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This month several readers have asked us questions about where to dive. Our favourite is from a "nervous" novice who is nearly 70 and has just passed her open water qualification. Many congratulations to Gillian who wants to know where to dive next - see her's and other letters below. We've also news of a competition to **win a holiday in the Red Sea**, and we've found some good [travel insurance for divers](#) with no depth limits which doesn't cost the earth.

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## Lepia Dive Centre

*For experienced, disabled and learner divers on the beautiful island of Rhodes.*

Visit us at <http://www.lepiadive.com/>



## What's New at SCUBA Travel?



### [Diving Greece](#)

Welcome to Lepia Dive Centre on Rhodes, Interdive on Agistri and the other Greek dive centres who are now on the site at <http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/europe/greece-diving.html>  
<http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/europe/lepia-dive-centre.html>



### [Diving the Philippines](#)

The Philippines is part of the "coral triangle", in which live 76% of the world's coral species. Diving in the Philippines is all year round however the best time is generally December to April. Diving highlights include the World Heritage site of Tubbataha, thresher sharks at Malapascua and big pelagics at Panagatan.

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



### [Ghiannis D Photo Album](#)

The Ghiannis D is a lovely wreck in the Red Sea. A new photo album of her is up with photos by Tim Nicholson.

<https://plus.google.com/+JillStudholme/>  
<http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/redsea/wreckdive.html>

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## Letters

Lots of people asking advice this month - hope you can help some of them.

### **Where to dive next from newly qualified diver who's nearly 70**

Hello

I found your website through a Google search, and although I live in Vancouver, Canada, I wonder if you can provide some input, please? In March of this year, at the grand old age of almost 70, I obtained my PADI Open Water certification on the island of Curacao. I enjoyed 9 dives in total, at a place called Porto Marie. It was wonderful. I can't believe I wasted my whole life being too afraid to try what one of the most magical experiences I have ever had!

Although I will be returning to Curacao next March, the people at the Dive Shack

suggested I should try to get back into the water sooner than that. In my ignorance, I thought I could just go down to San Diego and dive there. I have now discovered that there are fundamental differences between the "from the beach" warm-water diving I did in Curacao and the diving off the West Coast of the USA. Although I will hopefully be ready to try dry-suit cold-water diving at some time (I am told that Vancouver has some of the best diving of that kind), I need help in finding a suitable place for a "refresher trip". My options from a financial perspective, are as follows:

Florida  
Hawaii  
Mexico  
Cuba

Any suggestions would be most welcome, because I am still a very "nervous Nellie"!

Regards,  
Gillian

Any suggestions for Gillian? E-mail [news@scubatravel.co.uk](mailto:news@scubatravel.co.uk) and we'll pass your message on.

### **Curacao**

What would be the one thing to see or do on the island. Best scuba dive site? Best entertainment, best adventure?

Judy Harbison

### **Dominican Republic, Via our [Twitter account](#)**

@SCUBANews - Going to Dominican Republic for our honeymoon in September. Need a good dive shop, suggestions?

Phil Radatz, @psradatz

### **Panama, via our [Facebook page](#)**

Hello! I was wondering what's the best spot to do the advance course in Panama at this time of the year... Thanks in advance ;)

Pedro Paz Lopez

Again, any suggestions e-mail us and we'll pass your comments on, or you could instead post on <https://www.facebook.com/SCUBANews> or <http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/+>.

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## **Travel Insurance for SCUBA Divers**

Anyone planning to dive when on holiday needs to be sure they are covered by their travel insurance. Many policies have a 30 m limit which is not always enough. Even if you don't

plan to go deeper than 30 m there is always a chance you may overshoot, or circumstances dictate that you go deeper. We recommend always travelling with at least 40 m cover. Your policy should also include:

- medical and health cover for an injury or sudden illness abroad
- repatriation to your home country should it be medically necessary
- 24-hour emergency service and assistance
- personal liability cover in case you're sued for causing injury or damaging property
- lost and stolen possessions cover
- cancellation and curtailment (cutting short your trip) cover
- cover for other outdoor activities that are commonly excluded from standard policies
- personal accident cover
- legal expenses cover
- financial protection if your airline goes bankrupt before or during your trip

After extensive research we've found three travel insurance companies that offer insurance specially for divers, tick all our boxes and aren't prohibitively expensive: Columbus Direct, World Nomads and Dive Master Insurance.

The best value option is [Columbus Direct](#). A week's diving in Egypt for example, with cover for dives to 40 m, starts at just £9.71 for UK residents. Make sure you select the Adventure Pack option. For **dives to 50 m**, if appropriately qualified, their sister company [Club Direct Travel Insurance](#) is not much dearer.

[World Nomads](#) travel insurance is designed specifically for **travellers who like to take part in all sorts of adventurous sports and activities, especially backpackers**. They offer cover for diving down to 50 m, depending on your country of residence and qualifications.

[Dive Master Insurance](#) is different in that they let you buy stand-alone diving insurance to accompany your existing travel insurance. You can buy **diving cover with no depth limits**. (Dives over 80 m should be supported, and deeper than 130 m must be agreed with the underwriters.) They also offer **dive equipment insurance** - including for camera flooding - and **dive professional insurance**.



### **Further Reading**

More about [insurance for divers](http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/insurance.html) is on our web site at <http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/insurance.html>

Please check the insurers' web sites for full policy details - especially as cover changes depending on your country of residence.

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### **Win a holiday to the Red Sea**

We've been asked to promote a competition to win a holiday to the Red Sea from the airline Monarch, and we are happy to do so. Hope one of you wins!

Monarch have teamed up with Emperor Divers to offer a 7-night stay in either El Gouna or Marsa Alam for two. The prize comes with a 3-day diving course. Unfortunately there isn't an alternative for qualified divers - although our contact suggests that perhaps a different course could be negotiated with Emperor Divers. In spite of that, a free holiday to the Red Sea is still on offer.



*Dugong at Marsa Alam*

Flights are from the UK (Manchester, Birmingham or Gatwick) to Hurgada, so the prize might suit UK readers best.

You can enter the competition at <http://blog.monarch.co.uk/>

Good Luck

Further Reading:

We've more on the [diving around Marsa Alam](http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/redsea/diving-marsa-alam.html), including a video, on the SCUBA Travel web site at <http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/redsea/diving-marsa-alam.html>

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## Diving News From Around the World



### **Caribbean coral reefs gone within 20 years**

But they can be saved, simply by restoring parrotfish populations

### **More Big Whales in Ocean Could Mean More Fish**

Scientists and fisheries managers have long underestimated the valuable role large whales play in healthy ocean ecosystems, a new study suggests. And, scientists add, those commercial fishermen who complain that whales steal fish from their nets have it wrong.

## **There's a lot of shipwrecks in US Waters**

NOAA map shipwrecks within US maritime boundaries. A new interactive map lets you zoom in, click on a wreck and see details about it.



## **First-of-its-Kind Map Details Extent of Plastic in Ocean**

here's less than expected on the surface. Scientists are trying to find where in the ocean it's gone.

## **First Shark Species Protected Under the ESA**

For the first time ever, the US National Marine Fisheries Service has conferred ESA (Endangered Species Act) protection on a shark species by adding four "distinct population segments" of scalloped hammerhead sharks to the list of species protected under the ESA.



## **Dredging increases fatal disease risk for coral: Great Barrier Reef new worry**

Study finds sediment exposure can double risk of disease, raising questions over Abbot Point expansion impact on Great Barrier Reef

## **Climate change to impact even deep-ocean ecosystems**

Even tiny crustaceans scuttling across the deepest, darkest depths of the ocean floor will feel the effects of climate change, according to a new study published in the journal *Global Ecology and Biogeography*. "The deep sea is so remote and so very, very cold that we wondered if it too will be impacted by climate change," explains Gene Hunt, a paleobiologist at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C. "Our research shows the answer is yes."

## **Ancient Marine Predators sport Modern Brains**

Marine predators from the Cambrian era had brains wired like some in living invertebrates.

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

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