Pic 1 or 2: Velella velella along the shoreline at Spooner’s Cove in Montaña de Oro State Park in May 2023

Pic 3: Each tentacle of the velella is their own organism, playing an important unique role on the hydrozoan velella team (Spooner’s Cove)

Pic 4: Velellas are made up of chitin, which is the same material that makes up the exoskeleton of crustaceans (e.g., crabs, shrimp, etc.) (Morro Strand)

Pic 5: Close up of velellas at Spooner’s Cove. Velellas experience mass strandings due to a combination of springtime onshore wind and increased ocean temperatures or storms.