

Taxonomy of *Physalis physalis*

(Scientific Name)

Common Name Portuguese man o' war

Level	Name	Defining Characteristics
<i>Kingdom</i>	Animalia	Animals are a major group of multicellular organisms. Their body plan becomes fixed as they develop, usually early on in their development as embryos, although some undergo a process of metamorphosis later in their life. Most animals are motile, meaning they can move spontaneously and independently.
<i>Phylum</i>	Cnidaria	Distinguishing feature is cnidocytes, specialized cells that they use mainly for capturing prey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their bodies consist of mesoglea, a non-living jelly-like substance, sandwiched between two layers of epithelium that are mostly one cell thick. • They have two basic body forms: swimming medusae and sessile polyps, • Radially symmetrical with mouths surrounded by tentacles that bear cnidocytes
<i>Class</i>	Hydrozoa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predatory animals, some solitary and some colonial, most living in saltwater. • The colonies of the colonial species can be large, and in some cases the specialized individual animals cannot survive outside the colony
<i>Order</i>	Siphonophora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each specimen is actually a colony composed of many individual animals. • Most colonies are long, thin, transparent pelagic floaters.
<i>Family</i>	Physaliidae	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colonies of four specialized polyps and medusoids that drift on the surface of the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans. • A gas-filled bladder resembling a blue bottle provides buoyancy, and long tentacles of venomous cnidocytes provide a means of capturing prey. A sail on the float, which may be left or right-handed, propels <i>Physalia</i> about the sea
<i>Genus</i>	Physalia	Contains only two species, distinguished by size of float and number of long fishing tentacles. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pacific man o war : 6 inch float and single tentacle
<i>Species</i>	P. Physalis	12 inch float and several fishing tentacles

Source: [Wikipedia and Animal Diversity Web](#)

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