

***Velella***  
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*by-the-wind-sailors*



**INVERTEBRATE**

*Velella velella*

*diet: plankton and fish eggs that they trap with nematocysts (sticky cells with a neurotoxin).*

*size: about 7cm (3 inches) across*

*Habitat: Hydrozoans that are actually colonies of animals all in one body shape (polyp). They raft in large groups offshore. Are entirely at the mercy of the prevailing winds and are sometimes washed ashore in mass strandings in springtime. As they die, the bodies turn into dried matter that resembles plastic.*

*Beautiful, bright cobalt blue with a stiff, clear "sail".*

***Fun Fact: each polyp is either all-male or either all-female. They are not known to harm humans.***