

PHYLUM CTENOPHORA

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS FEATURES:

Soft body, transparent, diploblastic marine metazoans. Cten means **COMB** and phero means **TO BEAR**, that's why it's called ctenophore. They bear comb plates.

❖ **DISTRIBUTION**: Ctenophores are found in most marine environments, from polar waters to the tropics, near coast and in mid-ocean; from the surface waters to the ocean depths. No ctenophores have been found in fresh water.

- Body soft, transparent and biradially symmetrical.
- They are diploblastic animal, the body wall consists of an outer ectoderm and an inner gastro dermis.
- Mesoglea with amoeboid cells and smooth muscle fibers form mesoderm.
- Eight meridional rows of comb like ciliary plates are present that propel the animal.
- There are peculiar adhesive structures called **colloblasts** present in the tentacles, which help to kill the prey.
- Nematocyst are absent.
- Absence of polyp and medusa zooids.
- Tentacles, if present, are two in number and bear short branches called pinnae and retractile into sheaths.
- Mostly hermaphrodites.
- Fertilization external; development indirect and a distinctive **CYDIPPID LARVA present in the life cycle.**

Example:

Hormiphora sp. Berne sp. Ctenoplana sp.