

SCUBA News

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Welcome to SCUBA News - thank you for subscribing. This month we review Secret Seas - a beautiful book about Oman's unique marine world.

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What's New at SCUBA Travel?



Diffent Diving in Dominica

Dive sites where hot water bubbles up from the sea floor and where the Caribbean meets the Atlantic.

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Madeira Magic

320 Miles west of Morocco, lies the archipelago of Madeira. Offering excellent diving plus year-round whale watching.

[LEARN MORE...](#)

Book Shelf: Secret Seas - Discover Oman's unique underwater world



Secret Seas

by Paul Flandinette and Michel Claereboudt

July 2021

ISBN: 978-99969-849-0-7



240 pages, £36.85

Secret Seas is a beautiful book which not only has gorgeous pictures but is awash with information on Oman, its seas and underwater life. Even the most experienced divers will learn from this book and all will be enchanted by the

superb photography.



Whale shark in blue water

As the authors explain, the diving in Oman is truly unique. Nowhere else do you have kelp forests and coral gardens co-existing in the same spot. The seasonal coldwater upwellings in the south of Oman bring nutrients and ideal conditions for temperate giant seaweeds. By the end of August diving here would resemble diving in the UK or Norway, if it wasn't for the presence of tropical fish and coral communities - many, like the Dhofar parrotfish, only found here. By the end of September though, the sea temperature rises and the algae start to disappear, once more revealing a tropical coral reef.



Omani clownfish on carpet anemone, amongst the growing seaweed

Oman is home to over 1600 species of fish and almost 200 species of coral. Four out of seven species of turtle nest here. The upwellings have led

to many endemic species - which are found nowhere else in the world.

The book opens with a discussion of Oman and its history. It quickly progresses to the diving in the different parts of the country and in its different seas - the Arabian Gulf, the Sea of Oman and the Arabian Sea. Whereas the early sections contain much detail, from now on the fabulous photos take centre stage. These are annotated with fascinating bite-size details of behaviour or peculiarities. Each section of the book now focuses on one aspect of the underwater world, such as The Reef, Nudibranchs, Sharks and Rays, Cephalopods, Blue Water, Under the Rainbow and Threats to the Oceans.



The teira batfish (Platax teira) is often seen in schools, swimming near the surface above sunken reefs or pinnacles.

The reef section for example features stunning close ups of soft corals. Colours are shown both well lit by the photographer's flash and sometimes also as they would be originally seen in natural light by a diver. Some of the photos are of species not yet described by scientists.





This colonial sea anemone is a parasite of whip corals.

Co-author Paul Flandinette has been an underwater photographer for about 20 years and has wanted to produce a professional quality underwater photographic book for as long as he can remember. In 2014 he received an underwater photography commission from Oman's Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth (as it was then known). Spread over six months this project gave him a detailed insight into the beauty and biodiversity of Oman's underwater world. Paul says *"It didn't take me long to learn there was no photographic book on Oman's underwater world. It's rare to find any project that's never been done before so, always up for a challenge, I began this journey which was to last over 7 years."*

He continued *"For my co-author Michel and me it's not just about creating a beautiful and informative book. We hope that being part of the effort to promote Oman's underwater world Secret Seas will help increase awareness of the need to conserve and protect this very special marine environment."*



*The gulf blenny, *Ecsenius pulcher*, is not easy to spot when it hides within small holes in the corals. This species is endemic to the region and can reach ten centimetres*

This really is a beautiful book. Absolutely essential if you plan to dive in Oman, but also really interesting and informative for any diver, regardless of their location. During a time whilst many of us cannot travel to dive, an inspiring book which helps us better understand the underwater world. This book is good both for experienced divers with a deep knowledge of marine

life, and people just at the start of their diving adventure. Highly recommended.



The lemon shark (Negaprion brevirostris) can grow up to three metres. They are found in shallow tropical waters and are known to return to specific nursery sites to breed

A hardcover book with 240 pages, the authors include 195 photographs and cover 160 species. Measuring 24 cm by 30 cm, it has been printed on 170gsm matt art paper using sustainably sourced papers. Secret Seas is available from the author - Paul Flandinette. It costs £36.85.

Ordering

To order *Secret Seas* contact Paul Flandinette - secretseasofoman@gmail.com, +968 9138 2281. The book costs £36.85. Postage is £6.50 to the UK, £16.95 to the rest of Europe and £31.95 to the rest of the world.

For more photos from the book see our news site - news.scubatravel.co.uk

Featured Liveboard - Oman Brown Dhow

6 cabins for 10 divers: visit uncrowded reefs in traditional boat



With two single cabins, ideal for people travelling on their own.

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](#)



Controversy over the MSC fish ecolabel

Is the MSC, the world's biggest sustainable fisheries certification scheme, still fit for purpose?



Ancient Greek Shipwreck is now an Underwater Museum

A 2000-year-old Greek shipwreck will open to divers next month as an underwater museum



Philippines banks on new fisheries management system, but rollout is rocky

The Philippines introduced a new fisheries management framework to curb illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in 2019, but the program has seen drastic delays in its implementation



High-impact wildlife projects aim to restore habitats

Funding for offshore kelp forest, seagrass pastures, expanding salt marshes and wetlands among other schemes will help address climate crisis



Turkey now home to worst invasive fish species

Official figures point to trouble for Turkey's diverse ecosystems, with more invasive fish species now calling the country home. Fourteen species were among the world's worst.



>No northern escape route for Florida's coral reefs

Research shows climate change will suppress reef growth from north and south of Florida



AI spots shipwrecks from the ocean surface - and even from the air



A computer can recognise shipwrecks on the ocean floor from scans taken by aircraft and ships on the surface.



Targeted removals and monitoring can help manage lionfish in Mediterranean

Targeted removals can be effective in suppressing the number of invasive lionfish found within protected coastlines around the Mediterranean Sea. However, if they are to really be successful they need to be combined with better long-term monitoring by communities and conservationists to ensure their timing and location achieve the best results.

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