

# SCUBA News

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Welcome to SCUBA News. Halloween is approaching and so our creature of the month is the spooky Batfish, which when young can do an amazing job of mimicing something else.

Any questions and comments to [news@scubatravel.co.uk](mailto:news@scubatravel.co.uk), I look forward to hearing from you.

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Creature of the Month: the spooky batfish

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?



### Where is the best diving in Tunisia?

Top of the list is the little-visited marine reserve at La Galite islands, which amongst other things is home to the rare Mediterranean Monk Seal.

[LEARN MORE...](#)



### Diving Palau v Raja Ampat: Which is Better?

When it comes to world-class dive destinations, Palau and Raja Ampat are two names that sit at the top of every diver's wish list. But which is the best?

[FIND OUT...](#)

[Top 10 eco-friendly diving practices](#)



Eco-friendly diving is more than just following a set of rules; it's a mindset to care for the ocean and its inhabitants. We can all improve with these tips.

[READ MORE...](#)

## 7 Fantastic Liveboard Deals - Save up to 52%

More great liveboard diving deals, to some of the best diving destinations in the world, specially selected for us by [Divebooker.com](#), the liveboard specialists.

1. **Tillis - visiting the Shark Triangle, Egypt, SAVE 30%, Price from GBP 576** per trip per person from November until February



[More Info or Book](#)

2. **Smiling Seahorse, Marine Biology Expedition** 15 Jan 2025 with marine scientist Gavin Miller. Dive on some of the most beautiful dive sites in Thailand. Throughout the trip, Gavin offers a series of lectures on environment protection plus animal behaviours and interactions.



[More Info or Book](#)

3. **Galaxy Diver II, Galapagos Islands,, 18 Dec 2024 (7 nights), **SAVE 52%**.** Price from USD ~~10148~~ \$4900 per trip per person. Plus, 35% off 2025 trips.



[More Info or Book](#)

4. **Palau Siren, Palau, SAVE 20% in May and August 2025**



[More Info or Book](#)

5. **La Galigo, Raja Ampat, Indonesia,, SAVE 10% in 2025 to one of the best diving areas in the world.**





[More Info or Book](#)

6. **Horizon 3, Maldives**, SAVE 30% in November and December



[More Info or Book](#)

7. **Discovery I (Amelia), Brothers, Daedalus, Elphinstone**, **SAVE 25%** on some of the best diving in the Red Sea in November, December and March. Or choose the Northern wrecks trip. **Price from GBP 561.**



[More Info or Book](#)

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**Creature of the month: the spooky Batfish**

These slow moving fish are not at all intimidated by divers, and often come to "greet" you on your dive. There are five species living in warm waters

throughout the Indo-Pacific, although not all species are represented in all areas. In the Red Sea, for example, you will see just three species: longfin batfish (*Platax teira*), circular batfish (*P. orbicularis*) and golden batfish (*P. boersii*).



*Longfin batfish. Vitaliy/Depositphotos*

**Young batfish look different to the mature fish**, some mimicing unpalatable things. The russet juveniles of the circular batfish, *P. orbicularis*, float sideways in the water and do a brilliant impersonation of dead leaves. During the day they drift, leaf-like, on their sides and feed on algae, but at night they dispense with the leaf behaviour and actively hunt for zooplankton.

Juveniles of the dusky batfish (*P. pinnatus*), look and behave like toxic flatworms. They too lay on their sides but these undulate just like the flatworm would.



*Juvenile dusky batfish mimics a turbellarian flatworm both in coloration and body shape. Christian Gloor/CC BY 2.0*

All juveniles prefer shallow, sheltered water such as in lagoons and among

mangroves. You find the adults in deeper water on reefs and wrecks down to 20 or 30 m.



*Juvenile longfin batfish. Cipto Aji Gunawan/Depositphotos*

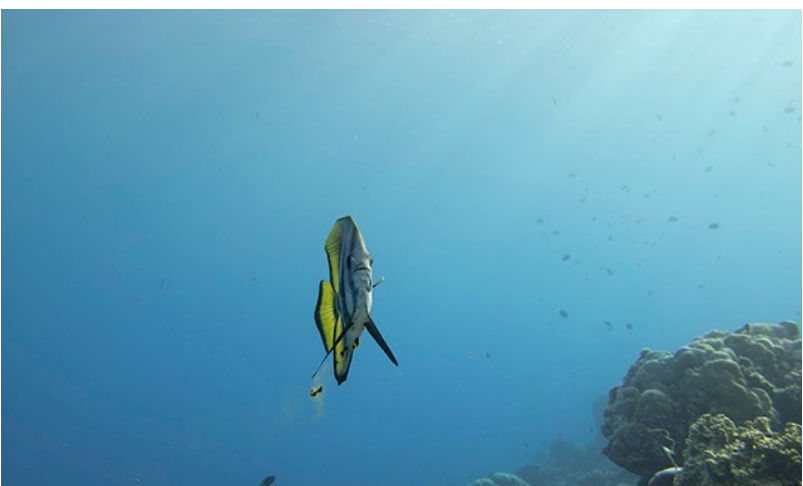
All Batfish have thin deep bodies. Other features they have in common are their greyish colouring and the two black or grey stripes going vertically down their bodies, one through the eye and the other at the back of the head. They grow to between 45 and 60 cm long.



*Shoal of circular batfish. Madelein Wolfaardt/Depositphotos*

## Taxonomy

Phylum: Chordata > Class: Actinopteri > Order: Acanthuriformes > Family: Ephippidae > Genus: *Platax*





Andrea Izzotti/Depositphotos

## References

Red Sea Reef Guide, Ewald Lieske and Robert Myers

Barros, B. et al. Feeding behavior of leaf-like juveniles of the round batfish *Platax orbicularis* (Ephippidae) on reefs of Kuchierabu-jima Island, southern Japan. *J Ethol* 26, 287-293 (2008).

John E Randall; Alan R Emery, On the resemblance of the young of the fishes *Platax pinnatus* and *Plectorhynchus chaetodontoides* to flatworms and nudibranchs. 1972

## Diving news from around the World



### 2024 Ocean Art Underwater Photo Competition is now Open

This year's competition features over \$60,000 in prizes, for amateur and professional photographers.



### The Azores establishes largest marine protected area network in North Atlantic

287,000 square kilometers of marine protected areas - the largest MPA network in Europe.



### 'Cocaine of the seas' - how a luxury food is wreaking ecological mayhem

A surging market for fish maw is pushing threatened species to the brink. Researchers are trying to limit the damage.



### New species of hammerhead shark

*Sphyrna alleni* is named after the late Paul G. Allen, the co-founder of Microsoft and marine conservationist. It occurs in the Caribbean and the Southwest Atlantic.



### Coral reef destruction a threat to human rights

A human rights-based approach to coral reef protection could ensure governments are held to account for safeguarding



marine ecosystems.



### **Imaging up to 10,000 plankton species in each seawater sample**

Speeding up detecting marine biotoxins in shellfish and harmful algae in water.



### **Scientists have successfully bred corals to improve their heat tolerance**

Selective breeding can lead to a modest rise in coral heat tolerance.



### **Disposable vapes to be banned from June, says UK government**

One less source of environmental pollution



### **Jaw-Some' New Research: What Do Kids Think About Sharks?**

When it comes to what people think about sharks, 'Jaws' has a lot to answer for. So while older generations shudder at the sound of the infamous two-note tuba alternation, what do younger generations think of sharks?



### **SSI Launches Global Ambassador Program**

The ambassadors represent the pinnacle of expertise in freediving, scuba diving, extended range and other specialties.

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