

Species Showdown: Kubaryana vs. Cristata

By Dave Harasti



NEMBROTHA KUBARYANA



NEMBROTHA CRISTATA

Taxonomy	Family <i>Polyceridae</i>	Family <i>Polyceridae</i>
Distribution	Found through out the Tropical Indo-West Pacific and recorded in Indonesia, Philippines, northern Australia, Malayasia, Mauritius, Solomon Islands, East Timor and Papua New Guinea.	Found throughout the Tropical Indo-West Pacific and recorded in Malayasia, Maldives, Indonesia, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Taiwan, Guam, Great Barrier Reef and Solomon Islands.
Morphology	This large nudibranch species can show a considerable variety in colour. It is generally black with green pustules, or green longitudinal ridges. A bright orange border to the foot can also be seen. Around the base of the rhinophores there is generally an orange circle and in some animals the rhinophores and gills have orange or green markings.	Similar in size and appearance to <i>Nembrotha kubaryana</i> , <i>cristata</i> can be recognised by the green border on the mantle foot and lacks the orange/red colouration that can be seen on <i>Nembrotha kubaryana</i> . In addition, this species has a green border to its foot. The rhinophores are black with a green circle at the base whilst the gills are black and green.
Size	Maximum length of approximately 12 cm.	Maximum length of approximately 7 cm.
Food	Known to feed on ascidians such as the colonial ascidian (<i>Clavellina moluccensis</i>), the ascidian <i>Sigillina signifera</i> and the compound ascidian (<i>Lissoclinum patella</i>).	Also feeds on ascidians including the colonial blue ascidian (<i>Clavellina moluccensis</i>), the Atapozoa sp. ascidian and a green compound ascidian (<i>Eudistoma olivaceum</i>).
Interesting Facts	Nembrotha sp. nudibranchs are a great find for photographers as they are generally large in size and brightly coloured. They can often be found 'standing up' and 'sniffing' for their next source of food or a mate. The Nembrotha genus has at least 14 different species with the most similar looking species being <i>Nembrotha milleri</i> (green coloured body with lines rather than pustules) and <i>Nembrotha guttata</i> (also called <i>Nembrotha yonowae</i>), which has a body covered in orange/red pustules.	

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