

*Eastern Pacific Nudibranchs: A guide to the opisthobranchs from Alaska to Central America* by D.W. Behrens & A. Hermosillo, 2005. Sera Challengers, California. vi + 137 pp. numerous line drawings and colour photographs. Softcover, US \$35, ISBN 0-930118-36-7.

This is the third edition of this little book on the opisthobranchs of the American Pacific coastline. The layout and organisation is the same and works very well, although the text seems short of space in this edition. The book is nicely printed, and the quality of the paper and covers, and therefore the photographs, is improved. The 15-page introduction covers all the usual aspects and is nicely illustrated with a six-page pictorial glossary. Needless to say, there have been major advances in the last 14 years, but the most significant change to this edition is the extended coverage south to Central America. This fauna is tropical, and as such has greatly extended the scope of this book. More species needed to be included; additionally, many un-named species from the previous editions have now been

named, and range extensions for a number of species have been included. The book now includes 314 species, and some still need to be described, a never-ending story!

T. Gosliner brings up a number of important points in the preface: global warming and its effects on the ranges (extensions) of a number of species, and the introduction of non-native species transported in ballast tanks of large ships resulting in regulations preventing discharge of ballast water along the west American coastline. These factors will affect all our work in the future, and it is important to have the "older" baseline studies for comparison.

The opisthobranchs covered in the book are arranged by order, with a diagnosis of each (Cephalapidea, Anaspidea, Notaspidea,

Sacoglossa and Nudibranchia). The 243 species of Nudibranchia are further classified to suborder with a diagnosis and all orders are then arranged by family, which have no diagnosis: I am not sure these headings serve a purpose as they stand and this becomes a little confused when the genus *Janolus* (p. 102) is included in both the families Dironidae and Zephyrinidae...Each species then has six categories of information, which works well, is concise, and precludes the necessity of full sentences: description, radula, natural history, size, range, etymology. I would have exchanged 'etymology' for abundance, but the authors do state that they were asked for an explanation of names in previous editions.

Unfortunately, I have small issues with the ranges/distributions: some species seem to have only eastern Pacific ranges, others include a wider distribution. The inconsistency is misleading, and an extra heading of 'geographical distribution' would have obviated the problem. With the Red Sea being one of my areas of specialisation, for instance, I notice that it is cited for some species which occur in the Red Sea, but not

for others which are well known or originated in the Red Sea. This inconsistency also occurs with northern European species, and with so many species occurring both in the west Atlantic and the east Pacific, it would be nice to know which are native European or north (east or west, or both) Atlantic species. Indeed, this is cited as such for *Tenellia adspersa* (p.133) while several species are listed as European (or something similar which is fine), but a number have no comment whatsoever. To be fair, the authors do state that "only subsequent [range] changes... are cited here". However, I do like things to be consistent! And new buyers may not have the previous editions for this additional information.

A bibliography and taxonomic index conclude the book. The authors have taken on board reader's comments, and as such the book is useful to both specialist and non-specialist. Written by scientists, it is a useful addition to any library, not just a pretty picture book.

Nathalie Yonow