



Like hermit crabs, red-and-white-banded sea nymphs are wary of the world outside the shell; they rarely emerge more than a head's length.

Sea nymphs (members of the family Nereididae) are the most widespread intertidal polychaete worms - worms that have well-segmented bodies, with each segment having a pair of fleshy protrusions called parapodia that are used in crawling, swimming, and respiration. The RED-AND-WHITE-BANDED SEANYPH (*Cheilonereis cyclurus*) is distinguished from other sea nymphs by its high, wrinkled collar that partially envelops its head. It also has prominent white-and-red or pink bands along the length of its body. It can reach a maximum length of 18 centimeters (about half as tall as a bowling pin).

This stunning scavenger worm is seldom seen in its full elongated glory. Sometimes referred to as the hermit worm, it has a special commensal relationship with large hermit crab species, joining these crabs in the large shells of snail species such as the Lewis's moonsnail (*Neverita lewisii*). The worms are thought to feed on the feces of their crab housemates, but they probably also steal food scraps from the hermit crabs.

