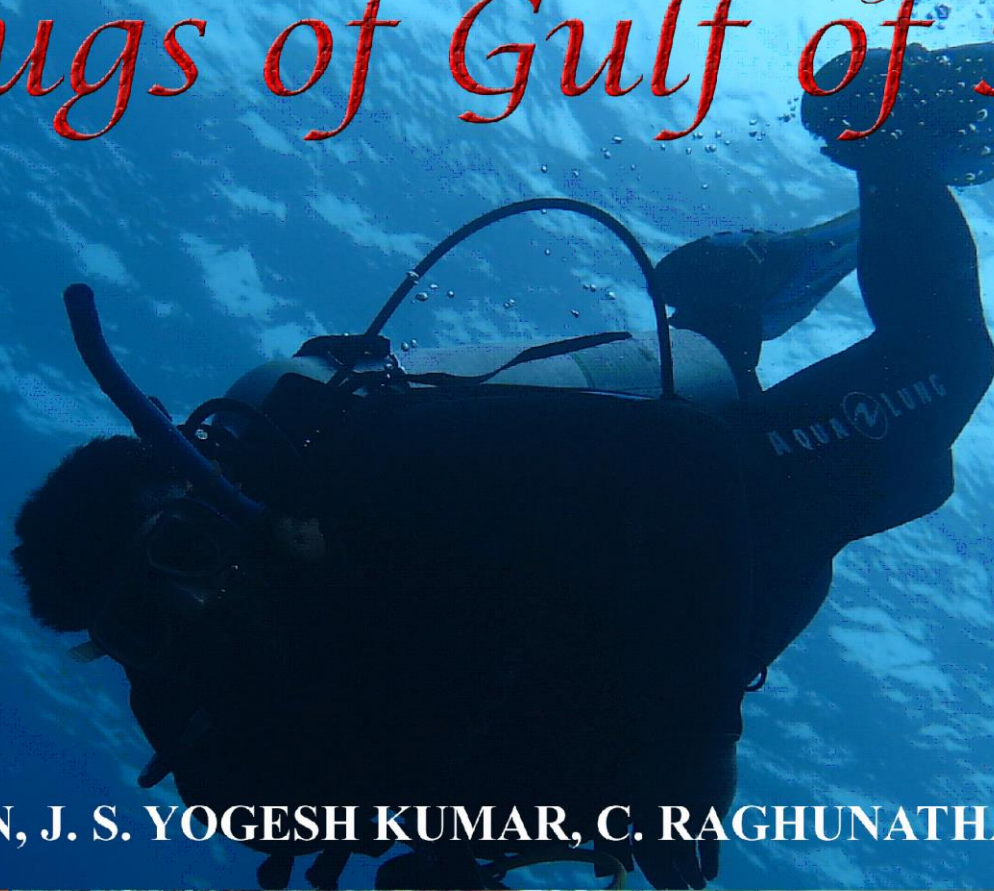


# FASCINATING SEASLUGS OF GULF OF MANNAR

C.Venkatraman  
J.S.Yogesh Kumar  
C.Raghunathan  
Dhriti Banerjee



# *Fascinating Seaslugs of Gulf of Mannar*



C. VENKATRAMAN, J. S. YOGESH KUMAR, C. RAGHUNATHAN AND DHRITI BANERJEE



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**Author(s)** : C. Venkatraman, J. S. Yogesh Kumar C. Raghunathan,  
Dhriti Banerjee

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# PREFACE

The Tamil Nadu state is situated at the south eastern part of India acting as edge between several ecosystems and the habitat heterogeneity acts in favour of harbouring a great level of biodiversity. Whole eastern side is protected by a 1000 km long coastal stretch and major ecosystems like Seaweed, Seagrass, Mangrove, Coral Reef, Pelagic & Benthic, Estuarine ecosystems - decorates the glorified eastern side of Tamil Nadu. Coral reef ecosystem of the Gulf of Mannar is the central gemstone of this biodiversity hub. The Islands of Gulf of Mannar are located between the latitudes 8°47' N and 9°15' N, Longitude 78°12' E and 79°14'E. These islands are protected under Tamil Nadu Forest Act, 1882. Tamil Nadu Forest Dept. declared it as a Marine National Park on 10th September, 1986. In 1989, the Man & Biosphere Programme of India declared these Islands and adjoining areas as a Marine Biosphere Reserve of India, which was the first ever attempt made in south East Asia for a Marine Reserve. Coral reef ecosystem of Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park has acted as a natural reservoir for several micro and macro animals and various Ichthyofaunal species thus maintaining a large food chain. Heterobranch are the most beautiful and diverse creatures in a marine ecosystem. The Heterobranch are shell-less marine mollucs and commonly known as sea slugs or sea hares or nudibranch. Around 6000 species were described worldwide of which, 400 valid species of Heterobranch were reported from Indian waters. A little work has been done from the Gulf of Mannar Islands under this shell-less community. A total of 114 species has been recorded from this area creating an array of discovering much more diversity from the region. This book deals with coloured illustrations and description of 69 species and updated checklist of seaslugs from Gulf of Mannar region which will be highly useful for the Policy makers, Park managers, researchers and students for identification of the species as well as locating the animal from the habitats in this region.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR(s)

**Dr. Dhriti Banerjee** is a first women Director in Zoological Survey of India. She is specialist in Dipteran taxonomy. She received Doctoral Degree in Life Science. Awarded the “Amazing Godavari Memorial Award for Excellence in the field of Education and Science”; Conferred with the “Exceptional Woman of Excellence”, by the Women’s Economic Forum, at The Hague, Netherlands on the International Women’s Day, 2018; Awarded the Nari Shakti Samman Purashkar, 2022”; Awarded the H R Mehra award by The Helminthological Society of India on 21st March, 2022; The CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Biology and Bharat Chambers of Commerce felicitated as one of the Outstanding Women Achievers of 2022; Felicitated with The Prof. T N Ananthkrishnan Foundation on 6th August, 2022; Conferred with “ESDA Women Empowerment Award 2022” by the Environment and Social Development Association at their 3rd World Environment Summit 2022; For the contributions and the achievements in the field of Sciences, felicitated with the Women Achievers Award 2023 by IBRF; Conferred with the Honorary Fellowship Award 2023 for her outstanding contribution in the field of Environmental Sciences by the Society of Biological Sciences and Rural Development. She described more than 15 species as new to science with different ecological significance and published 21 books, 48 book chapters and 201 research articles in peer reviewed national and international journals, including publications in Scientific Reports and Genes.



**Dr. C. Raghunathan** is Scientist-F and Additional Director of Zoological Survey of India and Expert in Marine Biodiversity and is having 33 years’ experience. He received High Performance Scientist Award of ZSI - Year 2011 & 2012. 13 new species described and 715 species new records reported from India (scleractinian corals, alcyonacean corals, sea anemones, hydrozoans, bryozoans, sponges, molluscs, nudibranchs, polyclads, brachiopods, ascidians, fishes and bird). Total 15 Ph.D. students awarded under his guidance (Pondicherry Central University and University of Madras) and 2 students completed M.Phil dissertation under his supervision. He published around 269 manuscripts and 64 books and 245 book chapters were published.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR(s)

**Dr. C. Venkatraman** is Scientist E and ornithologist in Zoological Survey of India and 25 years experiences. He discovered two mammal and one bryozoan species, recorded 58 species (One bat species and One fish, One sea snake, seven mollusc, five crabs, 42 bryozoans, one nemertea) as new record to Myanmar and India respectively. He contributed to the taxonomy of Bryozoans in Indian reefs and Assessment of Sea cucumber population in GoMBR and Palkbay, East coast of India. He guided 05 Ph.D students awarded under his guidance, 3 M.Phil students and 3 M.Sc., students were completed dissertation under his supervision. He published around 120 research papers, 8 books, and 42 book chapters.



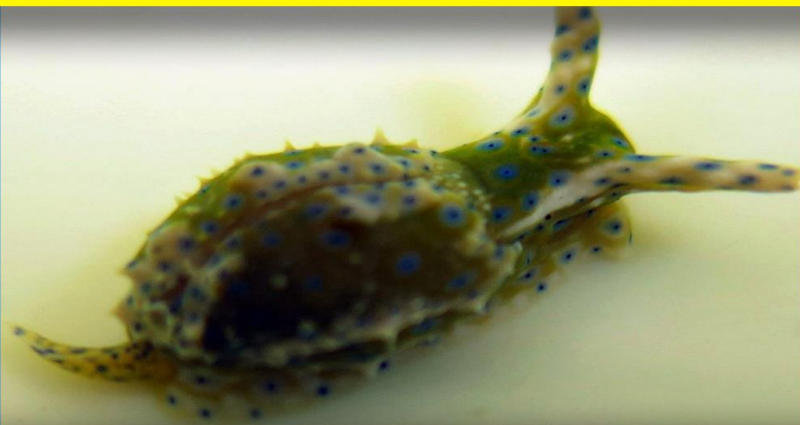
**Dr. J. S. Yogesh Kumar** is Scientist E and Officer-in-Charge in Sunderban Regional Centre. In 2012, he awarded Young Scientist by DST-SBRC and reported 343 species new records reported from Indian coral reef ecosystem. He actively involved in first coral reef transplantation and restoration in Gulf of Kachchh and restored 1000 sq.m in reef ecosystem. Three students completed M.Sc., dissertation under his supervision. He published 07 books, 68 research papers and 20 book chapters.





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