

Prof. Dr. Jan Tytgat – KU Leuven

$\alpha$ -Nemertides, a novel family of marine peptide neurotoxins from ribbon worms

Ribbon worms (nemerteans) are marine predators, which capture their prey using a proboscis containing a mixture of toxins which brings on rapid paralysis. We have discovered a novel family of peptides ( $\alpha$ -nemertides), of which one causes death in green crabs and targets invertebrate voltage-gated sodium channels at low nanomolar concentrations, suggesting a role as drug lead for novel insecticidal and anti-parasitic agents.