

Vampire Victims - Odostomids at work

photos by Karin Fletcher, all photos taken in Rich Passage, WA

Odostomids are marine gastropods in the family Pyramidellidae. This group is still undergoing study as to how many species we have on the west coast. All members of the Pyramidellidae are parasitic, using their proboscis to pierce the skin of their prey and sucking the fluids and soft tissues. They have a wide variety of prey. Still under question is whether the various species are generalists or prey specific, or if there is a mix of the two types among our local species. It's a challenging question since the species are tiny and can be difficult to collect while diving. Often more difficult is the need to identify the prey; while many clam species can be recognized by their siphons, tube worms retract quickly when disturbed and often require collection for positive identification. This is a challenge in the most ideal of circumstances - doing it while diving is a very difficult task.

We have published photos of these snails on their prey in a number of past issues. Here is another collection of photos illustrating a variety of victim species.



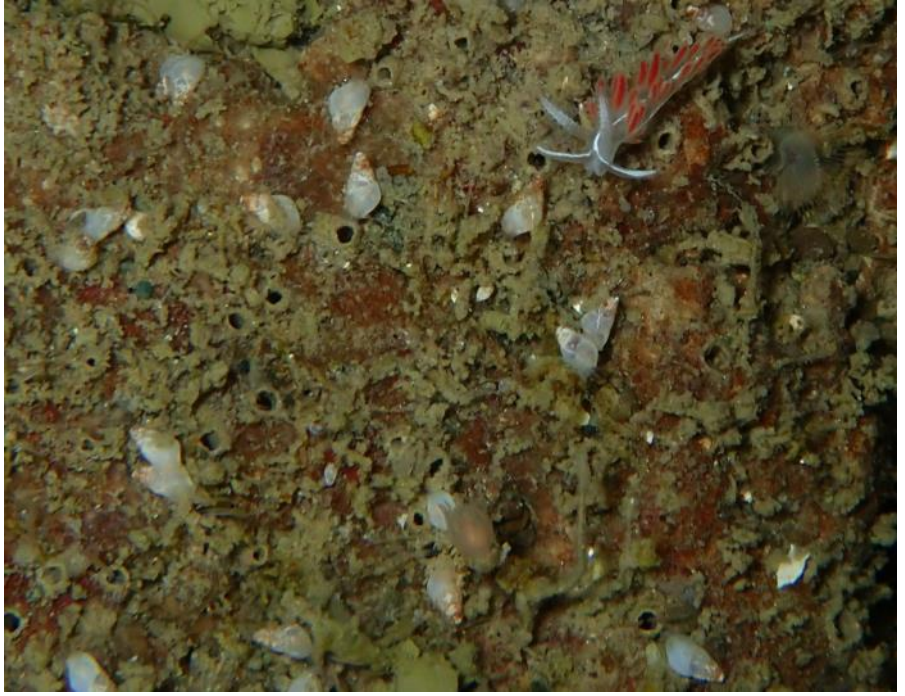
Above - Horse clam siphon (*Tresus* sp.), Oct. 18, 2022

Right - Another horse clam siphon, Oct 1, 2022



Left - A false jingle shell (*Pododesmus macrochisma*), Apr. 9, 2022; note the pygmy rock crab hiding in the crevice underneath

Above - in a tube worm field, Jan 7, 2020; accompanied by a puppet margarite (*Margarites pupillus*)



Left - on a single tube worm, Oct. 5, 2020

Right - in a tube worm field, Mar. 26, 2019; accompanied by a three-lined aeolid (*Coryphella trilineata*) in the upper right



Left - on some Phoronids, an interesting animal that looks like a tube worm but is more closely related to Brachiopods than worms
Right - on a colony of Bryozoans