

# SCUBA News

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## What's New at SCUBA Travel?

### Stunning Solomon Islands Scuba Diving



The diving in the Solomon Islands is excellent. Their remoteness means that the dive sites are unspoilt. WWII wrecks, caves, coral gardens and immense biodiversity of marine life, coupled with hardly any divers, make for a great trip.

[Read More...](#)



### Costa Rica

Not only incredible diving at Cocos Island but also dramatic encounters at Guanacaste in the north west of Costa Rica.

[Read More...](#)



### Diving Kit Insurance

Insure your diving equipment, including for flooding of underwater cameras, with a price match guarantee.

[Read More...](#)



## Undersea Adventures Diving Center

Dive Hurghada in the northern Red Sea

[redsealife.com](http://redsealife.com)

### Letters

#### Maldives - Dive Centre Wanted

*We have recently finished a four room guesthouse on Baa Atoll Dhonfan, the closest island to UNESCO biosphere reserve "Hanifaru Bay". There is also a famous house reef "Dhonfanu Thila" and multiple diving points within 30 minutes distance. We were wondering if there is any interest in operating a dive business in Maldives or if there are any small operators who might want start a scuba diving business in Maldives. If there is any interested party we would be very happy to provide any additional details required. Thank you.*

Ali

Do you want to start a diving business in the Maldives? Email [news@scubatravel.co.uk](mailto:news@scubatravel.co.uk) and we'll forward your message to Ali

### Featured Liveboard - Atlantis Azores

#### Save \$500 on Diving The Philippines



With 7 days on board and 2 days in 5-star dive resort

[Learn More...](#)

## Creature of the Month: Humphead Wrasse, *Cheilinus undulatus*

The Humphead Wrasse is found throughout the warm waters of the Red Sea, the Indian and Pacific Oceans. An extremely large fish, it grows to over 2 m and weighs up to 191 kg (420 lb or 30 stone)! It has several names, depending on where in the world you are, including Napoleon and Maori Wrasse.



*Humphead Wrasse, Cheilinus undulatus, in the Red Sea where it is normally known as the Napoleon Wrasse. [Photo credit](#): Tim Nicholson*

Living between 1 and 60 m down, you can easily identify the fish by its large size and, in the case of a male, the prominent bulge on its forehead. Usually solitary, it feeds primarily on invertebrates and will even take toxic animals like crown-of-thorns starfish, boxfish or sea hares.

Like others in the wrasse family, the Humphead Wrasse doesn't usually move its tail when swimming but flaps its pectoral fins. The species can live for at least 30 years, and becomes sexually mature at between 5 and 7 years.



*[Photo credit](#): Garry Frazer*

Humphead Wrasse are particularly vulnerable to fishing, as they grow slowly, mature late, and are uncommon. They are traded on the live reef food fish market, which serves luxury restaurants in, amongst others, Hong Kong, China, and Singapore. There is evidence of decline throughout its range, but particularly in Southeast Asia. Historical information shows *Cheilinus undulatus* was common in the 1950s and 1960s, and that declines have coincided with increased fishing activity.

To compound its problems, the species changes sex from female to male, which, if a fishery selects for larger fish, may make it even more vulnerable. Virtually all Humphead wrasse are born females and most change sex between 55 and 75 cm (approximately equivalent to ages of 9 and 20 years). Females do not develop into males if they have not done so after reaching 75 cm in length. The proportion of females that change sex in this size range is uncertain, but it is suspected that many fish stay female all their lives, given that the population is heavily female biased.



*Photo credit: Tim Nicholson*

In the Red Sea, where it is known as the Napoleon Wrasse, numbers dropped considerably due to divers feeding them boiled eggs. These are thought to have caused the fish health problems. This practice has now ceased and the fish are increasing in numbers. In some places, such as St John's Reef, the resident fish is very curious and will come right up to divers.

Class: Actinopterygii > Order: Perciformes > Family: Labridae

By Jill Studholme

### References and Further Reading:

[Coral Reef Guide Red Sea Reef](#), Ewald Lieske and Robert Myers  
[Eye of the Shoal](#), Helen Scales

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### Diving News From Around the World

Our round up of the best underwater news stories of the past month. For breaking news see our [Twitter page](#) or [RSS feed](#)



### **47 Percent More Diver Permits for Sipadan Island**

The number of divers allowed a day at Sipadan is to increase from 120 to 176, but the total number of dives in a year to stay the same. Protecting the dive sites but allowing more people to visit.



### **3 Pay, 1 Goes Free on Scuba Liveboards**

Book 3 spaces on a liveaboard trip and get +1 space FREE of charge. Book now until 30th November 2019 and travel in 2020. Applies across the Indo-Pacific.



### **One whale is worth thousands of trees**

A strategy to protect whales can limit greenhouse gases and global warming



### **Divers cull starfish in Spain**

Galicia's shellfish farmers say that an unusually large population of starfish has begun devouring their crop of mussels, cockles and clams. They recently obtained permission from the regional government to cull the starfish, and divers have been hauling up hundreds of kilos a day.



### **Can we stop, or even reverse, climate change?**

It would not be an overstatement to say that climate change is the greatest crisis facing the human race.



### **Dolphins in Channel carry toxic cocktail of chemicals**

High levels of mercury and banned industrial fluids, found in blubber and skin, can impact reproduction



### **Poor to Very Poor: Great Barrier Reef at risk**

The region has further deteriorated and, in 2019, Australia is caring for a changed and less resilient reef.



### **Ocean Art Underwater Photography Competition now Open**

Ocean Art is one of the most prestigious underwater photo competitions in the world. A



long list of prizes valued at over 80,000 USD also makes it one of the best endowed, attracting amateur to pro photographers across the globe. Sixteen categories ensure all photo disciplines and cameras compete fairly.

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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