

Melbourne Sea Slug Census VIII 5 - 8 March 2021

Thanks to everyone who participated in the March 2021 Melbourne Sea Slug Census. It was great to return to the water for another Victorian Census after almost a year's pause and we thank everyone for their continued support of the project.

March saw over 75 people out searching for slugs and we received submissions from 36 different individuals or teams. The list of sites examined included: Apollo Bay, Blairgowrie, Curlewis, Flinders, Frankston, Hampton Beach, Mushroom Reef Marine Sanctuary, Party Point, Phillip Island, Point Lonsdale, Portarlington, Portsea, Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary, Rosebud, Rye, San Remo, Sorrento, St Leonards, Steeles Rocks, Williamstown and Warrnambool.

Together, we found a total of **98 species** of sea slug- the most species found during a Melbourne Census to date. And now to the results you've all been waiting for...

BEST NUDI SPOTTER (with the highest count of the Census) - **Rebecca Lloyd**, with **38** species. Rebecca was followed closely by **Nick Shaw** with **35** species, and 11 different photographers found more than 10 different species apiece.



BEST PHOTO (Awarded by Bob Burn) - Jeremy Bishop
- *Okenia* sp. RB2

Jeremy's *Okenia* sp. RB2 shows beautiful details of this diminutive dorid nudibranch, and we all agreed with Bob that it is a very impressive photo. There are several known yet unnamed *Okenia* in Victoria, but this was the first time that sp. RB2 has been spotted during a Census. Well done, Jeremy.

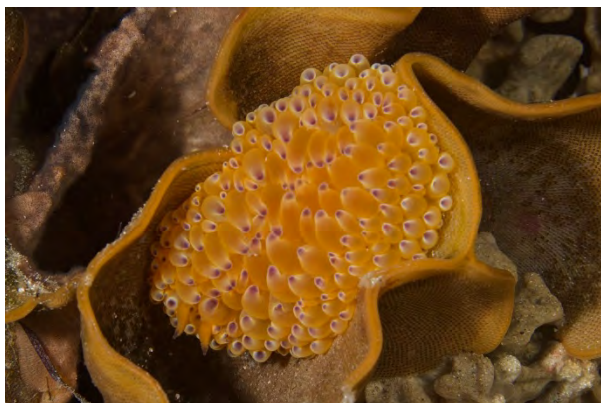


Honourable mention - Ian Scholey - Tritonia sp. RB3

The delicate details of the branchial processes and velar tentacles of this nudibranch in such clear focus in this image impressed our experts. Another excellent shot Ian.

With more and more photographers submitting wonderful images it is getting harder to narrow down just a handful of winners each time! Please 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 Steve Smith) - Rebecca Lloyd - *Janolus* sp. RB5

There were several new additions to the Sea Slug Census records this time around, including this striking but rarely sighted *Janolus* species. This image caught the judge's attention because it also shows the animal's bryozoan food source. Great work Rebecca.



Honourable mention - Rebecca Lloyd - *Doto pita*

While this species is a regular feature in our Census records, the image itself is a nice arrangement of a pair of these tiny slugs next to their egg ribbon. There are many species of sea slug for which we don't know much about their reproductive habits so photos like these can be of great value.

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 36). At the end of the photo catalogue there are also several entries that could not be positively identified to the species or even genus level either through lack of distinguishing details in the image or difficulty in confirming identity from external morphology (features) alone.

Note: for undescribed species we have given each entry a unique identifier, and where possible following the identifiers given in "Nudibranchs and related molluscs" (Burn 2015) and related reports (these appear as "RB" numbers). The abbreviation "cf." means "compare with" and denotes that something is similar to a described species, but not necessarily the same as that species.

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

Photographers:

Brendan Lacota (BL), Bruce Ellis (BE), Cheri Bruhn (CB), Corinne Telford (CT), Duscha Bradley (DB), Elena Markushina (EM), Elodie Camprasse (EC), Erin Brereton (EB), Ian Scholey (IS), Ivan Lee (IL), Jane Headley (JH), Jeremy Bishop (JB), John Eichler (JE), John Olden (JO), Julie Wrighton (JW), Kade Mills (KM), Karen Barwise (KaB), Ken Flannigan (KF), Kerry Borgula (KeB), Leon Altoff (LA), Mervyn Dannefaerd (MD), Mick Morley (MM), Monica Tewman (MT), Naomi Strong (NaS), Nick Shaw (NiS), Nicole Mertens (NM), Paul Schaus (PaSc), Paul Sorenson (PaSo), Rebecca Lloyd (RL), Sally Nankervis (SN), Sally Watson (SW), Shannon Hurley (SH), Stephen Goodall (SG), Steven Kuitert (SK), Thierry Rolland (ThR), Toni Roberts (ToR)



Ceratosoma brevicaudatum (CB)
(22 sightings)



Verconia haliclona (SK)
(17 sightings)



Phyllodesmium serratum (KaB)
(16 sightings)



Goniobranchus sp. 3 (SG)
(15 sightings)



Doriopsilla carneola (JO)
(11 sightings)



Discodoris paroa (SK)
(10 sightings)



Carminodoris nodulosa (JW)
(9 sightings)



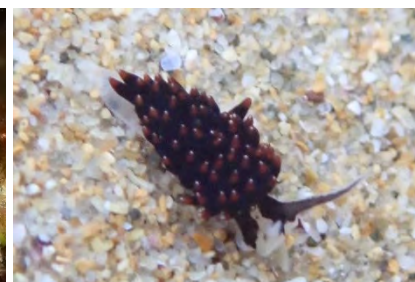
Goniobranchus epicurius (PaSo)
(9 sightings)



Tambja verconis (BE)
(9 sightings)



Placida sp. RB2 (Big ears) (NiS)
(8 sightings)



Ercolania boodleae (BL)
(7 sightings)



Lamellaria australis (JW)
(7 sightings)



Madrella sanguinea (JO)
(7 sightings)



Tambja dracomus (NiS)
(7 sightings)



Thecacera pennigera (NiS)
(7 sightings)



Berthella medietas (SK)
(6 sightings)



Austraeolis ornata (SK)
(5 sightings)



Chromodoris alternata (SK)
(5 sightings)



Madrella sp. RB1 (JE)
(5 sightings)



Tritonia sp. RB3 (JH)
(5 sightings)



Facelina sp. RB3 (IS)
(4 sightings)



Rostanga crawfordi (NiS)
(4 sightings)



Tubulophilinopsis lineolata (JB)
(4 sightings)



Aplysia cf. *parvula* (PaSo)
(3 sightings)



Aplysiopsis formosa (NiS)
(3 sightings)



Caldukia affinis (NiS)
(3 sightings)



Costasiella formicaria (NiS)
(3 sightings)



Doris cameroni (RL)
(3 sightings)



Edenttellina typica (JE)
(3 sightings)



Facelina newcombi (SK)
(3 sightings)



Lamellaria ophione (RL)
(3 sightings)



Pleurobranchaea maculata (IS)
(3 sightings)



Baeolidia macleayi (JE)
(2 sightings)



Berthellina citrina (JO)
(2 sightings)



Ceratosoma amoenum (IS)
(2 sightings)



Cerberilla incola (MM)
(2 sightings)



Cerberilla sp. RB1 (JW)
(2 sightings)



Diversidoris sulphurea (PaSo)
(2 sightings)



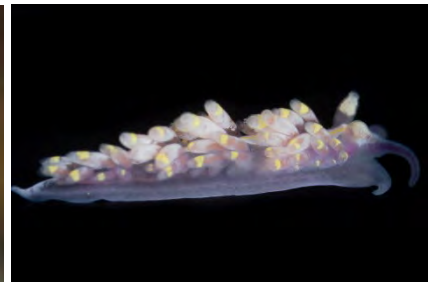
Doto ostenta (NiS)
(2 sightings)



Elysia expansa (KaB)
(2 sightings)



Elysia furvacauda (NM)
(2 sightings)



Facelina sp. RB2 (LA)
(2 sightings)



Goniodoris meracula (EC)
(2 sightings)



Okenia sp. RB2 (JB)
(2 sightings)



Oxynoe viridis (RL)
(2 sightings)



Paliola cooki (JE)
(2 sightings)



Papawera maugeansis (NiS)
(2 sightings)



Pleurobranchus hilli (SK)
(2 sightings)



Polycera janjukia (JE)
(2 sightings)



Rostanga calumus (LA)
(2 sightings)



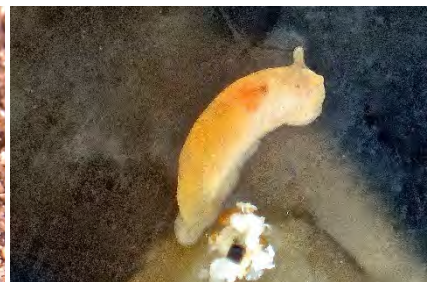
Trinchesia catachroma (NiS)
(2 sightings)



Trinchesia sp. RB2 (NiS)
(2 sightings)



Tritonia sp. RB2 (RL)
(2 sightings)



Vayssierea felis (JE)
(2 sightings)



Aegires exeches (LA)
(1 sighting)



Antaeolidiella lurana (SK)
(1 sighting)



Aplysia concava (LA)
(1 sighting)



Aplysia juliana (JE)
(1 sighting)



Berthelinia australis (NiS)
(1 sighting)



Coryphellina poenicia (RL)
(1 sighting)



Doto pita (RL)
(1 sighting)



Elysia maoria (NM)
(1 sighting)



Elysia sp. 1 Melb8 (NM)
(1 sighting)



Elysia sp. RB4 (CT)
(1 sighting)



Ercolania margaritae (LA)
(1 sighting)



Ercolania sp. RB2 (NaS)
(1 sighting)



Favorinus sp. RB1 (RL)
(1 sighting)



Flabellina sp. RB2 (RL)
(1 sighting)



Goniobranchus cf. *epicurius* (EC)
(1 sighting)



Gymnodoris alba (SK)
(1 sighting)



Gymnodoris arnoldi (LA)
(1 sighting)



Hermaea cf. *evelinemarcusae*
(NM) (1 sighting)



Hermaea sp. RB1 (LA)
(1 sighting)



Janolus sp. RB2 (LA)
(1 sighting)



Janolus sp. RB5 (RL)
(1 sighting)



Melanochlamys handrecki (LA)
(1 sighting)



Melanochlamys queritor (RL)
(1 sighting)



Melibe sp. RB3
(1 sighting)



Onchidella nigricans (LA)
(1 sighting)



Paradoris dubia (MM)
(1 sighting)



Phyllodesmium macphersonae
(NiS) (1 sighting)



Polybranchia pallens (NiS)
(1 sighting)



Polycera melanosticta (RL)
(1 sighting)



Polycera parvula (LA)
(1 sighting)



Rostanga sp. 1 Melb8 (NiS)
(1 sighting)



Runcina australis (LA)
(1 sighting)



Sclerodoris cf. *trenberthi* (JO)
(1 sighting)



Sclerodoris tarka (RL)
(1 sighting)



Siphopteron sp. RB1 (SW)
(1 sighting)



Thorunna perplexa (NiS)
(1 sighting)



Tornatina sp. RB1 (LA)
(1 sighting)



Trapania brunnea (RL)
(1 sighting)



Trinchesia ornata (SK)
(1 sighting)



Tularia bractea (LA)
(1 sighting)



Verconia closeorum (KaB)
(1 sighting)



Verconia verconis (MT)
(1 sighting)



Unknown dorid (IS)
(1 sighting)

Unknown discodorid (RL)
(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 <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