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SCUBA News (ISSN 1476-8011)  
Issue 150 - December 2012  
<http://www.scubatravel.co.uk>  
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I hope you enjoy the December issue, and if you celebrate Christmas I hope you have a happy and peaceful one. In this issue we've our 2012 bestsellers list and the amazing air-breathing goby.

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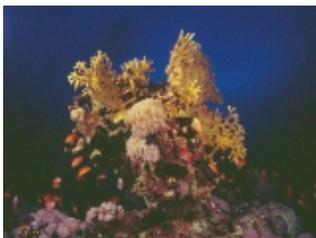
SCUBA News is published by SCUBA Travel Ltd.

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## What's New at SCUBA Travel?



### **Diving Madagascar**

Madagascar, the world's fourth largest island, hosts one of the world's largest continuous coral reefs. The country is famous for its unique land animals, but her seas are also full of life not found anywhere else.

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



### **Diving Malta**

More on the excellent diving in Malta now up at

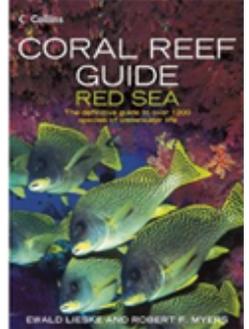
<http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/europe/malta-dive-in.html>

For regular announcements of what's new at the SCUBA Travel site see our [Twitter feed](#) and our [Facebook page](#).

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## Best Selling SCUBA Books of 2012

We're pleased to release our list of the best selling diving books in 2012. It comprises a mixture of books featuring the best dives from around the world, sea life guides and dive guides to particular places. No books published this year have made it into the top ten though: all were either listed last year or are a re-entry from a previous year.



Here are the top ten: figures in brackets show the previous year's position.

1. **[Fifty Places to Dive Before You Die: Diving Experts Share the World's Greatest Destinations](#)** by Chris Santella  
The fifth in Santella's bestselling "Fifty Places" series. (1)
2. **[Coral Reef Guide Red Sea \(Coral Reef\)](#)** by Ewald Lieske, Robert Myers  
Excellent guide to the fish and invertebrates of the Red Sea. (4)
3. **[Coral Reef Fishes: Indo-Pacific and Caribbean](#)** by Ewald Lieske, Robert Myers  
Another from Lieske and Myers, this goes on all my tropical diving holidays. (5)
4. **[Ultimate Diving Adventures: 100 Extraordinary Experiences Under Water](#)**  
Classic dives and secret spots: the authors' favourite 100 dive spots. (3)
5. **[Diving the World](#)** by Beth and Shaud Tierney  
Some 200 tropical sites have been selected, reviewed and photographed by experienced husband-and-wife team, Beth and Shaun Tierney. (--)
6. **[Red Sea Sharks](#)** by Jeremy Stafford-Deitsch  
Photographic guide to sharks of the Red Sea. (10)
7. **[Shipwrecks from the Egyptian Red Sea](#)** by Ned Middleton  
Eight years of research went into this accurate and definitive guide to the wrecks of the Egyptian Red Sea. (8)
8. **[Dive Atlas of the World: An Illustrated Reference to the Best Sites](#)** by Jack Jackson  
300 pages detailing some of the world's best dive sites. (2)
9. **[Thailand \(Lonely Planet Diving & Snorkeling Guides\)](#)** by Tim Rock  
Dive sites of Thailand. Includes city guide to Bangkok. (9)
10. **[Dive Thailand](#)** by Paul Lees  
A great guide to diving Thailand. My copy is about 20 years old, but this is the updated version from 2009.(7)

For [diving book reviews](#), and [interviews with authors](#), visit the SCUBA Travel site.

## Creature of the Month: Broad Barred Goby, the Coral Defender



Corals under attack by toxic seaweed do what anyone might when threatened: they call for help. And the fish that rushes to their aid is the Broad Barred Goby.

The Broad Barred Goby, or *Gobiodon histrio*, is just 3.5 cm long. You find it amongst the branches of coral, from the Red Sea to Samoa in the east, north to Japan and south to the Great Barrier Reef. These fish act as "bodyguards" to their coral homes. When noxious seaweed touches the corals, the polyps send out chemical signals. The gobies quickly respond

to these signals by munching the destructive algae. If the seaweed were not removed it would seriously damage the coral

Eating the toxic seaweed makes the gobies less palatable to their enemies and protects them from parasite. Spending their lives within the crevices of specific acropora corals also affords protection to the gobies from predators.

Each coral colony is occupied by a just a single breeding pair of gobies, which live down to 11 m. Some are so shallow that at extreme low tides they may be exposed to the atmosphere. To cope with this they have developed the capability to breathe air! They appear to have done this by losing their scales and producing a network of subcutaneous blood vessels, letting them breathe through their skin.

Another problem with which they have to cope is the possibility of dramatic falls in the oxygen levels among the branches of their coral home at night. This amazing little fish has adapted to this as well and has a high tolerance of low oxygen levels, down to as little as 3%.

Next time you see a clump of shallow acropora coral, look closely and see if you can see this air-breathing, toxic-skinned, coral-defender of a fish.

**Further Reading:** [Corals call for fish aid when attacked by Seaweed](#)

[Coral Reef Fishes, Indo-Pacific and Caribbean](#), Ewald Lieske and Robert Myers, 2001  
[Ocean Biogeographic Information System \(OBIS\)](#)

[Skin toxins and external parasitism of coral-dwelling gobies](#), P L Munday, M Schubert, J A Baggio, G P Jones, M J Caley, A S Grutter *Journal of Fish Biology* Volume 62, Issue 4, pages 976-981

[Hypoxia tolerance and air-breathing ability correlate with habitat preference in coral-dwelling fishes](#), G E Nilsson, J-P A Hobbs, S Ostlund-Nilsson, P L Munday *Coral Reefs* June 2007, Volume 26, Issue 2, pages 241-248

## Diving News From Around the World

You can display this news, in real-time, on your web site - for more details see <http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/newsfeed.html> or grab <http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/scuba.xml>



### **High Pressure Scuba Diving Hoses Recalled**

Scuba Concepts, Trident Diving and A-Plus Marine recall high pressure scuba diving air hoses due to drowning hazard: around 1900 Innovative Scuba Concepts hoses, about 480 Trident Diving Equipment hoses and about 210 A-Plus Marine hoses.

### **Fisheries ministers following scientific advice only 1 out of 10 times**

An analysis launched today by WWF shows that over the past nine years fisheries ministers have only followed scientific advice in 13 per cent of their decisions; and set fishing quotas on average 45 per cent higher than the recommended scientific advice.

### **Animals are already dissolving in Southern Ocean acid**

In a small patch of the Southern Ocean, the shells of sea snails are dissolving as a result of ocean acidification.

### **Pacific Fishing Zones to Improve Fish Stocks**

Marine zoning in the Pacific Ocean, in combination with other measures, could significantly improve numbers of heavily overfished bigeye tuna and improve local economies, a fish modelling study has found.



### **Divers find Second Shipwreck**

A group of amateur treasure-hunters who discovered the remains of an 18th century Dutch merchant vessel lost off the Devon coast during a violent storm in 1721, have uncovered a second wreck - on the same spot.

### **Wave powered robot completes 9000 mile journey**

An autonomous wave-powered robot has completed a 9000-nautical-mile journey across the Pacific Ocean. It navigated along a prescribed route under autonomous control, collecting and transmitting high-resolution ocean data.

### **Mercury releases contaminate ocean fish**

Mercury released into the air - as a result of activities such as coal burning, misuses and

other industrial processes - is deposited into the oceans and contaminates seafood that is eaten by people across the globe.

### **Doha summit launches climate damage aid**

The latest summit to stop climate change, held in Doha, Qatar, over the past two weeks has been roundly slammed. Little was agreed to curb greenhouse gas emissions and the latest modelling, carried out by the Climate Action Tracker consortium shows global averages temperatures are still set to rise by at least 3 oC above pre-industrial levels. There was one breakthrough: developing countries won a promise from developed ones that they would compensate them for losses and damage caused by climate change.



### **MSC Certifies Maldives Tuna Fishery Sustainable**

Marine Stewardship Council awards the Maldives' pole-and-line skipjack tuna fishery its sustainability certification. x

### **Fiji achieves her first certified sustainable tuna fishery**

Fiji achieves first sustainable tuna fishing award, the fourth country in the South Pacific to do so.

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