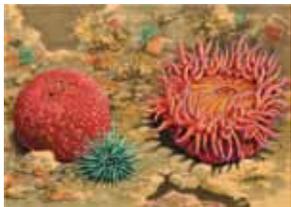


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SEA ANEMONES AND SEA SLUGS^{1,2}

by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson

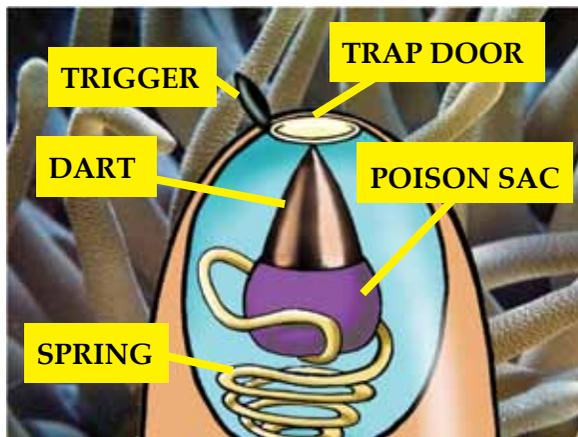
Pictures on front page by Mark Sonmor © AOI



In the ocean are many wonderful creatures. Some, like these *sea anemones* look like beautiful flowers. The sea anemone near the left of this picture is taking a snooze. He is resting or sleeping. The other one is not. He is waving his tentacles around hunting for food.

At the end of each and every one of the sea anemone's tentacles is a small capsule. Inside the capsule is a poisonous dart, attached to a sack of poison. Near the bottom of the dart is a spring system. At the top of the capsule is a trap door complete with a trigger.

When a fish gets too close to the sea anemone's tentacles and brushes the trigger, the trap door flies open, the spring fires the poison dart, and the fish is injected with poison. The



spring that launched the dart holds on until the poison takes effect. Now if it is a small fish, the poison will kill it; if it is a large fish, the poison will paralyze it or put it to sleep. In any case - that is lunch! Did this hunting machine come about by chance and accident, or was it designed?

The *sea slug* is another creature that also lives in the sea. Just as with dogs, we find a lot of variation in kinds of sea slugs. There are thousands of different sea slugs.

Many sea slugs are brightly colored. These bright colors possibly warn other fish that the sea slug is poisonous. He might be advertising that it would be unhealthy for him to be eaten - unhealthy for the other fish, and for the sea slug too! Girls, would this yellow sea slug look good in your hair to wear as a barrette on Sunday morning? Or how about wearing this one? You may think that you are looking at a number of Monarch butterflies all clustered together, but you are not. What you are looking at is one sea slug. Could he be using the same colors as the Monarch, which is poisonous, to warn other creatures that he does not taste good?



Another name for a sea slug is *nudibranch* (NEW-dih-bronk). When studying the nudibranchs, especially this next one, we should realize that they had to have been created, and that they never could have

evolved. This sea slug has no poison of his own, but what he can do is truly amazing. This nudibranch can sneak up on that sea anemone we just studied, rear up, and pounce right on top of him. Then the sea slug eats the sea anemone whole, poison darts and all! For some reason the poison does not affect the sea slug, and the poison darts do not open up or fire; they just stay closed.

The sea anemone is eaten and goes into the stomach of the sea slug, where it is digested, all except the poison darts. Now it really gets interesting. You will notice that the

sea slug has tentacles or what look like arms or spines. These spines are hollow inside (like a straw) and go right down into the stomach of the sea slug. Inside the spines are tiny little hairs, called *cilia*. These cilia reach right down into the belly of the nudibranch, pick up the poison darts, wiggle, and handoff the darts until they are finally planted in the tips of the sea slug's tentacles.

Now something truly amazing happens. A fish or other predator sees the sea slug and says, "Wow that sure does look like a good meal." As he goes to take a bite of the nudibranch, Pow! Pow! Pow! The poison darts fire! He has used someone else's defense mechanism for his own!

Consider this: How many times did the sea slug have to die from the poison darts before he got the system right? When we look at the sea slug, we realize that he could only have been born with these capabilities by design. Only God could have designed such a marvelous creature



such as the sea slug. Even as smart as we are, or think we are, man could never have come up with such a wonderful animal. Not only is our God a designer, He is an awesome one!

REFERENCES

¹Adapted from Discover Creation Children's Adventure, Copyright © 1995 – 2017, Alpha Omega Institute,

²Read more about sea anemones and sea slugs @ <http://www.discovercreation.org/documents/kids/>

God has Created so many wonderful sea creatures.

"Praise the LORD from the earth, You great sea creatures and all the depths;"

Psalm 148:7

Find the 21 differences between the 2 pictures.



Puzzles by Lanny Johnson © AOI 2018

FOR ANSWERS GO TO: <http://www.discovercreation.org/kids/NewsletterAnswers.htm>

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