Taxonomic Poetry: Those Marvelous Metazoans

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Porifera are full of holes.  
This group includes the sponges.  
They’re filter-feeders through and through  
Some grow to be humongous!

Cnidaria are jellyfish,  
Anemones and corals.  
Their tentacles have stinging cells  
On colonies or singles.

Planaria are flatworms,  
Platyhelminthes, to be sure  
As scavengers they crawl around  
With muscle cells galore!

The roundworms are ubiquitous  
Nemotodes by name.  
Some of them are parasites  
And that’s their claim to fame.

Chordates usually have backbones,  
But a few of them do not.  
Sea squirts and the lancelet  
Are examples of that sort.

Invertebrates are a splendid group  
Filling niches far and wide  
From ocean floor to mountain top  
Over all the countryside.

Now we’re on to vertebrates  
With their backbones strong.  
The Agnatha, the jawless fish,  
Were first to come along.

Next we have Chrondrichthyes  
With sharks and skates and rays.  
These fish are fast, so well-equipped,  
And splendid in their ways.

Bony fish are Osteichthyes,  
First with solid bone.  
Swim bladders filled with gases light  
So they can float alone.

Amphibians and Reptilians  
Were the first to live on land.  
Some reptiles, like the turtles,  
Sought the ocean, not the sand.

Birds and mammals were the first  
To counteract the weather  
With built-in thermostats they found  
The ocean was not better!

We tend to think we human beings  
Are really just the best;  
But we’re the same, though not in name,  
No different from the rest!