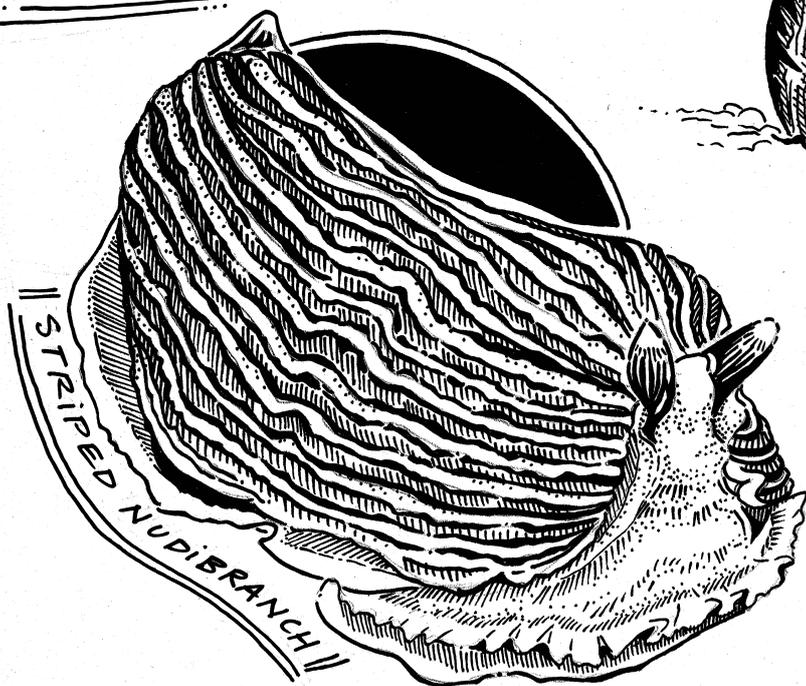
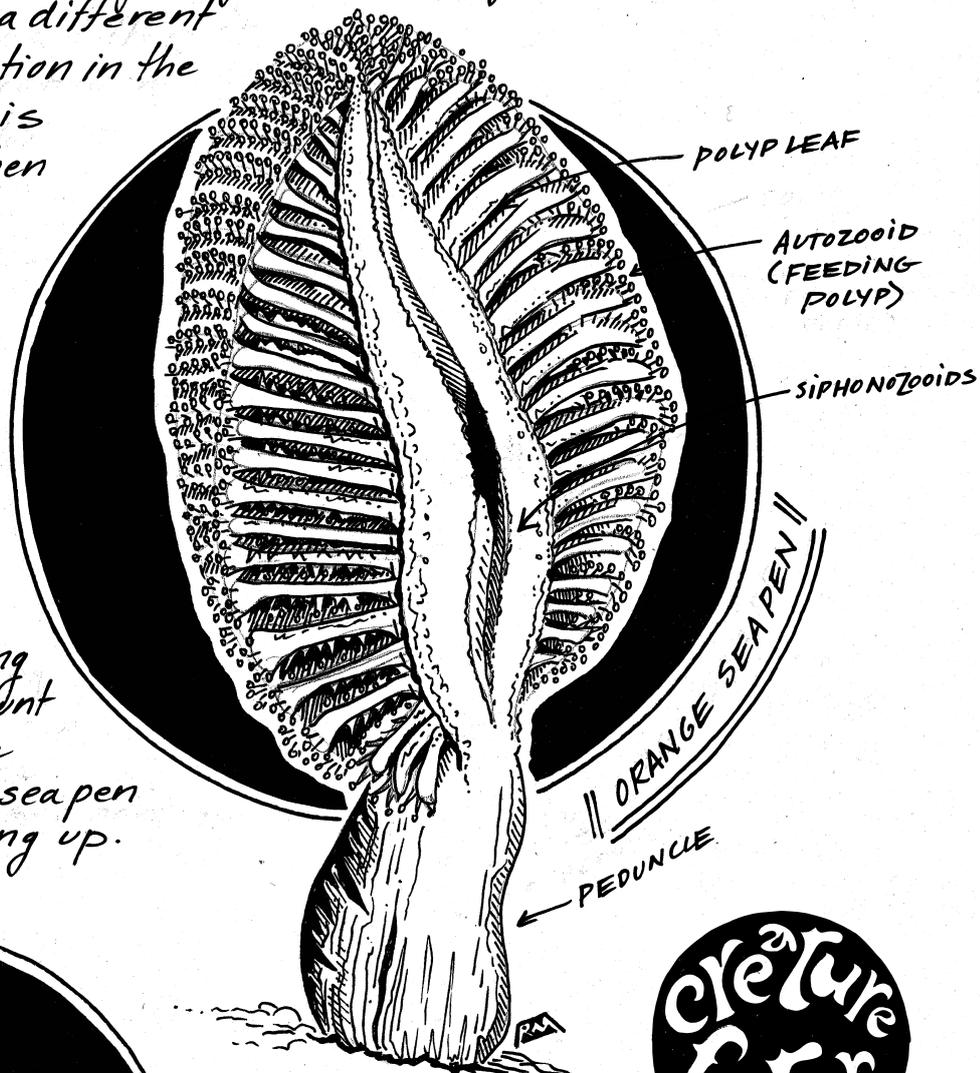


The ORANGE SEA PEN (*Ptilosarcus gurneyi*) resembles a colorful autumn tree waving in water currents at the bottom of the sea. But actually, it's a colony of tiny animals called polyps working together to form a single organism. As it grows, it adds more polyps, each with a different job depending on its location in the colony. And this colony is surprisingly mobile! When a predator like this

STRIPED NUDI BRANCH (*Armina californica*) approaches, the sea pen can inflate its siphonozooids — or pumping polyps — with water to drift to a more favorable location. It can also deflate, retracting into its base, with the amount of retraction specific to the predator, suggesting the sea pen can sense who is creeping up.



As for the striped nudibranch, it may look cute as a button but don't let that fool you. Nudibranchs are voracious hunters that will eat any sea pen in their path.