

MARINE STINGERS – BLUEBOTTLE

Physalia physalis

DISTRIBUTION

Australia wide and in most warm oceans worldwide.

COMMON NAME

Bluebottle, Portuguese man-o-war, Pacific man-o-war

SIZE AND APPEARANCE

Air-filled sac up to 8cm in length, usually with a single, long, blue main fishing tentacle hanging underneath. This may contract to a few centimetres or extend to cover over 10 metres in length. Some may have numerous main fishing tentacles and can cause painful stinging.

FIRST AID

1. Do not allow rubbing of the sting area.
2. Adherent blue tentacles may be seen after a sting and are distinctive for *Physalia*. Remove any adhering tentacles.
3. Rinse the area well with sea water (not freshwater).
4. Place the sting area in hot water - no hotter than the rescuer can comfortably tolerate for 20 minutes.
5. If the pain is unrelieved by heat, or if hot water is not available, apply cold packs or ice in a dry plastic bag.
6. Send for medical aid if symptoms persist.

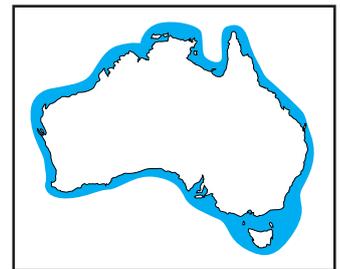
DID YOU KNOW?

Bluebottles are a different type of jellyfish called siphonophores. Bluebottles are colonial hydrzoans, made up of four types of specialised and highly modified individuals (polyps). The polyps are dependent on one another and each performs a different function to ensure their survival.

Bluebottles are the most common cause of marine stings in Australia, with 1 in 6 Australians reporting to have been stung by a bluebottle.



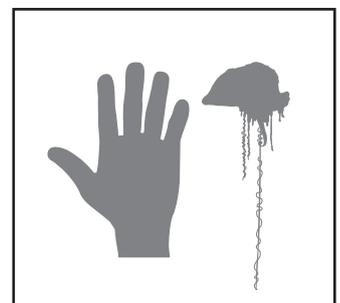
Physalia physalis



Distribution in Australian waters



Physalia sting



Size relative to human