with predictable food sources or temperature fluctuations, the distribution and lifecycles of the majority of species remains unknown. What is without doubt is an increase in species diversity and abundance is observed throughout the southeast monsoon, which runs from June through to September. During this time sea temperatures drop, which coincides with an increased plankton levels in coastal waters.

To date the opisthobranch fauna of Seychelles has been poorly studied and there remains much to discover. This book includes approximately 70 species, photographed at a handful of localities predominantly around the island of Mahé. Further exploration of both the inner and the outer islands will undoubtedly lead to the discovery of numerous additional species.

Within the identification section of this book, each opisthobranch species is accompanied with a brief description of the animal's characteristic colouration, a measurement of the size of the animal in the photograph, and the location at which it was observed. For species that are common or for which additional information is available, a full page has been afforded. All of the opisthobranchs within this book have been identified to the best of my knowledge and while every effort was undertaken to ensure accuracy, mistakes are possible.

Location

Although nudibranchs are found throughout Seychelles coastal waters, there are a handful of localities, which over the years have proven to be particularly productive for opisthobranch species. The following guide highlights four sites around Mahé, which offer an excellent opportunity to encounter nudibranchs.



Anse Major

Located on the northwest coast of Mahé Island, Anse Major is a popular beach with holiday makers. The adjacent reef is a mixture of coral rubble and sparse bommies, together with a sandy substrate.

The beach can be accessed by a trail that runs along the coast from Bel Ombre, or the reef can be visited by boat.

The site has provided some interesting opisthobranch findings in the past including several species uncommon to Seychelles waters. The best time to search for nudibranch species is during the southeast monsoon from July to September.

The Baie Ternay Marine National Park is located on the northwest coast of Mahé island and covers 25ha of sand-flats, seagrass beds and coral reef. The seagrass beds witness seasonal population blooms of *G.ceylonica* and are home to numerous other opisthobranch species.

The shallow rubble back reef is home to several species of *Phyllidia spp.* including frequent sightings of *P.ocellatus*.

On the reef, a variety of dorid species can be encountered, while night dives provide the opportunity to observe *Platydoris formosa* and *Hexabranchnus sanguineus*.



Baie Ternay



L'ilot

The tiny islet of L'ilot is situated to the north of Beau Vallon bay approximately 100m from the northern tip of Mahé Island. Famous for the abundance of soft corals that cling to the granitic boulders, L'ilot is perhaps the premier site around Mahé for finding nudibranch species.

H.tesellata and *H.willeyi* are both frequently encountered, while the site appears to be a stronghold for *N.lineolata* within the inner islands. The prolific soft coral and encrusting sponges are home to many further species.

Twin Barges is a popular dive site located within Beau Vallon bay. Two sunken vessels are located adjacent to the Corsaire reef with the deeper of the two barges found at a depth of 22m. Deliberately sunk to create an artificial reef, over the years the barges have become encrusted with corals and all manner of marine life.

A variety of Nudibranch species have been found on this site, both on the vessels and on the adjacent reef, and night dives provide the opportunity of encountering nocturnal species.



Twin Barges

Feeding



Opisthobranchs feed on a wide variety of food sources. Many are herbivorous, while other species are carnivorous or cannibalistic. Most are highly specialised, feeding on a single food preference.

Often finding the food source of a particular nudibranch species can prove to be the most successful method of finding a specimen. Hydroids, sponges and soft corals are particularly good locations to search for opisthobranchs as are seagrass beds and clumps of algae.



Top left: In Seychelles the dorid nudibranch *Gymnodoris citrina* often feeds on the egg strings of *Gymnodoris ceylonica* following population explosions. It has also been observed attempting to cannibalize *G. ceylonica*.

Top right: *Nembrotha lineolata* is frequently encountered at L'ilot Island, where it can be observed out in the open feeding on ascidians.

Left: The sapsucking slug, *Cyerce nigricans* feeds on the algae *Chlorodesmus fastigiata*, which can be found in shallow water along coasts of the inner islands. Locating the algae is often the best method of finding this opisthobranch species.

Senses & Respiration



For many species of nudibranch, the rhinophores are the primary organs used for detecting a food source. Rhinophores are horn like structures located on the head of the animal, and contain numerous receptors capable of detecting vibrations and chemicals.

Rhinophores come in a variety of shapes and sizes, simple, smooth, elongated structures to highly elaborate shapes designed to increase surface area and enhance the animal's ability to detect chemicals in the water. Primitive opisthobranchs often lack rhinophores and instead possess oral cilia, which perform the same function.

It is believed nudibranchs are also capable of sensing touch, with many species having tactile sensing tentacles on the head.

Respiration in opisthobranchs occurs through gills, which take on a variety of forms. Perhaps the most famous is the branchial plume, a feather like structure located towards the posterior of dorid nudibranchs. The large surface area of these delicate structures enhances the exchange of oxygen. In some species the plume can be retracted, while in others it is non-retractable and sometimes protected by a body extension.

The gills of sea hares are hidden from sight, arranged around their anal tube, while phyllids have their gills lined up underneath the mantle on the right hand side of their body. Species of aeolids respire through their numerous cerata and species of elysia exchange gas directly through their skin.

Locomotion



Nudibranchs move through the action of a muscular foot located on the underside of the animal. In most species the muscle contracts and expands sending horizontal waves in the opposite direction to which the nudibranch is moving. This crawling movement is assisted by the secretion of a sticky mucus and the presence of thousands of hair-like cilia. Opisthobranch species are often found on uneven and unstable substrates yet show a remarkable ability to remain stable. Some dorid species are capable of flapping their mantle, though the function of this behaviour remains uncertain.

Many groups of nudibranch have developed the ability to swim, though this form of locomotion is predominantly used as a means to escape predators. Others burrow into the substrate in search of their prey.



Top left: The Dorid nudibranch *Goniobranchus geminus* is one of several species known to flap its mantle in a rhythmic movement. The reason for this behaviour remains unclear.

Top right: *Goniobranchus conchylata* raises and lowers the anterior portion of its mantle to display a striking purple colouration common to many species.

Bottom left: The Spanish dancer *Hexabranchnus sanguineus* is perhaps the most famous of all swimming nudibranchs, and is a common sight on Seychelles reefs at night.

Bottom right: Tailing behaviour has been observed in a number of nudibranch species, but is particularly common in *Hypselodris pulchella*. As with mantle flapping the reason for this behaviour is not certain.

Reproduction



All opisthobranch species are hermaphroditic, possessing both male and female sexual organs. Mating takes place when two adult nudibranchs position themselves head to tail so that their right sides are in close proximity. As they align the genital papillae begin to protrude until they come into contact with each other and finally the penis of each nudibranch enters the female duct of its partner.

Above left: A pair of *Gymnodoris ceylonica* position themselves head to tail as their genital papillae begin to protrude in anticipation of mating.

Above right: With their genital papillae fully extended these *Nembrotha lineolata* are in the process of mating.



Nudibranch eggs are found in every conceivable shape, colour and form and differ remarkably from one species to another. Frequently they resemble coiled ribbons while others are similar to chains of beads. The egg masses are fixed to the substrate or a favoured food source where they remain before hatching into larvae.

Above left: *Phyllidia ocellata* lays a flattened orange egg ribbon. This particular individual was laying its egg mass on the underside of an overhang.

Above right: *Gymnodoris citrina* is often found in shallow seagrass beds where it can be seen laying its bright yellow egg strings on the blades of seagrass.

Defence and Mimicry



Many species of opisthobranch display defensive adaptations, which range from warning colourations and mimicry, to the production of poisonous chemicals. Several of these strategies can be observed in nudibranchs on Seychelles reefs.

Above left: The sapsucking slug *Cyerce nigricans* is capable of producing a distasteful secretion making it repellent to fishes.

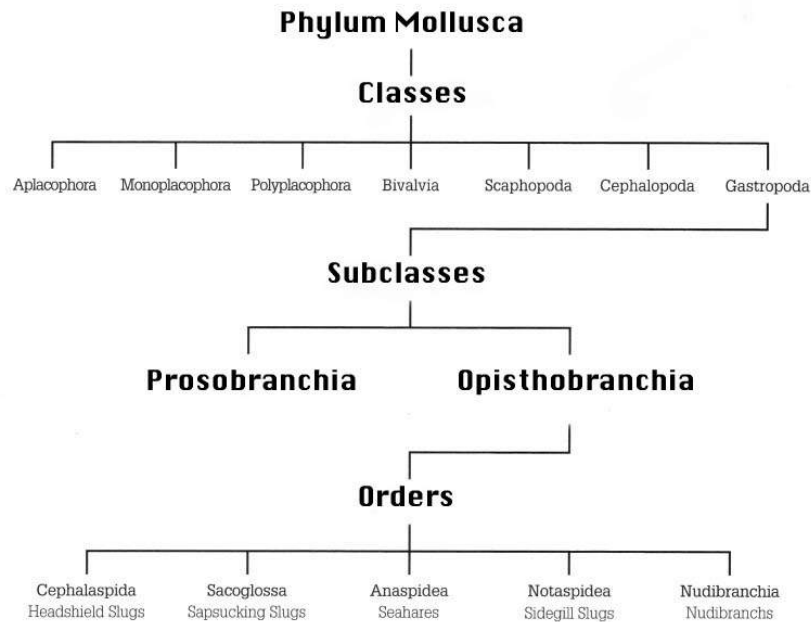
Above right: Several species, as in the case of *Jorunna funebris*, have sensory organs known as caryophyllidia on the exterior of their dorsal surface. These organs are surround by sharp spicules making them unpalatable to predators.

Below left: *Glossodoris hikuerensis* is another species that utilises chemical defence. The nudibranch is able to secrete a milky-white substance when disturbed.

Below right: One of the most widely distributed nudibranch species, *Phyllidia varicosa* exhibits bright warning colours, alluding to its toxicity. This species is mimicked by the juvenile of the sea cucumber *Pearsonothuria graeffei*.



Classification



Notaspidea (Pleurobranchida)

Sidegill slugs are found in a variety of sizes and colours. They possess feather-like gills on the right side of their body beneath the mantle skirt.

Cephalaspidea

Most headshield slugs have a distinctive external shell, but lack rhinophores. Several species have black eyespots.

Anaspidea

Seahares have internal shells, rhinophores and distinctive oral tentacles. They tend to be well camouflaged against the algae upon which they feed. Capable of releasing a purple ink if disturbed.

Sarcoglossa

The Sapsucking slugs are a morphologically diverse group that predominantly feed by sucking fluid from algae. Some species retain a shell while in others it is absent. Others have developed numerous cerata or parapodia.

Nudibranchia

The largest Order of sea slugs with over 2000 species, the nudibranchs all lack shells and possess a pair of sensory rhinophores. Most species have either cerata or gills, which are the animal's respiratory structures.



Pleurobranchus grandis (Pease, 1868)
Order: Notaspidea
Family: Pleurobranchidae
Size: 200mm
Colour: brown, red, white
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Hydatina physis (Linnaeus, 1758)
Order: Cephalaspidea
Family: Aplustridae
Size: 30mm
Colour: pink, brown, blue, white
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Cheilidonura punctata (Rudman, 1973)
Order: Cephalaspidea
Family: Aglajidae
Size: 20mm
Colour: black, orange
Location: Therese Island



Chelidonura hirundinina (Quoy & Gaimard, 1882)
Order: Cephalaspidea
Family: Aglajidae
Size: 18mm
Colour: orange, black, blue
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Dolabella auricularia (Lightfoot, 1786)
Order: Anaspidea
Family: Aplysiidae
Size: 200mm
Colour: brown, green
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Stylocheilus striatus (Quoy & Gaimard, 1832)
Order: Anaspidea
Family: Aplysiidae
Size: 30mm
Colour: brown, white
Location: La Digue



Aplysia oculifera (Adams & Reeve, 1850)

Order: Anaspidea

Family: Aplysiidae

Size: 200mm

Colour: pink, cream, brown, white

Location: Praslin Island



Elysia sp.
Order: Sarcoglossa
Family: Plakobranchidae
Size: 30mm
Colour: green, white
Location: Therese Island



Elysia ornata (Swainson, 1840)
Order: Sarcoglossa
Family: Plakobranchidae
Size: 35mm
Colour: green, orange, black
Location: Curieuse Island



Elysia sp.
Order: Sarcoglossa
Family: Plakobranchidae
Size: 30mm
Colour: green, red, black
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Plakobranchus ocellatus (van Hasselt, 1824)
Order: Sarcoglossa
Family: Plakobranchidae
Size: 40mm
Colour: white, brown, black
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Thuridilla gracilis (Risbec, 1928)
Order: Sarcoglossa
Family: Plakobranchidae
Size: 20mm
Colour: black, white, orange, green
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Thuridilla indopacifica (Gosliner, 1995)
Order: Sarcoglossa
Family: Plakobranchidae
Size: 15mm
Colour: white, blue, red, black
Location: Anse Major, Mahé



Cyerce nigricans (Pease, 1866)
Order: Sarcoglossa
Family: Polybranchiidae
Size: 40mm
Colour: black, white, orange
Location: Curieuse Island



Bornella anguilla (Johnson, 1984)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Bornellidae
Size: 50mm
Colour: brown, orange, cream
Location: Aldabra Atoll



Trapania naeva (Gosliner & Fahey, 2008)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Goniodorididae
Size: 20mm
Colour: black, white, brown
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Babakina indopacifica (Gosliner et al., 2007)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Babakinidae
Size: 15mm
Colour: white, pink, orange
Location: Anse Major, Mahé



Pteraeolidia ianthina (Angas, 1864)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Facelinidae
Size: 150mm
Colour: brown, white, blue, purple
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Favorinus japonicus (Baba, 1949)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Facelinidae
Size: 15mm
Colour: white, cream, green, orange
Location: Port Launay, Mahé



Dendrodoris nigra (Stimpson, 1855)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Dendrodorididae
Size: 50mm
Colour: black, red, orange
Location: Port Launay, Mahé



Dendrodoris carbunculosa (Kelaart, 1858)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Dendrodorididae
Size: 300mm
Colour: brown, black, white
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Dendrodoris sp.
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Dendrodorididae
Size: 50mm
Colour: yellow, black, brown
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Discodoris sp.
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Discodorididae
Size: 35mm
Colour: white, purple, pink
Location: Port Launay, Mahé



Discodoris boholiensis (Bergh, 18797)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Discodorididae
Size: 50mm
Colour: brown, white
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Platydorid formosa (Garrett, 1879)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Discodorididae
Size: 110mm
Colour: red, orange, cream
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



***Nembrotha lineolata* (Bergh, 1905)**

Order: Nudibranchia

Family: Polyceridae

Size: 35mm

Colour: cream, brown, purple, red

Location: L'ilot, Mahé

The polycerid nudibranch *Nembrotha lineolata* is a relatively common sight on the granitic reef at L'ilot Island. Interestingly the author is yet to observe this species on any other reef location within Seychelles.

Members of the genus *Nembrotha* are underrepresented in Seychelles waters with *N.lineolata* the only species identified to date. It is likely however, that further species will be identified in future.

The genus is characterised by distinctive perfoliate rhinophores and pronounced oral tentacles. While regional colour forms of *N.lineolata* have been observed, specimens recorded in Seychelles possess the more common red rhinophores and branchial plume. As in all *Nembrotha* species, the large branchial plume is non-retractable. The species is known to feed on ascidians.





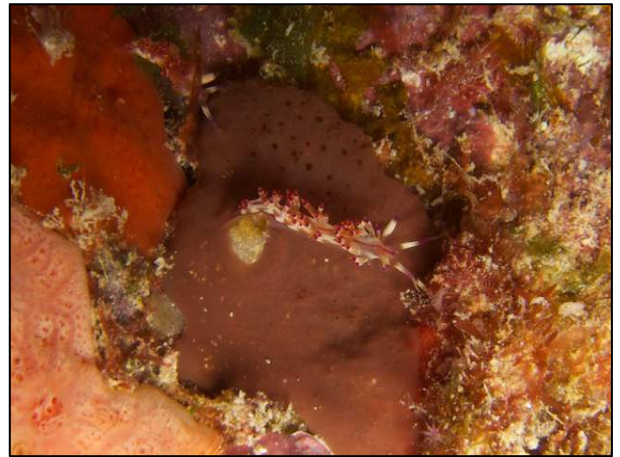
Halgerda tessellata (Bergh, 1880)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Discodorididae
Size: 45mm
Colour: orange, black, white
Location: L'ilot, Mahé



Halgerda willeyi (Eliot, 1904)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Discodorididae
Size: 50mm
Colour: white, orange, black
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Jorunna funebris (Kelaart, 1858)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Discodorididae
Size: 45mm
Colour: white, black
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Flabellina rubrolineata (O'Donoghue, 1929)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Flabellinidae
Size: 30mm
Colour: white, pink, red
Location: Therese Island



Flabellina bicolor (Kelaart, 1858)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Flabellinidae
Size: 20mm
Colour: white, red
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Noumea varians (Pease, 1871)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 15mm
Colour: red, white, purple, orange
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Gymnodois ceylonia (Kelaart, 1858)

Order: Nudibranchia

Family: Gymnodorididae

Size: 30mm

Colour: yellow, orange

Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé

Found throughout the Indopacific, *Gymnodoris ceylonica* is known to undergo population explosions, forming mass mating aggregations within localized areas. In Seychelles, for six months of the year significant numbers of *G. ceylonica* are found in the shallow seagrass beds of Baie Ternay, on the northwestern coast of Mahé Island. Population numbers peak in the months of August and September and coincide with a seasonal drop in sea temperature.

G. ceylonica is frequently observed clinging to seagrass blades or crawling across the sandy substrate and often several individuals are located within close proximity of each other. Mating behavior is commonly observed when *G. ceylonica* is recorded.



The precise reason for the appearance and subsequent disappearance of *G. ceylonica* at particular times of the year is currently unknown, but may be linked to the appearance of *Stylocheilus longicauda*. *S. longicauda* is a favourite food source of *G. ceylonica*, and its presence may indicate the possibility of prey-induced settlement as a causative agent of the seasonal aggregation.



Gymnodois citrina (Bergh, 1875)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Gymnodorididae
Size: 30mm
Colour: yellow, orange
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Aegires villosus (Farran, 1905)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Aegiridae
Size: 25mm
Colour: white, purple, orange
Location: L'ilot, Mahé



Doriprismatica atromarginata (Cuvier, 1804)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 40mm
Colour: white, cream, black
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Diversidoris flava (Eliot, 1904)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 15mm
Colour: yellow, red
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Thorunna furtiva (Bergh, 1878)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 15mm
Colour: white, orange
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Glossodoris cincta (Bergh, 1888)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 50mm
Colour: pink, brown, blue, green
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Glossodoris hikuensis (Pruvot-Fol, 1954)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 70mm
Colour: brown, white, black
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Glossodoris pallida (Ruppell & Leuckart, 1828)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 30mm
Colour: white, yellow
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Chromodoris africana (Eliot, 1904)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 50mm
Colour: black, white, orange
Location: Aldabra Atoll



Chromodoris aspersa (Gould, 1852)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 40mm
Colour: white, orange, purple
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Chromodoris hamiltoni (Rudman, 1977)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 50mm
Colour: blue, orange, black
Location: Aldabra Atoll



***Goniobranchus albopunctatus* (Garrett, 1879)**

Order: Nudibranchia

Family: Chromodorididae

Size: 45mm

Colour: red, yellow, blue

Location: North west Mahé

A brightly coloured species usually encountered on carbonate reefs, where it can be found flapping its mantle as it crawls across the substrate. The typical colour form has a red body with numerous white rings, and a blue marginal mantle band. The foot and underside of the animal is yellow. In addition to the red colour form a yellow variation exists, though it is less frequently encountered on Seychelles reefs.





Goniobranchus cavae (Eliot, 1904)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 60mm
Colour: white, brown, purple
Location: L'ilot, Mahé



Goniobranchus conchyliaius (Yonow, 1984)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 50mm
Colour: white, purple, orange
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Goniobranchus tinctorius (Ruppell & Leuckart, 1828)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 70mm
Colour: pink, white, orange
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Goniobranchus tinctorius (Ruppell & Leuckart, 1828)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 70mm
Colour: red, purple, orange
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Goniobranchus geminus (Rudman, 1987)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 60mm
Colour: red, yellow, white, blue
Location: Conception, Mahé



Goniobranchus gleniei (Kelaart, 1858)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 55mm
Colour: white, orange, black, purple
Location: Grouper Point, Mahé



Goniobranchus fidelis (Kelaart, 1858)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 20mm
Colour: red, white, black
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Hexabanchus sanguineus (Ruppell & Leuckart, 1830)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Hexabanchidae
Size: 300mm
Colour: red, orange, white
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Hypselodoris maculosa (Pease, 1871)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 20mm
Colour: red, white, orange, pink
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Hypselodoris infucata (Ruppell & Leuckart, 1830)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 40mm
Colour: green, blue, yellow, red
Location: Anse Major, Mahé



Hypselodoris bullockii (Collingwood, 1881)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 50mm
Colour: white, orange, pink
Location: Beacon Rock, Mahé



Hypselodoris pulchella (Ruppell & Leuckart, 1828)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 70mm
Colour: white, yellow, purple
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Hypselodoris sp.
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 35mm
Colour: white, purple, red
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Hypselodoris emma (Rudman, 1977)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 45mm
Colour: cream, pink, red
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Hypselodoris nigrostriata (Eliot, 1904)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 40mm
Colour: blue, red, yellow
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Hypselodoris maridadilus (Rudman, 1977)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Chromodorididae
Size: 40mm
Colour: cream, pink, red
Location: L'ilot, Mahé



***Phyllidia ocellata* (Cuvier, 1804)**

Order: Nudibranchia

Family: Phyllidiidae

Size: 40mm

Colour: yellow/orange, white, black

Location: Conception, L'ilot, Beau Vallon, Mahé

Phyllidia ocellata is one of the most commonly encountered nudibranchs in Seychelles. It is known to exhibit extreme variations throughout its range and even within Seychelles waters a number of variants have been observed. Species tend to display a combination of yellow/orange, black and white colouration with orange more frequently encountered than the yellow variety within Seychelles. Some individuals have dark circles along the side of the body, while in others the circles have become rings (top left). Occasionally the circles fuse to form an irregular dark shape (bottom right). The species is common on both carbonate and granitic reefs throughout the inner islands.





Phyllidia alyta (Yonow, 1996)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 40mm
Colour: white/pink, black, yellow
Location: L'ilot, Mahé



Phyllidia coelestis (Bergh, 1905)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 45mm
Colour: blue, black, yellow
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Phyllidia exquisita (Brunckhorst, 1993)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 45mm
Colour: blue/white, black, yellow
Location: L'ilot, Mahé



Phyllidia varicosa (Lamarck, 1801)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 80mm
Colour: blue, black, yellow
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Phyllidia marindica (Yonow & Hayward, 1991)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 35mm
Colour: blue, black, yellow
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Phyllidiella meandrina (Pruvot-Fol, 1957)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 30mm
Colour: pink, black
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Phyllidiella rosans (Bergh, 1983)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 30mm
Colour: pink, black
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Phyllidiella zeylanica (Kelaart, 1859)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 35mm
Colour: pink, black
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Phyllidiopsis cardinalis (Bergh, 1875)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 50mm
Colour: red, green, white, yellow
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé



Phyllidopsis gemmata (Pruvot-Fol, 1957)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 45mm
Colour: pink, black
Location: Baie Ternay, Mahé



Phyllidiopsis phiphiensis (Brunckhorst, 1993)
Order: Nudibranchia
Family: Phyllidiidae
Size: 15mm
Colour: white, black
Location: Beau Vallon, Mahé

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