

14/12/21 DI (S/G)Ctenophora

Ctenophora is a small phylum of marine animals, which are commonly known as sea walnuts or comb jellies. The phylum takes its name from two Greek words, *Ktenos* = comb and *pheros* = bearing, as they possess 8 comb-like plates for locomotion. In previous classification, ctenophores have been placed in sub-phylum Cnidaria under the phylum Coelenterata. But, the present tendency is to consider them as a separate phylum. Ctenophores were recognized as a distinct group by Exscholtz and placed under a distinct phylum by tentacles Hatschek.

A new species *Ternoya chboya*, Bonaire Banded Box jelly has been described in 2011. It was caught in the sea around Netherlands.

GENERAL CHARACTERS

1. Marine, solitary, free-swimming or pelagic. No polymorphism and no attached stages.
2. Body transparent, symmetry biradial along oral aboral axis.
3. External surface with 8 vertical rows of comb plates of fused cilia, for locomotion. Hence the

name comb jellies.

4. A pair of long, solid, refractile tentacles present.
5. Cell-tissue grade of body organization.
6. Body acoelomate and triploblastic, with an outer epidermis, inner gastrodermis, and middle jelly-like the mesoglea with scattered cells and muscle fibres.
7. Digestive system with mouth stomodaeum, complex gastrovascular canals and 2 aboral and pores.
8. Nematocysts absent, instead, special adhesive and sensory cells, called colloblasts, present on tentacles, help in food capture.
9. Skeletal, circulatory, respiratory and excretory organs present.
10. Nervous system diffuse. Aboral end bears a sensory organs, the statocyst.
11. All monoecious (hermaphrodite). Gonads develop side by side on digestive canals and develop from endoderm.
12. Development usually includes a characteristic cydippid larva.
13. Asexual reproduction and alternation of generation absent.
14. Regeneration and paedogenesis common.