

SCUBA News

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

Welcome to SCUBA News.

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You can download this SCUBA News issue as a pdf.



What's New at SCUBA Travel?



Pristine Papua New Guinea

With waters jam-packed full of fish, the diving in PNG is spectacular.

[LEARN MORE...](#)



Where in the world are the best wreck dives?

We've updated the list of ten best shipwreck dives on the planet, as voted for by our readers. How many have you dived?

[SEE WHERE...](#)



For something different, dive Norway

Escape the crowds and experience the strongest tidal current in the world for a wild drift dive, explore Norway's many wrecks or snorkel with killer whales.

Letters

Health and Safety Executive Scuba Qualification

G'day

A letter in edition #274 asked about HSE media diving or tv and films as they put it

They can find details of what is [accepted in UK here](#) page 20 onwards specifically for media diving HSE

But it will depend on what country they are working in as to what qualification (s) required

Otherwise keep up the good work

I do a fair bit of advising and where I work the researchers work globally

Kind regards,

Starry

WHS Specialist, Diving and Boating Safety Officer

Thanks for the info Starry!

10 Last Minute Liveaboard Deals - Save up to USD2000!

There was dreadful news of a fatal fire on a Red Sea liveaboard this month. The liveaboard was chartered by a company trading as Scuba Travel owned by Tony Backhurst Scuba Ltd. We'd like to reassure you that this company is nothing to do with us: we are Scuba Travel Ltd. Any questions please get in touch.

1. [Dolce Vita, Egypt, St. John's](#), 15 - 22 July and 12 - 19 Aug 2023 (7 nights), SPECIAL PRICE from EUR 1,187 per trip per person
2. [Nautilus Two, Maldives, Central Atolls](#), 14 - 24 July 2023 (10 nights), 02 - 11 Aug 2023 (9 nights), SAVE 10%, Price from EUR 1,928 per trip per person



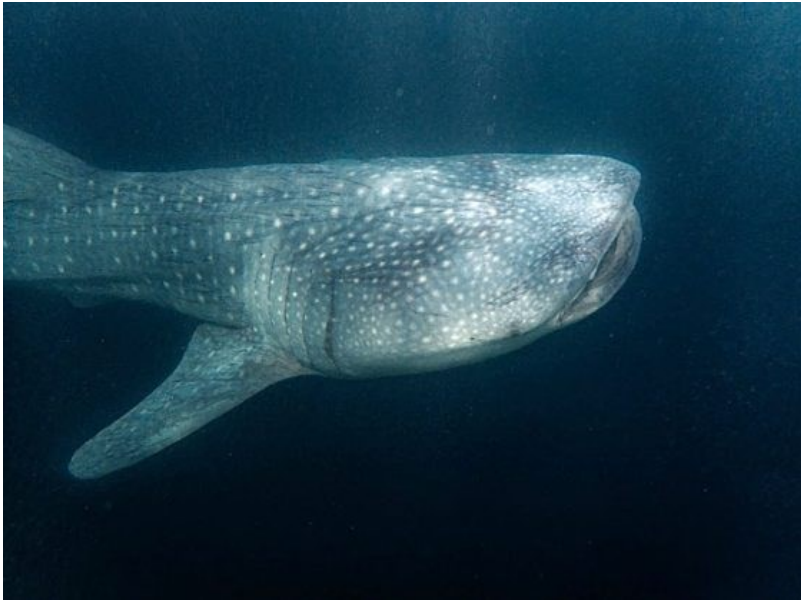
3. [Black Pearl, Indonesia, Palau Spawning Special - New Moon](#), 12 - 19 Jul 2023 (7 nights), SAVE USD 300 per person, Price from USD 3,165 per trip per person
4. [Aqua Cat, Bahamas\(Tiger Beach\)](#), SAVE Weeklong Cruise, 16 - 23 Dec 2023 (7 nights), SAVE USD 500 per person, Price from USD 2,695 per trip per person
5. [BVI Aggressor \(Cayman Aggressor V\), British Virgin Islands](#), Best of the BVI, 05 - 12 Aug and 12 - 19 Aug 2023 (7 nights), SAVE USD 900 per person. [Nautilus Gallant Lady, Mexico, Orcas and Mobulas](#), 08 - 15 July 2023 (7 nights), SAVE USD 500 per person, Price from USD 3,500 per trip per person
6. [Nautilus Gallant Lady, Mexico, Orcas and Mobulas](#), 08 - 15 July 2023 (7 nights), SAVE USD 500 per person
7. [Calipso, Ecuador, Galapagos Islands](#), SAVE UP TO USD 2000 per person for selected trips in 2023 (7 nights) [Emperor Harmoni, Indonesia, Bali, Sumbawa & Komodo](#), 29 Jun - 08 Jul & 18 - 27 Sep 2023 (9 nights), SAVE UP TO 40%, Price from EUR 1,974 per trip per person
8. [Emperor Harmoni, Indonesia, Bali, Sumbawa & Komodo](#), SAVE UP TO USD 2000 per person for selected trips in 2023 (7 nights)
9. [Solomons Master, Solomon Islands, Guadalcanal and Western Province](#), 0 Oct - 09 Nov 2023 (10 nights), SAVE 30%, Price from USD 4,025 per trip per person
10. [Ghani, Egypt, Fury Shoals and Dolphins and St. John's Reef/a>](#), SAVE USD 250 per person for selected trips in 2023 (7 nights), *Offer valid for all confirmed new bookings until 16 July, 2023. Price from USD 756 per trip per person



Volunteering with Maldives Whaleshark Research Program: Diving with a Purpose

By Bill Mashek

Volunteering as a diver for any marine conservation project is an wonderful opportunity for passionate divers.



Whale shark, Rhincodon typus, by Bill Mashek

I spent 10 days on the MV Felicity Dive boat with an exceptional group of ocean lovers. We spent that time studying, surveying, taking photos, observing, and identifying whale sharks in South Ari Atoll Maldives with Maldives Whaleshark Research Program (MWSRP).

The Maldives Whale Shark Research Program is a research-based conservation charity dedicated to studying the whale shark and fostering community-focused conservation initiatives in the Maldives and the greater Indian Ocean. They offer a citizen science volunteer program which I signed up for.



Photo taken as part of the Maldives Whale Shark Research Program by Bill Mashek

To enter this program, volunteers must fill out an application and be accepted. MWSRP analyzes applications for interest in whale sharks, previous experience and/or training. Many of the folks who are volunteers have marine science backgrounds and everyone is passionate about whale sharks. Dive certifications are not necessary, experience in free diving is helpful.

First, this program is all free diving in South Ari Atoll area; one can choose to scuba dive during time off, usually 1 day-2 days, during your volunteer period. Whenever one dives with whale sharks it is best to free dive, bubbles from scuba tanks tend to stress the shark and cause him to dive deep. There are specific steps in approaching a whale shark, including avoiding physical contact with the shark. They are not tactile creatures, touching whales sharks may cause them to dive. The protocol at MSWRP is to keep a distance of 3-4 meters while observing. Never block a whale shark's path. This means avoid swimming directly in front of a whale shark as well as on top of one, which may prevent it surfacing. For the safety of both diver and whale shark, stay away from the tail fin area. A sudden movement may cause a severe injury if hit by a whale shark fin.



Photo: Bill Mashek

The Program

Working as a volunteer with MSWRP is an experience like no other. It is fun and interesting but it is still working. As a "citizen scientist", volunteers are instructed in and involved with research, data collection, and increasing knowledge of marine conservation. Volunteers spend long days on a boat watching for whale sharks. When one is located, it is an all-out rush of adrenaline. Everyone puts their fins on and swims to the shark to begin their survey.



Whaleshark. Photo: DepositPhotos

Every day is different, but a typical research day starts with Breakfast 7:30-8:30, Getting on the dive dhoni (smaller boat) and looking for sharks. Surveys are done in the South Ari Marine Protected Area (SAMPA).

Volunteers not only record whale shark sightings, but also include megafauna such as sea turtles, mantas, other rays and dolphins.



Manta Ray. DepositPhotos

In the evening we input our information into the MWSRP laptop computers, this data goes into a worldwide network studying the movement, behavior, and threats, to whale shark population.

We all work as a team, in that everyone usually has a role such as: observation, data collection and entry, identification by photographing the left and right flanks at the lateral fin. Whale sharks have a unique spot pattern and can be identified by them. Also photographing the tail fin as many whale sharks can be identified by damage to the fin. We record the wind direction, current movement, visibility, and water temperature. We note the whale shark behavior and the behavior of people around them.

Being part of a volunteer dive trip is not for everyone. This is not a scuba diving trip, there are not 4 dives per day then relaxing with cocktails in the evening. Volunteering is work, it is fun and interesting but still work. Unlike more expensive charters, there is no internet service. However, most volunteers bought local sim cards and used their phones as "hot spots" for their laptops. The Maldives is a Muslim country, alcohol is only served on resort owned islands and private liveaboards. Women should dress conservatively when on populated islands.

The ten days I spent on the MV Felicity with the other volunteers was an extraordinary experience for me. Our leaders, Chloe and Clara, were patient and kind mentors. I met many new friends. Being part of this cause brought together people from around the world with diverse backgrounds, all with a similar bond; the love of Sharks.





Volunteers on the Maldives Whale Shark Research Program

To become a volunteer, one does not need to be a scientist or marine biologist! MWSRP welcomes people of all ages, talents, and nationalities. If you love whale sharks and you are not afraid of hard work get in touch!

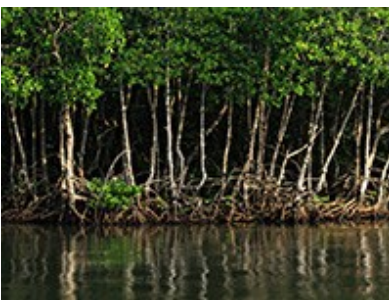
For the full story see <https://www.scubatravel.co.uk/>

Diving news from around the World



Remembering Dr. Roger Payne: A champion of whale conservation

In the late 1960s, Roger, along with first wife Katy Payne and Scott McVay, made the groundbreaking discovery that humpback whales sing songs.



How to lock away more carbon: give mangroves a little love

Restoring mangrove forests could lower acidity of seawater, allowing the water to absorb more carbon.



Marine reserves don't negatively impact the fishing industry

Five years after the creation of Mexico's Revillagigedo National Park, the largest fully protected marine area in North America, experts report no negative impacts on the Mexican fishing sector



Polar fish are less likely to die early, so they prioritize growth over reproduction



Polar fish experience lower mortality than tropical fish, allowing them to delay reproduction until later in life when they are larger and can produce more eggs, according to a new study



Indo-Pacific corals more resilient to climate change than Atlantic corals

Researchers expose flexibility that may boost long-term resilience to climate change



At sea as on land? Activists oppose industrial farming in U.S. waters

Aquaculture produces more than half of the world's seafood, mostly in inland and coastal waters. Industrial finfish aquaculture, such as salmon farming, accounts for just a fraction of that production, and comes with a host of negative environmental impacts.



Marine protected areas improve health, wealth of nearby communities

Protecting the ocean and providing livelihoods and food security do not have to be mutually exclusive.

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CONTACTING THE EDITOR

Please send your letters or press releases to:

Jill Studholme

SCUBA News

The Cliff

DE6 2HR

UK

news@scubatravel.co.uk