

In the Goddard segment, folks (especially schoolkids & teachers) might get the impression that with all those vials and jars the boys and I had in the field, we were going to bring all those specimens home. We didn't and don't. I keep only those representing something new to science (like an extension of geographic range) or those from which new information on diet or development can be obtained. Of the animals we do bring back to the lab, after we have made the relevant observations, we return some to the wild, and carefully preserve and label the others and then deposit them in a museum like the California Academy of Sciences, where they become part of the museum's permanent collection and database and available to other researchers for study. But far and away, most of what we bring home from the field are notes and photographs (and hopefully, a broadened awareness and deepened sense of place). I should probably also add that (1) I have a Scientific Collecting Permit from the California Department of Fish and Game, which is required in order to make these kinds of collections; (2) nudibranchs are short-lived (typically less than a year), and their populations come and go rather quickly, so it's not like collecting long-lived snails or sea anemones; and (3) I only collect small fragments of their much longer-lived prey, like sponges, which hardly affects those organisms. -- Jeff Goddard