

***Doris montereyensis* and *Peltdoris nobilis* (Gastropoda: Nudipleura) in Mexico: Eliminating Political Boundaries in Marine Biogeography**

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While searching for images to use in my new book, *Los Invertebrados Marinos del Noroeste de México*, I found the following unreported records for two dorid nudibranchs.

Doris montereyensis Cooper, 1863. Six individuals; 30' and 39' deep; 14 mm, 35 & 20 mm copulating pair, with egg mass (Fig. 1); 28, 32 and 27 mm (Fig. 2). Arbolitos, south side of Punta Banda (Ensenada), Baja California, México (approximately 31° 42' N; 116° 41' W); H. Bertsch & Tom Smith, 6 August 1989.

Although Behrens & Hermosillo (2005) reported its southern range limit to be in San Diego, Hamann (1981) had earlier reported finding a specimen intertidally from Punta Cabras, 50 km south of Arbolitos. This is only the second report for this species from México.

Peltdoris nobilis (MacFarland, 1905). Six individuals ranging in size from 32-90 mm in length (average 66.3 mm), between depths of 20-39', were observed on this 6 August 1989 research dive at Arbolitos. The only previous records of *P. nobilis* south of the Islas Coronados, were inside Bahía de Todos Santos: one specimen at the Ensenada docks (Farmer & Collier, 1963), and one 8 cm specimen from Puerto Pacar, north side of Punta Banda (Bertsch, 1982). This species appears more common along the northwest coast of Baja California than previous records would indicate. Note that the photograph in Hermosillo *et al.*, (2006) representing *Peltdoris nobilis*, is actually an image of *Doris montereyensis*.

These records emphasize the biogeographic distribution pattern of species known from southern California. The Californian marine province extends from Point Conception, CA, to Bahía Magdalena, Baja California Sur (Briggs, 1974), with an ecotonal zone of overlap with the subtropical Sea of Cortez province between Punta Eugenia and Bahía Magdalena. It seems quite reasonable that many species from southern California, with reported southern limits at Point Loma or San Diego, may well occur along the northwestern Pacific coast of Baja California (e.g., Bertsch, 1991) in their appropriate habitats.

Five other species of nudibranchs were observed, including a 12 and 15 mm long pair of *Limacia cockerelli* (MacFarland, 1905); eight individuals of *Hermisenda crassicornis* (Eschscholtz, 1831), ranging in total length from 22-41 mm (average 30.1 mm), with egg masses; five specimens of *Triopha catalinae* (Cooper, 1863) on their prey items the bryozoans *Bugula* and *Diaperoforma californica* (d'Orbigny, 1852); and 20+ individuals of *Aegires albopunctatus* MacFarland, 1905, most on their prey items the calcareous sponges *Leucetta* and *Leucilla* (see Bertsch, 1980 and 1982).

Twenty-three individuals of *Doriopsilla* cf. *albopunctata* (Cooper, 1863) were recorded, ranging from 10-37 mm in length (average 21 mm). Genetic studies are being conducted currently by Ángel Valdés, Craig Hoover, Jeffrey Goddard and myself to correctly identify the three Californian species within the *D. albopunctata*—*D. fulva*—*sp. nov.* complex.

The Pacific coast of Baja California, so close yet so far, continues to yield significant new information to the careful observer.



Figure 1. Copulating pair of *Doris montereyensis* with egg mass. Arbolitos, south side of Punta Banda, Baja California, 6 August 1989.



Figure 2. Three *Doris montereyensis* (28, 32 and 27 mm in lengths). Arbolitos, south side of Punta Banda, Baja California, 6 August 1989.

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