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Welcome to *SCUBA News*. This month the British coastguard revealed that diving incidents were down this year - good news but perhaps more down to the dreadful weather in spring in Britain last year than to better diving practices. I hope the weather is good with you wherever you are - dive safely.

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## What's New at SCUBA Travel?



### [Diving Malta and Gozo](#)

With clear waters and rocky scenery, Malta and Gozo boast some of the best diving in the Mediterranean. Find out more at



<http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/europe/malta-dive-in.html>



### **Kingston Photo Gallery**

The wreck of the Kingston lies on a sloping reef wall in the Red Sea. Built in 1871, she was one of a new type of ship which had a funnel as well as two masts. Divers called her the Sarah H at first, until her identity was discovered. We've a new gallery of photos of the Kingston (by Tim Nicholson) on our Google+ page at

<https://plus.google.com/100388265497041686164/>

More about the Kingston is at <http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/redsea/wreckdive.html>

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

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## **Letters**

### Disabled Divers

Is there a special certificate for a handicapped / disabled diver?

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*We don't think so but e-mail [news@scubatravel.co.uk](mailto:news@scubatravel.co.uk) or comment at <https://plus.google.com/116729625851223504626/posts/h1BUUvnyNbA> if you know better.*

### HSE / Police Diver to PADI

I'm a qualified to HSE scuba and Police Surface supplied as I am a Police diver. I am due to go on my Honeymoon and wish to take part in recreational diving. My partner is going to do a PADI course. I was wondering how well recognised my qualification is. Would it be recognised abroad easily. What would it equate to as a PADI qualification and how easy would it be for me to get PADI qualifications with the qualifications I already have.

Thanks

Trish Foster

*HSE Scuba equates to BSAC Sports Diver or PADI Rescue Diver. You need to contact the dive centre you will be using to confirm that they will understand your qualification. There should be no problem converting to a PADI qualification - but you will have to do one of their courses. Anyone else had experience of using an HSE qualification outside Britain?*

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## **Creature of the Month: Hooded Cuttlefish, *Sepia prashadi***

This intelligent mollusc has almost incredible powers of mimicry. It can control the colour, patterning and texture of its skin to perfectly match its surroundings. And not just from above, the camouflage works from whichever angle it is observed. From birth, cuttlefish can display at least 13 type of body pattern, made up from over 30 different components. A recent study suggested that the military can learn from the cuttlefish and create "invisible suits".



*Hooded Cuttlefish showing courtship colouration  
taken in Oman by David Collins*

In addition to avoiding predators, pattern control is also used in courtship by male cuttlefish. This impresses females and warns off competitors. After mating the male will often defend the female while she lays clumps of eggs. These hatch in two to three months to reveal miniature cuttlefish. Females only breed once and die soon after laying.



*Eye of the cuttlefish, by Tim Nicholson*

With its flattened body skirted each side with fins, the cuttlefish moves with a pretty rippling motion. Like the closely related octopus, it can also escape by powerful jet propulsion whilst simultaneously ejecting a cloud of black ink to distract its foe. This ink is called sepia and was once used by artists.

The cuttlefish's beak-like mouth is surrounded by eight arms each with two rows of suckers. It also has two long extendable tentacles with suckered, club-like ends for catching fast-moving prey like crustaceans and fish.



*In this photo the cuttlefish is raising its tentacles in an aggressive posture, by Captain Victor Oram*

To change colour, the cuttlefish has a central sac (chromatophore) containing granules of pigment. This is surrounded by a series of muscles. When the brain sends a signal to the cell, the contracting muscles make the central sacs expand, dispersing pigment and generating the optical effect. Their skin can change colour and pattern in just a second to match their environment. Scientists have recently also discovered that cuttlefish possess luminescent protein structures that allow them to actively emit light, not just reflect and filter the ambient light from their environment. Additionally, they also discovered the presence of reflectin in the chromatophores, a high-refractive-index protein that, they suggest, allows the chromatophores, when highly stretched out, to more effectively absorb light than if they contained color pigments alone.

According to Helmut Debelius, the hooded cuttlefish can grow to 30 cm but is usually only half that size. You find these cuttlefish in the Red Sea, Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean.

Animalia (Kingdom) > Mollusca (Phylum) > Cephalopoda (Class) > Coleoidea (Subclass) > Decapodiformes (Superorder) > Sepiida (Order)

**Other Cuttlefish Photos:** [More cuttlefish photos are one our Cuttlefish page at http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/marine-life/cuttlefish.html](http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/marine-life/cuttlefish.html)

Further Reading:

[Cuttlefish](#) ♦ [Master of Camouflage](#) by Scubabacus  
[Red Sea Reef Guide](#) by Helmut Debelius

## Diving News From Around the World

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

### [UK diving incidents lowest for 21 years](#)

The number of diving incidents in the UK has fallen to its lowest level in 21 years, according to the latest figures from the Coastguard.



### [Little support for shark cull](#)

Even following another fatal shark attack in Australia, research finds little support for the shark cull.

### [Global plan to hush ships for the sake of whales](#)

At last, whales and dolphins might enjoy some peace and quiet. Shipping companies the world over will soon have voluntary guidelines that will, for the first time, require them to make less noise at sea.

### [Dolphin-Safe Certification Questioned](#)

A new study from the Environmental Policy Group in the Netherlands questions the reliability of the Earth Island Institute's (EII) "dolphin-safe" certification. The research investigates whether competition between standards leads to a "ratcheting up" of sustainability standards, or an opposite "race to the bottom," offering certification programs that lower the bar and allow companies to "greenwash" their image with weak compliance criteria.

### [Palau's plans to ban commercial fishing could set precedent for tuna industry](#)

The Pacific-island nation of Palau is close to kicking all commercial fishing vessels out of its tropical waters. The move will single-handedly section off more than 230,000 sq miles of ocean, an area slightly smaller than France, to create one of the world's largest marine reserves.

### [Japan accepts court ban on Antarctic whaling](#)

The UN's International Court of Justice has ruled that Japan must temporarily halt its whaling programme in the Antarctic. Japan said it would abide by the decision but added it 'regrets and is deeply disappointed by the decision'.

### [Japan's biggest online retailer, Rakuten, ends whale meat sales](#)

The Japanese online retailer Rakuten, who owns plus.com and Kobo, is to end all online sales of whale and dolphin meat by the end of this month. It gives the reason as The International Court of Justice's ruling against Japan's whaling programme, although some think the loss of western sales played a large part.

### [Eastern Australian waters warming fastest](#)

Waters off the eastern Australian coast are among the fastest warming in the world, bringing significant changes to marine eco-systems, scientists say.

### [Dino-killing asteroid cleared way for modern reef fish](#)

The mass extinction 65 million years ago may have helped establish the modern reef fish

communities, now home to 7 per cent of all vertebrate species

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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](mailto:news@scubatravel.co.uk)

#### PUBLISHER

[SCUBA Travel](#) Ltd, 5 Loxford Court, Hulme, Manchester, M15 6AF, UK