

# PHOTO STORY

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## New sea slug species found marks first record for UK waters



An extremely rare sea slug has been spotted off the coast of the Isles of Scilly, marking the first confirmed record of the species in the UK according to Cornwall Wildlife Trust and the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust.

The multi-coloured sea slug, *Babakina anadoni*, measures just 2cm in length and was captured on camera by Seasearch volunteer Allen Murray during a dive near Melledgan, an uninhabited rock island in the Isles of Scilly, during The Wildlife Trust's National Marine Week.

**Continues...**



This species is a member of the aeolid nudibranch family and has only been recorded a handful of times along the West coast of Spain and further south in the Atlantic.

Matt Slater, Marine Conservation Officer at Cornwall Wildlife Trust and Co-ordinator of the Seasearch programme for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, said: “What an incredible find! We were extremely excited to hear about the sighting of this colourful nudibranch – a species that we believe has never been recorded in the UK before.

“It’s one of the prettiest sea slugs I’ve seen and, given its less than half the size of your little finger, it’s amazing Allen spotted it at all! There’s still so much out there that we don’t know about our marine environment. Records like this from our Seasearch divers are vital in helping us understand and better protect our seas.”

Lucy McRobert, Communications Manager at Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust, said: “We never cease to be amazed at the wildlife turning up in Scillonian waters. From rare and beautiful nudibranchs to violet sea snails to great whales like humpbacks and fins, every time we dive beneath the surface we learn and see something new!”

Nudibranchs, often known as sea slugs, are soft-bodied marine animals famous for their extraordinary bright colours and striking shapes. They are much like their land-based, garden relatives and feed on seaweeds, anemones and other sea slugs.

Sea slugs can incorporate the stinging cells from their prey into their own bodies, giving them a defence against predators.

To find out more about becoming a Seasearch volunteer diver, visit [www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/seasearch](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/seasearch)

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### **Images:**

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Images:

- A rare and multi-coloured sea slug has been recorded in UK waters for the first time, credit Allen Murray

### **Notes for editors:**

#### **Cornwall Wildlife Trust:**

Cornwall Wildlife Trust has been protecting Cornwall's wildlife, both on land and in our seas, since 1962. It is Cornwall's leading wildlife conservation charity, with over 17,000 members which includes over 4,500 junior members and 160 Business Supporters. The charity manages 59 nature reserves across Cornwall, including a range of habitats such as woodlands, meadows, wetlands and heaths. It also runs a number of marine and terrestrial based conservation projects in partnership with others, including Upstream Thinking and Penwith Landscape Partnership, and hosts the Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCCIS). The Trust relies on charitable donations, grants and the generous support of its members and the generic public to raise more than £2.2 million every year. Money raised is spent on wildlife conservation and education in Cornwall, for present and future generations.

The Trust is one of 46 in the UK. Together, they make up the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts.

Visit [www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk) and follow [@cwallwildlife](https://twitter.com/cwallwildlife) on Twitter or Cornwall Wildlife Trust on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/cwallwildlife) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/cwallwildlife) to keep up to date with Trust's campaigns, events and news.

#### **Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust:**

The Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust is a locally-run island conservation wildlife charity that champions, values and manages our special Scillonian landscapes, for wildlife and for people. Our work covers around 50% of the archipelago.

Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust Limited. Reg. Charity No. 1097807 [ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk](http://ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk)  
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