

SCUBA News

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Welcome to SCUBA News. I hope you find it useful. This month: diving Bali, Denmark, Costa Rica plus why fire coral stings. Any questions or comments to news@scubatravel.co.uk.

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What's new at SCUBA Travel?

Creature of the Month: Fire Coral, *Millipora*

7 World Class Liveaboard Deals: Save up to 50%!

Diving news from around the World

You can download this SCUBA News issue as a pdf.



What's New at SCUBA Travel?



Beautiful Bali

For manta rays and *Mola mola* - the oceanic sunfish is the largest bony fish in the sea and Bali is a brilliant place to see them.

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World class diving destination which is a great place to see pelagic species like marlin, sailfish and sharks.

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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. **EcoPro Seascape, Maldives Central Atolls**. 4 - 11 August 2024 (7 nights) Price from ~~\$2450~~ \$1225 per trip per person, **SAVE 50%**.



[More Info or Book](#)

2. **La Galigo, Komodo, Indonesia**, **SAVE UP TO 35%** on all August trips to one of the best diving areas in the world. Price from USD 1290 per trip per person.





[More Info or Book](#)

3. **Belize Aggressor IV**: September and December 2024 (7 nights). Visit the famous Lighthouse Reef, Half Moon Cay and Turneffe Reef. Book now and save **25%**



[More Info or Book](#)

4. **Aurora, Raja Ampat** 1-7 September 2024 (6 nights), SAVE 15%, Price from EUR 2,900 2,320 per trip per person



[More Info or Book](#)

5. **Blue (Fun Azul II), Vaavu Atoll, Maldives**, 22 - 29 March 2025 (7 nights), Book 2 get 3rd for free. Price from \$2298



[More Info or Book](#)

[More Info or Book](#)

- Okeanos Aggressor II**, Cocos Island, 17 - 29 August 2024 (12 nights), **SAVE \$2000**. The Cocos Islands, of Costa Rica, are 300 miles off the mainland and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This world class diving destination is a great place to see big pelagic species.



[More Info or Book](#)

- Seven Seas, South and St. Johns, Red Sea**. Stunning coral plus sharks, dolphins, turtles and large shoals of fish. From 31 October to 7 November 2024, **SAVE 10%**, Price from EUR 4700 1530 per trip per person



[More Info or Book](#)

Creature of the month: Fire Coral, Millepora





Fire coral and Xenia on Fury Shoals, Red Sea. Jill Studholme

Fire corals are so called because they sting, with powerful stinging hairs or cnidae. When something touches the coral, the coiled thread is ejected, penetrating the skin and injecting venom

The coral is primarily defending itself against fish like parrotfish which would otherwise nibble the fire coral. However, the sting is strong enough to injure divers and snorkellers who brush their skin against them, causing burning and itching. (If this happens rinse with seawater and apply vinegar or methylated alcohol on the affected area. In a severe case anti-histamines can help, but seek medical advice.)

Not true corals

Colonies of fire coral are extremely important in building coral reefs. However, they are not true corals. They are, in fact, hydroids. The word hydroid means water animals. Other hydroids often look like ferny fronds growing from rocks. The fire coral is different: it looks like a hard coral.



Coral reef with fire coral. Jonathan Milnes/Deposit Photos

How to identify them

Fire corals are yellowish to brown in colour, often with white tips. There are several species and different growth forms. Some look like plates, some are encrusting but maybe the most familiar is the branching form. You can identify them by the minute pores on the coral surface.





Anthias and fire coral. Deposit Photos

Divers come across fire corals on tropical reefs throughout the world, in sheltered and exposed sites, in shallow and deeper water down to 40 m. There are about 14 species in the *Millepora* genus.

Fire corals are often at the reef edge as they can withstand rough waters and currents.



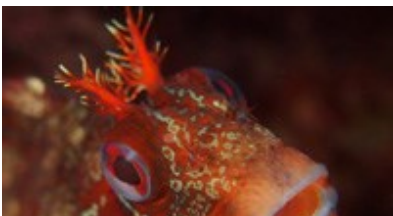
Leopard blenny in fire coral. Deposit Photos

Millepora tend to be oriented perpendicular to prevailing currents. This maximises their exposure to water flow allowing them to capture more food particles carried by the currents. It increases increases the surface area exposed to nutrient-rich waters. If fragments get broken during a storm they can regenerate. They are often the first to recover after short-term bleaching events.

Further Reading

John B. Lewis, *Biology and Ecology of the Hydrocoral Millepora on Coral Reefs*, *Advances in Marine Biology*, Academic Press, Vol 50 2006

Diving news from around the World



The most endangered fish are the most overlooked

Nearly 50% of the scientific publications on fishes are only concerned a subset of 1% of species. The most endangered fish are



the least studied



Philippine diving town trades plastic for rice to tackle ocean waste

Campaigners in Mabini have found a new way to make the issue of plastic pollution everybody's business, as they swap rice for waste in a drive to clean up the town's shores.



Mysterious origin of the blue spotted stingray spots revealed

The colours are produced by extremely small structures that manipulate light. Bright blue skin spots of stingrays do not change with viewing angle: they might have specific advantages in camouflage as the animal is swimming or quickly manoeuvring with undulating wings.



Ocean acidification turns fish off coral reefs

A new study of coral reefs in Papua New Guinea shows ocean acidification simplifies coral structure, making crucial habitat less appealing to certain fish species.



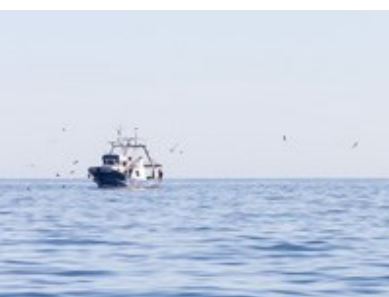
Hawaii fishermen and scientists team up tagging tuna

A veteran tuna researcher, Lutcavage is helping a team of fishermen and scientists in Hawaii to employ new tagging technology for yellowfin tuna.



Indonesia must integrate marine protection with fisheries subsidies, study says

Despite claiming exemption from the 2022 WTO agreement to halt harmful fisheries subsidies, Indonesia needs a strategy to support small-scale fisheries and ensure marine sustainability.



Expanding marine reserves will redistribute global fishing effort

Model predicts that fishing activity will decrease both within and adjacent to marine reserves.



New approach to restore coral reefs on mass scale kicks off in Hawaii

The project will identify individual corals with high thermal tolerance and other high-performance traits, then use them to breed genetically resilient coral larvae for release onto the reefs during natural spawning periods.



Another Red Sea liveaboard sinks

French liveaboard, Exocet, holes on coral reef in Sataya, south of Marsa Alam. Crew and divers all safe. Condition of reef being investigated.

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