SCUBA News

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Welcome to SCUBA News. We're here to give you ideas on your next diving trip, and share our enthusiasm for underwater life. Where is the best place you've dived recently? Let us know at news@scubatravel.co.uk, we look forward to hearing from you.

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What's new at SCUBA Travel?
Creature of the Month: the rare Splendid Toadfish
8 World Class Liveaboard Deals: Save up to 40%!
Diving news from around the World

You can download this SCUBA News issue as a pdf.

What's New at SCUBA Travel?

Tantalising Timor-Leste

The coral triangle's youngest nation, and still with limited tourism, an uncrowded diving paradise.

READ MORE...

Top 5 Places to Swim with Manta Rays in the Maldives

The Maldives offers some incredible diving and for scuba divers and snorkellers alike, it is one of the best places on Earth to swim with manta rays.

LEARN WHERE...

Cozumel's Top 6 Dives

Cozumel boasts world-class drift dives, stunning coral formations and diverse

marine life. Discover her best dive sites.

TOP 6 DIVES…

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8 Fantastic Liveaboard Deals - Save up to 50%

More great liveaboard diving deals, to some of the best diving destinations in the world, specially selected for us by Divebooker.com, the liveaboard specialists.

1. Discovery I (Amelia), Brothers, Daedalus, Elphinstone, **SAVE 40%** on some of the best diving in the Red Sea. **Price from just GBP 568**.

More Info or Book

2. **Nautilus Under Sea, Socorro or Sea of Cortez**, both world-class diving destinations. **SAVE 25%**. Price from USD 2171.

More Info or Book

3. **Galaxy Diver II, Galapagos Islands**,, November 2024. The iconic Galapagos needs no introduction and you can **SAVE 38%**. Price from USD ~~**6765**~~ $4200.

More Info or Book

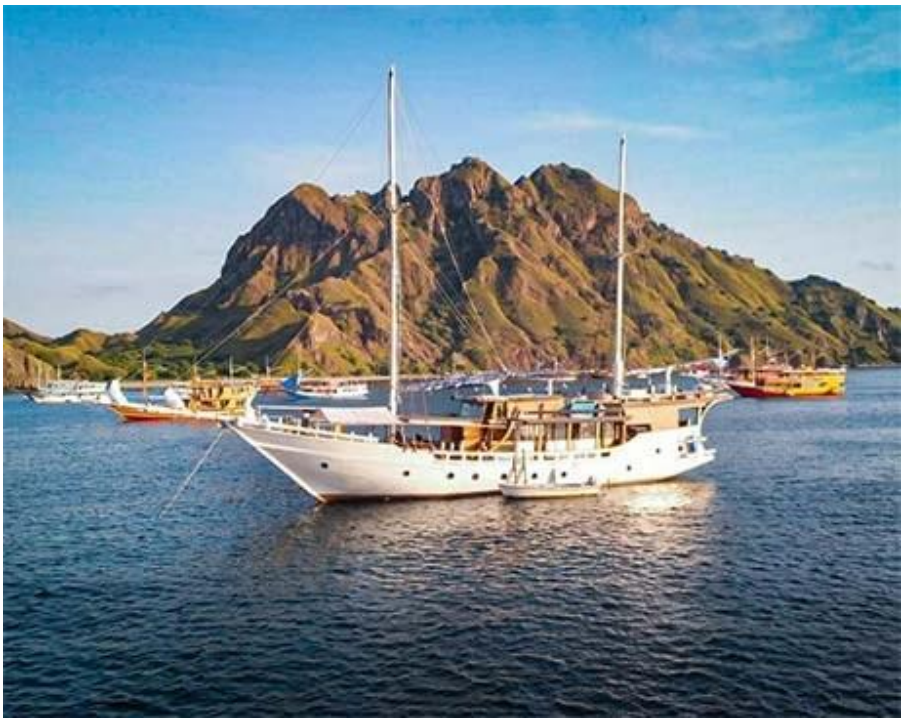
4. **White Pearl, Best of Central Atolls of the Maldives**: October. Book now and save **10%**

More Info or Book

5. **Palau Siren, Palau**, SAVE 20% in October 2024 and March 2025

More Info or Book

6. **Teman, Alor - Ambon,**. 28 Sep - 10 Oct 2024 (12 nights). Price from **$ ~~5,960~~** $4,768 per trip per person, **SAVE 20%**. Plus, as well as being a most attractive boat, it takes just 12 divers.



More Info or Book

7. **La Galigo, Raja Ampat, Indonesia**,, SAVE UP TO 25% in December to one of the best diving areas in the world.

More Info or Book

8. **EcoPro Mariana, Maldives**. **SAVE 30%** on trips of 11 nights in October and November. Price from **~~$2498~~** $1748 per trip per person. Accommodates just 16 divers for less busy dives.

More Info or Book

Creature of the month: the rare Splendid Toadfish

Toadfish are found on the sand and mud bottoms of coastal waters worldwide. They usually have broad heads and drab colours, and look something like toads. The Splendid Toadfish, though, is different.

Photo by Anita Floyd, on Cozumel
Taken in Cozumel with a Sea and Sea DX3000, using a YS-90 slave strobe.
A diver coaxed this toadfish out from its den, and it swam approximately 100 yards before finally finding a suitable coral head to duck under.

As you can see, the Splendid Toadfish is attractively patterned in purple. Most of its fins are edged in yellow with the pelvic fin being entirely yellow. Its yellow mouth completes its livery.

Swimming splendid toadfish. Anita Floyd

Also known as the Coral Toadfish, *Sanopus splendidus* generally lives on sand under crevices or coral heads in clear water, from 10 to 25 m. It hunts at night, preying on small fishes, snails and polychaete worms.

The Splendid Toadfish was thought to be only found in Cozumel (Mexico) but sightings have also been reported in Belize at Glovers Reef and further north of Cozumel at Costa Occidental de Isla Mujeres. However, it is not widespread and is now classified as endangered by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

In the past Cozumel suffered from increasing tourism and the building of a cruise ship dock in 1994. The island now takes much better care of its reefs, closing them periodically and operating a coral restoration program since 2017. Shockingly between 1984 and 2011, there was a 13% decline in live coral cover off Cozumel and an average 41% decline off Belize between 1970 and 2012.

Coral reef in Cozumel. Sergemi/DepositPhotos

Acoustic communication is critical to toadfish reproductive success, they make a buzzing sound that even divers can hear, but noise from cruise ships is thought to mask this as it is in the same bandwidth. Yet another problem for these unusual fish.

Have you been lucky enough to see one. Let us know.

Taxonomy

Phylum: Chordata > Class: Actinopterygii > Order: Batrachoidiformes > Family: Batrachoidinae > Genus: Sanopus > Species: *Sanopus splendidus*

References

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Moreno-Mendoza, R., Barrientos-Medina, R., (2019). Range extension of Sanopus splendidus (Actinopterygii: Batrachoidiformes: Batrachoididae) in

the Caribbean Sea

Pyc, CD. et al, (2021). Vocal behavior of the endangered splendid toadfish and potential masking by anthropogenic noise.

Diving news from around the World

Five divers rescued in Malta

Five divers were rescued by the Armed Forces of Malta and the Civil Protection Department after finding themselves in difficulty off Wied iz-Zurrieq

Maldives drops plan to reopen longline tuna fishing following protests

The decision came after local fishers, conservation NGOs and scientists protested against plans to reopen longline fisheries for yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna. Longline fishing has been banned in the Maldives since 2019.

Sharks leap out of the water more often than you might think

This breaching is thought to have functions related to courtship, birthing and hygiene

I fire darts at whales to help track their movements

Yakamoz Kizildas collects the DNA of humpback whales to learn about their behaviour in the North Atlantic ocean.

Northern elephant seals likely used sonar dinner bell to find food

When eight young northern elephant seals suddenly began showing up at a deep-sea observatory, researchers were taken by surprise. Their repeated visits to the research site, otherwise a speck in the vast, dark ocean, wasn't a chance occurrence, a study reveals.

Do Marine Animals Need Wildlife Bridges Too?

Human infrastructure can hinder the

mobility of marine animals.

Where does your salmon come from? Fish farm escape highlights questions for consumers

The differences between farmed, organically farmed and wild salmon may be unclear to shoppers.

NSW urged to remove 51 shark nets after hundreds of dolphins and turtles caught last summer

Advocates against nets say sharks can easily swim underneath them and drone surveillance is more effective

Rain or shine? How rainfall impacts size of sea turtle hatchlings

Research shows that both air and sand temperatures crucially impact sea turtle hatchlings. Wetter weather produce larger, heavier hatchlings with more males, while warmer temperatures accelerate hatching and offer predator protection

Sharks are abandoning stressed coral reefs in warming oceans

Scientists have discovered that grey reef sharks are the deserting coral reefs they call home at times of environmental stress, such as high temperatures that can lead to coral bleaching events.

Which tea bags are free of plastic?

And which can be home composted? Most which **claim to be compostable can't actually be put in the garden compost bin**! Find out which can.

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