

'Book' Review

Milne Bay Papua New Guinea Nudibranchs, volumes 1 and 2

by Jim Anderson, Alicia Hermosillo, David McKowen
by Dan Bolt

Recently released into the iBook Store are two new electronic books that are the culmination of 10 years of diving in the Milne Bay area of PNG.

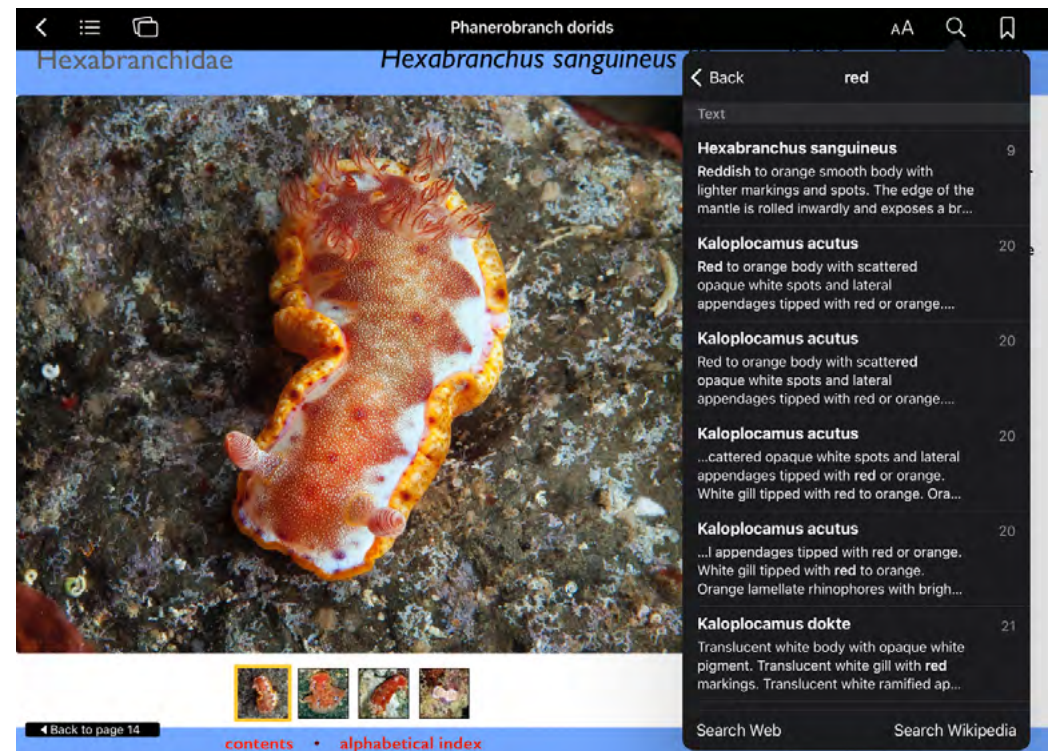
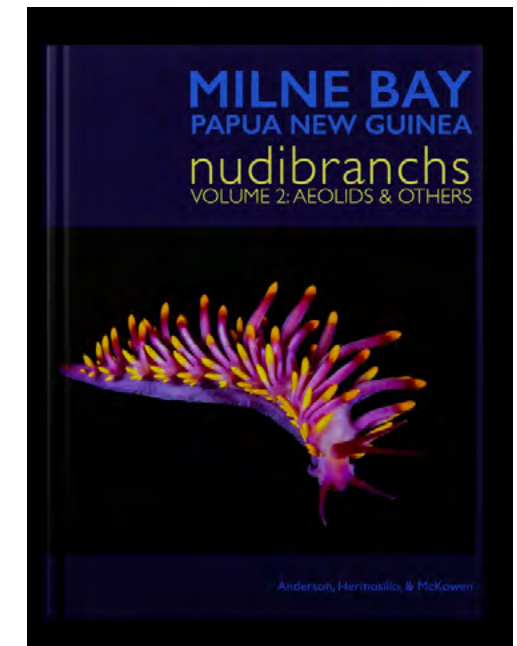
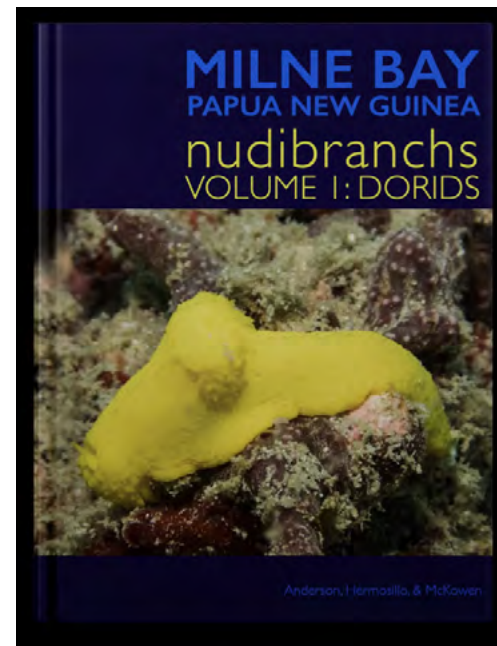
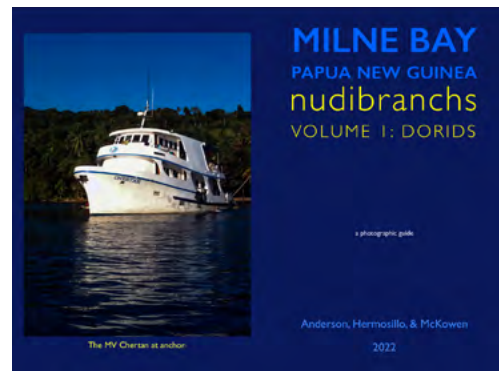
Incredibly, these books contain details of almost 1000 nudibranchs and heterobranchs. This includes 490 undescribed species and 185 that have never been recorded in any previous publication. These figures compliment not only the extreme diversity of the area, but are also testament to the huge amount of effort that has been put into the project over the years. Finding, identifying and cataloguing so many of these amazing creatures is a mammoth undertaking.

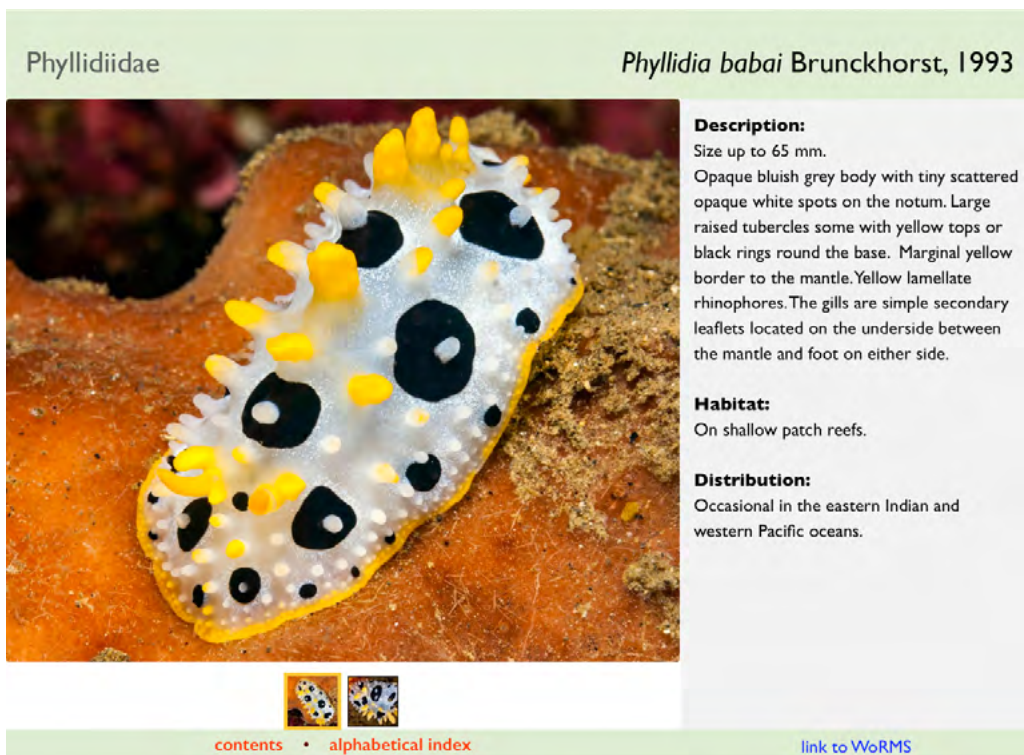
Some years ago I co-authored a similar iBook cataloguing just 75 species of slug that are found in my local patch of water. I thought that was quite a big effort so I cannot begin to image just how many hours of work have gone into these two amazing volumes. I'll say it

again... nearly 1000 species recorded, photographed and catalogued!

The books both have an introduction and a 'how-to' guide; being digital there are interactive and navigational elements. The authors have embraced these features that make navigating and searching through the archives simple and straight forward. You can add bookmarks, create highlights and make your own notes on any page too.

Each 'group' of nudibranch has an introductory page describing the characteristics that they all share, and then the rest of each chapter is given over to the individual group members. Each species is given a page that contains: a description of the animal (size, colouration, rhinophore type, distinguishing features), an explanation of their preferred habitat (usual depth, substrate, favoured food), how widely distributed they are around the region and finally





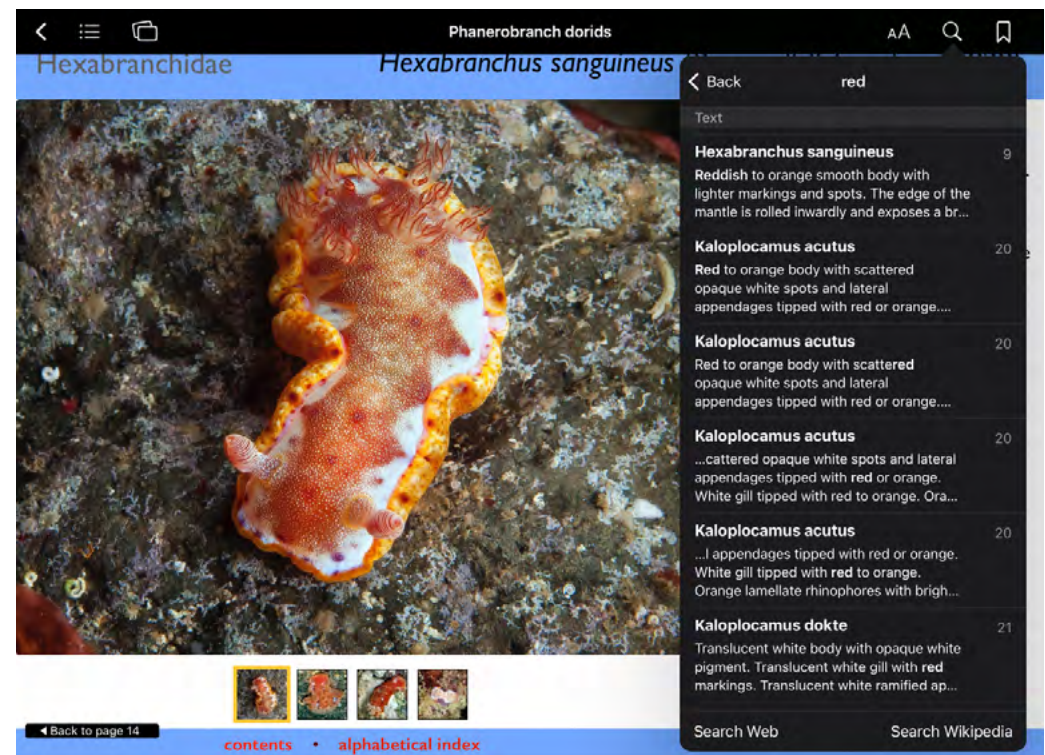
some additional information (this is where you'll see an awful lot of "Not formerly described" entries).

As well as all that descriptive text, every single species has accompanying photographs to aid identification. Quite a few just have a single image (as you'd expect with the super-rare, not previously recorded ones), but the vast majority of species have multiple images of different individuals. This can be very helpful when members of the same species can have subtle colour differences.

Being an iBook comes with built-in advantages for the less scientifically

minded nudibranch spotter. You can search the books by any keyword; so if you've seen a red animal, searching for the word "red" will elicit results that you can easily scroll through (the search results give you the first few lines of the description) to help you try and find the animal you've seen. An just in case you were wondering... In volume 1, there were 166 results for "red".

I would heartily recommend both volumes to any keen nudibranch spotters who are diving in the entire region. Being electronic they are weightless and I know many travellers



are accompanied by their ipad/iphone anyway so this is a great platform upon which to deliver such an amazing collection of knowledge built up by the three authors over a decade of diving.

Each volume is £14.99

Dan Bolt
www.underwaterpics.co.uk

iBooks

<https://books.apple.com/us/book/id1616838938>

Kindle

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Milne-Bay-Nudibranchs-Vol-Dorids-ebook/dp/B09WVPDWRT/ref=sr_1_2?crd=3UBNNQ5WUC0A4&keywords=Milne+Bay+Nudibranchs&qid=1648734663&sprex=milne+bay+nudibranchs%2Caps%2C60&sr=8-2

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White Balance

Digital cameras have opened up new possibilities to underwater photographers. For available light photography manual white balance is an invaluable tool for restoring colours. But when you use it without a filter you are not making the most of the technique. You're doing all the hard work without reaping the full rewards. These three photos are all taken of the same wreck in the Red Sea. The left hand image was taken on slide film, which rendered the scene completely blue. The middle image is taken with a digital SLR without a filter, using manual white balance. The white balance has brought out some of the colour of the wreck, but it has also sucked all the blue out of the water behind the wreck, making it almost grey. The right hand image is taken with the same digital camera and lens, but this time using an original Magic Filter. The filter attenuates blue light meaning that the colours of the wreck are brought out and it stands out from the background water, which is recorded as an accurate blue.

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