

SCUBA News

SCUBA News (ISSN 1476-8011)

Issue 243 - September 2020

<https://www.scubatravel.co.uk>

Hi - welcome to SCUBA News. This month we have a guest article by Joanne Swann about how her dive company is crowdfunding to continue its work clearing the seas of plastic - please contribute if you can. Plus, don't forget you can now get [travel insurance which includes COVID-19 cover](#). You can mix and match this with [specialist diving insurance](#) to get the best protection for your trip.

Contents:

[What's new at SCUBA Travel?](#)

[Your Letters](#)

[Saving marine life during Covid-19](#)

[Diving news from around the World](#)

[Download as a pdf file](#)



What's New at SCUBA Travel?

Reasons for Diving the Red Sea



The Red Sea has some of the best diving in the world. With over 1000 species of fish and 150 species of coral, it is rich in life. As the Red Sea has few storms, her corals are intricate and beautiful

[READ MORE...](#)



Cuba Scuba

Cuba has re-opened diving resorts to tourists. Discover one of the most intact marine ecosystems in the region.

[LEARN MORE...](#)

Letters

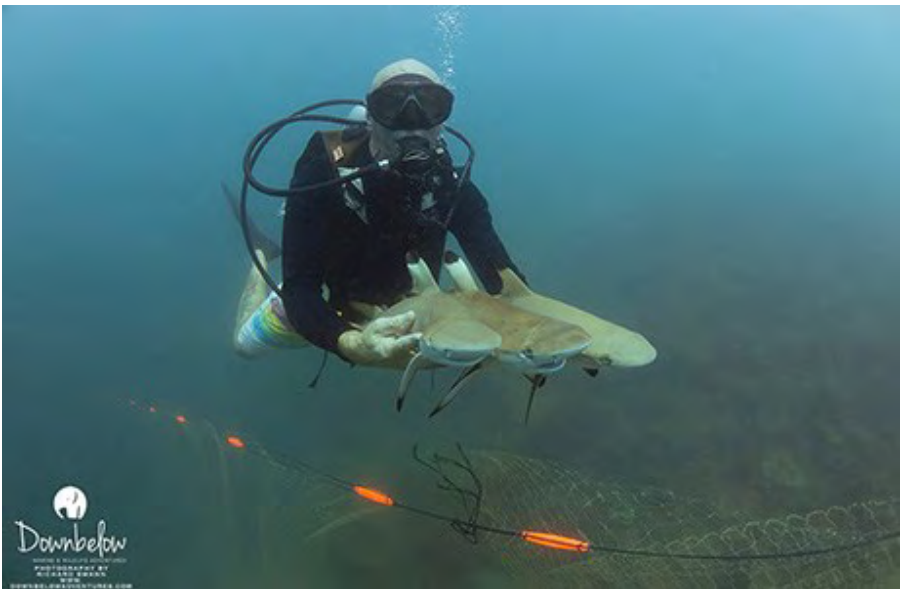
Hi I am a BSAC Dive Leader and according to the (SCUBA Travel) [equivalency](#) table I should be able to apply for the CMAS 3 Star. Although after applying BSAC has replied that they would only give me the CMAS 2 Star. Could you please clarify this.

Anthony Yusifredo

BSAC Dive Leader used to be equivalent to CMAS 2 Star, but according to their [equivalency chart](#) is now equivalent to CMAS 3 Star. I've previously checked this with the BSAC Diving Support Advisor, Geoff Bacon, who confirmed that this was the case. I can send you the correspondence if it helps. Please let us know what happens.

Saving Marine Life during COVID-19

Back to work with conservation



Since 2004, Downbelow Marine & Wildlife Adventures in Malaysian Borneo have been fighting the ever growing problem of ocean trash through beach cleanups and underwater gill net removals. They've saved thousands of marine lives that would have otherwise perished.

3

Tons of Ocean Trash Collected

400

Abandoned Gill Nets Collected

COVID-19 threatened to de-rail their efforts.

The pandemic bought worldwide travel to its knees. Malaysian borders were closed and will remain closed until 2021. Currently the dive centre operates with only local divers, at weekends and one or two extra days of the week.

Not being out diving everyday with several boats of divers means we are not finding the gill nets quickly enough and can't conduct non-profit charitable work to the same degree as pre-covid.



Photo credit: Richard Swann

To tackle the problem we've launched a fundraising initiative to save marine life, clean up ocean trash and help get local people in Malaysia back to work. The concept is a win/win for the environment and the community.

The objective of [the appeal](#) is to raise enough funds to complete several projects over the next few months.

Who will benefit from this project?

Marine life such as turtles, sharks, coral reef fish and crustaceans. A rogue fishing net, colloquially termed 'ghost nets' because it continually fishes even after being discarded, can be up to 100m long and 30m wide. Whilst they are left on the reef unsuspecting marine life get snagged in them, they struggle for their freedom and often larger fish will feel the vibrations of an injured creature and become snagged themselves and the devastation continues. Everything from crabs, clown fish, snappers, turtles and sharks entangle in the net, often still alive and waiting to be saved.



Photo credit: Richard Swann

Twenty five workers and their families, plus their extended families

will benefit. Local families usually have one main income earner with many generations of families living in the same house hold. There has been some government support during covid-19 but people are already struggling. Raising money for these conservation projects means the local team have work on the conservation days which will help substitute the loss of full time income.



Photo credit: Richard Swann

Beaches, mangroves & coral reefs will also benefit. Beach clean ups are a routine job for the island team. Sadly ocean trash is an increasing problem world-wide, the plastic tide is seen daily. More than eight million tonnes of plastic is thrown away each year and washed out to sea. It takes centuries to break down. It's eaten by marine creatures and it's in our food chain. Scientists can't say how dangerous plastic is to human health, but it's clear the effect on wildlife is devastating. Fish, whales, dolphins... hundreds of species have eaten plastic.





Photo credit: Richard Swann

Prior to COVID-19, we conducted regular 'Beach & Underwater Cleanups', inviting the local community to take part the conservation days were educational encouraging people to become 'Ocean Hero's' and torchbearers by reducing their own waste products.



Photo Credit: Richard Swann

How are the funds being used?

Historically the team conducted one Ghost Net Search & Recovery and one Beach & Underwater Clean Up per week at an approximate cost of MYR 5,150.00 (GBP 1,050.00) per week. So far the appeal has raised enough money to complete two projects which is fantastic and both projects have been uploaded to the companies [youtube channel](#). I have also set up a [fundraising page](#) which is regularly updated.





Photo credit: Richard Swann

What's great about this fundraiser is supporters can be virtually involved and see for themselves the project being completed. Every project is documented and supporters can share the results of their support on their own social media. Companies can support an entire project as part of their own CSR commitment.

To get the latest news on the project status and to **donate please visit the [Back To Work With Conservation' GoFundMe page.](#)**

[View Fundraiser](#)

[Downbelow Marine & Wildlife Adventures S/B](#) is a PADI 5 Star IDC Career Development Centre & Travel Company based in Sabah, Borneo.

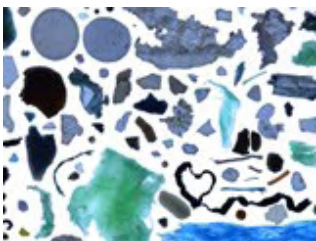
Diving News From Around the World

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



[Ocean Art 2020 underwater photography competition now open](#)

From now to 30 November 2020 you can submit your images to the prestigious Ocean Art competition. Prizes worth \$40,000 are on offer to amateur and professional photographers.



[Scientists sound alarm on plastic pollution](#)

A new study shows that despite global commitments to address plastic pollution, growth in plastic waste, or 'plastics emissions' continues to outpace reduction. What's more, the study shows that even if governments around the world adhere to their ambitious commitments to curb plastic pollution, annual plastic emissions may increase more than six-fold by 2030.



[Cuvier's beaked whale breaks record with 3 hour 42 minute dive](#)

Deploying 23 tags over a 5-year period, the team recorded more than 3600 foraging dives, ranging



from 33 min to 2 h 13 min, all of which were well in excess of the point when diving Cuvier's beaked whales were thought to run out of oxygen.



Welsh seagrass meadow sows hope for global restoration

Project to revive climate-boosting wonder plant in Pembrokeshire could spur similar schemes



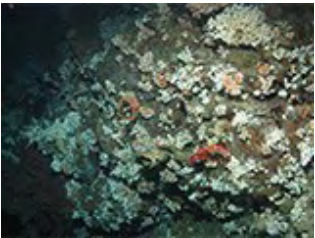
Loggerhead turtles record a passing hurricane

Most of the turtles moved northward during the hurricane, aligning themselves with the surface currents -- perhaps to conserve energy. Researchers observed longer dive durations after the hurricane for turtles that stayed in their pre-storm foraging areas. Some dives lasted an hour or more, compared with less than 30 minutes for a typical dive before the storm.



Israel fish deaths linked to rapid warming of seas

Bacterial infection alongside speed of temperature rise may have triggered mortality, suggests study



Ocean acidification risks deep-sea reef collapse

Deep-sea coral reefs face challenges as changes to ocean chemistry triggered by climate change may cause their foundations to become brittle, a study suggests.



World fails to meet a single target to stop destruction of nature - UN report

'Humanity at a crossroads' after a decade in which all of the 2010 Aichi goals to protect wildlife and ecosystems have been missed

SCUBA News is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Unported License. This means we are happy for you to reuse our material for both commercial and non-commercial use as long as you: credit the name of the author, link back to the SCUBA Travel website and say if you have made any changes. Some of the photos though, might be copyright the photographer. If in doubt please get in touch.

Previous editions of SCUBA News are archived at <https://www.scubatravel.co.uk/news.html>

UNSUBSCRIBING

Vsıt %%unsubscribelink%% to remove yourself from the mailing list. Any problems contact news@scubatravel.co.uk.

ADVERTISING

Should you wish to advertise in SCUBA News, please see the special offers at

<https://www.scubatravel.co.uk/newsad.html>

Other advertising opportunities are at

<https://www.scubatravel.co.uk/advertising.html>

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, 5 Loxford Court, Hulme, Manchester, M15 6AF, UK