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SCUBA News (ISSN 1476-8011)  
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Welcome to the first SCUBA News of 2014. We've some extraordinary images in this issue - just a few of the prize-winning entries to the Ocean Art underwater photography competition. Congratulations to all the winners. Plus, see what divers have been reading over the past year.

I hope you enjoy SCUBA News, but should you wish to cancel your subscription you can do so at <http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/news.html>.

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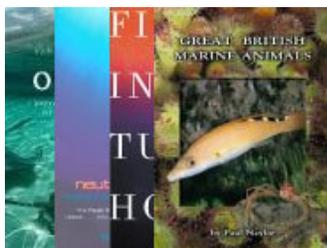
What's New at SCUBA Travel?



[Diving Madagascar](#)

Madagascar in the Indian Ocean has some great diving, but there has been political unrest and even riots last year. The situation is now calm but you should use an established travel company rather than travelling independently. Having said that, the vast majority of visits to Madagascar are trouble-free. More info about the dives, dive centres and travelling to Madagascar is now at:

<http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/madagascar/>



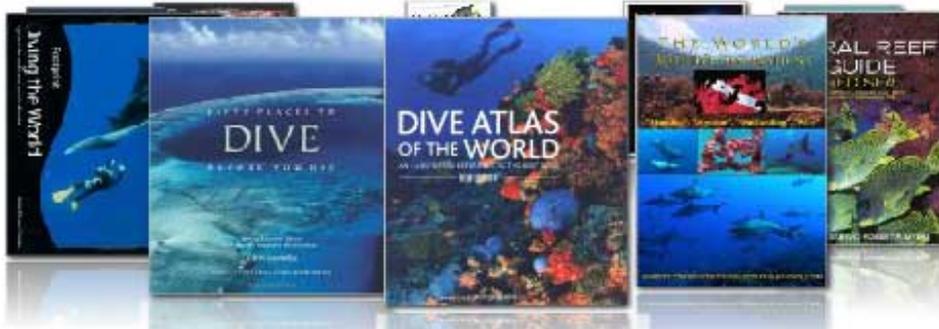
[Diving Interviews and Reviews](#)

Read more interviews with authors, and diving book reviews, at

<http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/interview.html>

Don't forget to keep sending us your reviews. E-mail news@scubatravel.co.uk, [fill in the form at the website](#) or post at the [SCUBA Travel Diving Reviews Community](#).

Diving Bestsellers of 2013



We are pleased to announce the top ten bestselling books and dvds of 2013.

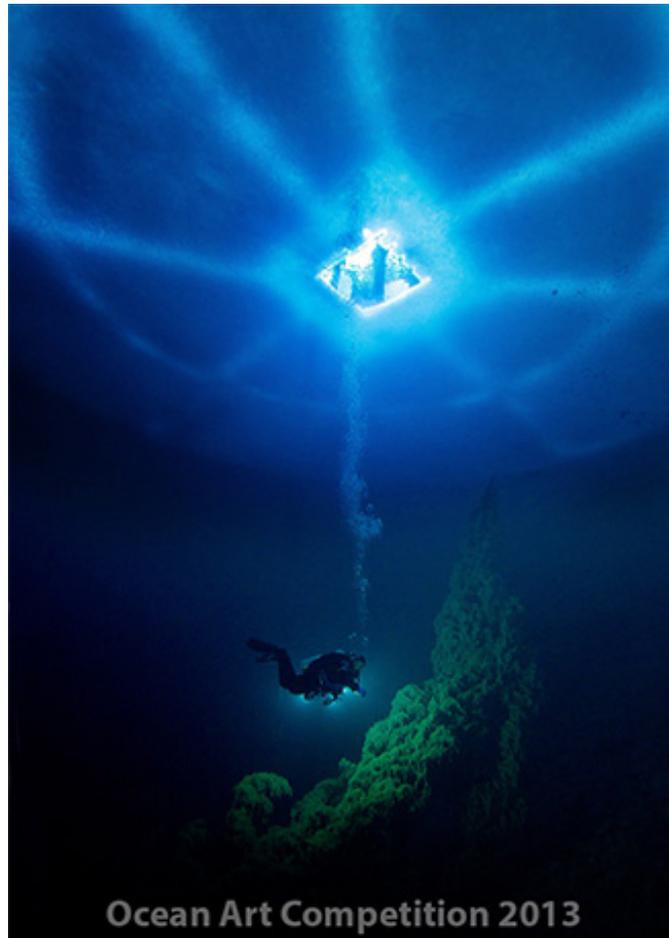
Dive Atlas of the World regains its number one spot, after dropping to number five on the list last year. *Diving Southeast Asia* is a notable re-entry - not seen in the top ten since its publication date of 2009. There are also several completely new entries. Almost all the books (and the single DVD featured) are either highlights of the best diving around the world, or are sealife guides. The notable exception is *North Sea Divers - A Requiem*.

Here are the top ten: figures in brackets show the previous year's position. If we've reviewed a book, we link to [the review](#). Otherwise the links go to the cheapest place we've found for you to buy the book.

1. [***Dive Atlas of the World: An Illustrated Reference to the Best Sites***](#) by [Jack Jackson](#)
300 pages detailing some of the world's best dive sites. (2)
2. [***Fifty Places to Dive Before You Die: Diving Experts Share the World's Greatest Destinations***](#) by Chris Santella
The fifth in Santella's bestselling "Fifty Places" series. (1)
3. [***Coral Reef Fishes: Indo-Pacific and Caribbean***](#) by Ewald Lieske, Robert Myers
Great, compact guide which goes on all my tropical diving holidays. (3)
4. [***Coral Reef Guide Red Sea***](#) by Ewald Lieske, Robert Myers
Easily identify the fish and invertebrates of the Red Sea. (2)
5. [***Diving Southeast Asia***](#) by Beth and Shaun Tierney
Includes over 400 dives in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Singapore. (--)
6. [***Diving the World***](#) by Beth and Shaun Tierney
Another one by husband-and-wife team Beth and Shaun Tierney who have selected, reviewed and photographed some 200 tropical sites. (9)
7. [***Ultimate Diving Adventures: 100 Extraordinary Experiences Under Water***](#), by Len Deeley
Classic dives and secret spots: the authors' favourite 100 dive spots. (6)
8. [***North Sea Divers - A Requiem***](#), by [Jim Limbrick](#)
There have been professional divers in the North Sea since oil exploration began in the 1960s, 58 of them have died whilst diving. The author of *North Sea Divers - A Requiem* wanted to create a memorial to these divers, whilst at the same time providing a useful text for anyone considering a career as an offshore diver. (--)
9. [***Sea Fishes of the Mediterranean Including Marine Invertebrates***](#) by Lawson Wood
Reveals the fascinating wealth of sea life found in the Mediterranean. (--)
10. [***The World's Best Dive Destinations DVD***](#)
Visual scuba dive guide to the world's best diving locations (--)

Over \$80,000 of prizes has been awarded to 64 underwater photographers, in the annual Ocean Art competition. Organised by the [Underwater Photography Guide](#), judges included the highly-respected Tony Wu, Martin Edge, Marty Snyderman and Todd Winner.

The best of show was a stunning wide-angle photo shot under the ice by Victor Lyagushkin in Russia.



This winning photograph was taken near Ekaterinburg, Russia. Lazurny is an old neglected quarry, totally filled with ground waters. Pine trees and bushes on its bottom remain green for many years. In winter the quarry is covered with thick ice and snow. The circles and rays on ice sky are man-made. According to Russian ice diving standards the snow should be removed from the ice in such a manner as to let divers orientate themselves beneath the ice and easily find their way back

The outstanding image in the wide-angle category was of a freediver swimming into a massive bait ball in Tenerife, by Francis Perez.



Dolphins, shearwaters and seagulls were all attacking this enormous shoal of fish, making it change shape.

Another winner from Tenerife - Montse Grillo's portrait of a turtle.



The green turtle was coming from the surface with the sun behind it.

Winner of the macro category was this amazing shot of a pelagic octopus by [Jeffrey Milisen](#)



This was taken at night, five miles off the coast of the Big Island of Hawaii. The photographer says "The tiny octopus stopped in my lights, intently studying me as I studied it, and then began to expressively posture and react to my every move. The cephalopod would move into position then freeze for a few seconds before adjusting its exaggeratedly long arms again. It went through probably a dozen different poses before moving on and into far deeper water than my comparably feeble physiology would allow."

The contest was open to novices and professionals alike. This photo of a Dugong shot in the Red Sea won the novice compact category.



Shot in Abu Dabbab, [Marsa Alam](#), by [Laura Dinraths](#).

Thousands of entries were viewed by the judges before the final set of images were selected and deemed some of the best underwater photos in the world.

The standard of the competition was extremely high. Here is a photo by Czech photographer George Karbus that earned a "honourable mention" in the Cold Water category, but in other competitions might well have won a prize



Karbus captured this shot whilst free diving in County Clare on the West Coast of Ireland. It was summertime and plankton was booming attracting the jellyfish. He was admiring this majestic Compass Jellyfish when a curious Bottlenose dolphin passed by. He managed to get both animals beautifully composed together.

The judges admitted that their job was difficult due to the high quality of so many images. Contest judge Martin Edge said, "Without doubt, the most demanding underwater photo competition that I have ever been involved in. So many excellent, diverse and wide-ranging images to choose from."

You can see all the winning photos on the Underwater Photography Guide site at <http://www.uwphotographyguide.com/2013-ocean-art-contest-winners>.

Diving News From Around the World

For breaking news see our [Twitter page](#) or [RSS feed](#)



A quarter of sharks and rays threatened with extinction

Large, shallow-water species are at most risk. The Indo-Pacific, particularly the Gulf of Thailand, and the Mediterranean Sea are the two hotspots where the depletion of sharks and rays is most dramatic. The Red Sea is also home to a relatively high number of threatened sharks and rays.

Anger as first shark killed in WA waters

Opponents to the West Australian government's shark killing program have responded angrily to the first slaughter in the state's waters.

Whale Meat Stallholders could face Jail

German customs officers have confiscated whale meat snacks being sold by a Norwegian stall at Berlin's Green Week. The stallholders could face prosecution and up to a 5 year jail term.

Palau's coral reefs surprisingly resistant to ocean acidification

Corals living in more acidic waters are healthy, but is the situation one-of-a-kind?



Prehistoric sharks were earliest animals to migrate

A prehistoric shark species is the earliest animal known to migrate, over 300 million years ago. The sharks lived in rivers but swam down to the sea to breed and care for their young.

Antarctic penguins forced up 100-foot ice walls, study shows

Warmer temperatures are forcing emperor penguins to make gravity-defying journeys out of their traditional breeding grounds

New sea anemone species discovered in Antarctica

Researchers from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, while using a camera-equipped robot to survey the area under Antarctica's Ross Ice Shelf, unexpectedly discovered a new species of small sea anemones that were burrowed into the ice, their tentacles protruding into frigid water like flowers from a ceiling.

New species of River Dolphin found in Brazil

River dolphins are among the world's rarest creatures. There are only four known species, and three of them are on the Red List, meaning they are critically endangered. Now scientists in Brazil have discovered a new type of river dolphin.

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CONTACTING THE EDITOR

Please send your letters or press releases to:

[Jill Studholme](#)

SCUBA News

The Cliff

Upper Mayfield

DE6 2HR

UK

news@scubatravel.co.uk

PUBLISHER

[SCUBA Travel](#) Ltd, The Cliff, Upper Mayfield, DE6 2HR, UK