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SCUBA News (ISSN 1476-8011)  
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Welcome to *SCUBA News* - our compliments of the season to you all.

Two readers recently got in touch about diving Saudi Arabia. Below is a lovely story from Ann Schroll about learning to dive around Jeddah in the 1970s, and advice for today's divers from Mike Hardaker. Thank you both.

You can [download a pdf version](#) of this newsletter [here](#).

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**What's New at SCUBA Travel?**



### [Diving Mozambique](#)

There is some incredible diving in Mozambique, from whale sharks and mantas to leaf fish and harlequin shrimps via dugongs and beautiful reefs.

[scubatravel.co.uk/africa/mozambique.html](http://scubatravel.co.uk/africa/mozambique.html)



### [Diving the Canary Islands](#)

From now until February is a great time to dive the Canaries. You find both North Atlantic and Mediterranean species here, plus sea life found nowhere else in the world. On top of this, the Canary Islands hold the most diverse community of sharks and rays of the whole European Union. Find out more at

[scubatravel.co.uk/europe/spain-diving.html](http://scubatravel.co.uk/europe/spain-diving.html)



### [100 Best Dives in the World](#)

You've been voting for your top dive sites and the new Best 100 Dives list is up at

[scubatravel.co.uk/topdiveslong.html](http://scubatravel.co.uk/topdiveslong.html)

## Stocking Fillers for Divers

Stuck for last minute presents for your diving friends and family? Here are some gifts which have been popular on the SCUBA Travel site.



### [T-Shirt](#)

Born to Dive Forced to Work.



### [Schleich Scuba-Diver](#)

So bad it's good. The Schleich Scuba Diver Smurf Figure features a bright yellow wet suit, flippers, an air supply tank with gauge, snorkel mask, and the classic white Smurf Hat.



### [Trust Me I'm A Scuba Diver Bottle Opener Keyring](#)

Never be short of a bottle opener with this keyring.



### Divers Mug

Keep calm and go scuba diving



### Scuba Diver Cufflinks

A selection of cufflinks from fun ones from under a pound to beautiful handcrafted designs in silver.



### Handcrafted Silver Jewellery

Some lovely pieces designed and made by scuba diver and jeweller Rose Ledbury



### IST Scuba Divers Handy Maintenance Tool Kit

Handy tool kit for convenient & quick maintenance of diving equipment



### Diving T Shirt

Evolution To Scuba Diving T-Shirt.

More [ideas for gifts](http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/presents2.html) are at <http://www.scubatravel.co.uk/presents2.html>

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## Letters

### Diving Saudia Arabia

*Hi folks at Scuba News!*

*You may be interested in the latest developments for divers in Saudi Arabia.*

*Recently, following a number of accidents I believe, the Saudi coastguard authorities have introduced a new Arabic dive licence, a version of the PADI/BSAC licence for local residents, without which you are not allowed to dive in the Kingdom. The current status in Jeddah (as of last weekend) is that the Sheraton Beach Resort will allow divers to dive off the beach, inside territorial waters, with only the PADI licence, but this is strictly against the instructions they have been given. They are requesting that everyone diving there should apply for this new Saudi diving permit. If you intend diving from a boat outside the coastguard limit, you **MUST** have the Saudi licence. This applies to weekend boat operators such as Desert Sea Divers in Jeddah and, presumably, the operators up in Yanbu.*

*I completed my application here in Jubail (eastern province) and found it to be a tiresome and long-winded process. If you are interested, I can*

provide all the details of what is needed.

Let me know if you're interested in more info.

Happy diving.

Mark

### **Diving Job Seeker**

Hi Sir!

*I'm Arianna Gioffredi, an Italian SSI instructor.*

*I'm looking for a job where I can express my passion and earn money at the same time, so working in a dive center is perfect for me. I have been diving for 30 years and I consider myself a professional in this field. I'm a diving instructor since 1993 (DCSI 17773 SSI). I have worked in many dive centers in Italy and I have a lot of experience with children with which I love working. I volunteer at Dynamo Camp about the swimming pool. I'm a lifeguard and swimming instructor.*

*I would also like to add that I'm a professional secretary and have worked in a lawyer's office for 25 years, so I could also help with the secretarial work of the dive center or the resort. Looking forward to hearing from you.*

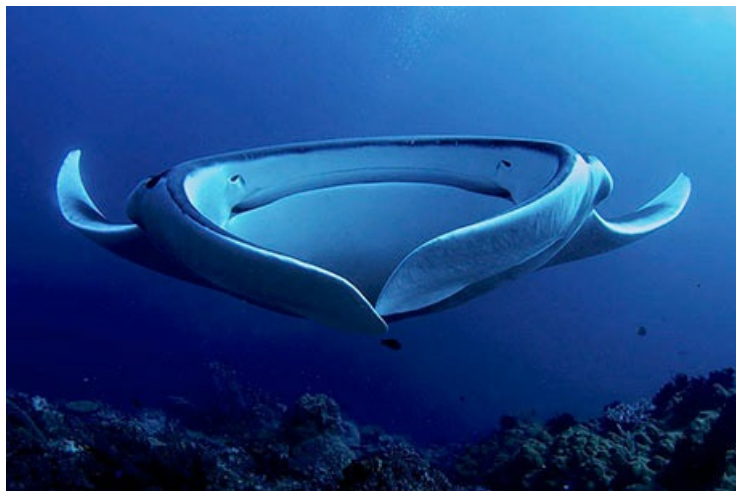
Best Regards Arianna

If you would like to get in touch with Mark or Arianna let us know and we'll pass your message on.

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### **Diving Saudia Arabia in 1977: A reader's story...**

In 1977 my husband and I had 6 weeks of lessons for PADI. We took our qualifying [dive in Saudi Arabia](#). We did so many dives about 20 miles north of Jeddah. I wish now we had a boat but all we had was a rubber raft. My husband took up underwater photography. We use to develop our own slides. I took all the land shots. There was so much to see. It was the most beautiful, untouched reefs I think I ever saw. Colors so vibrant and fish so plentiful. I used to take cans of cheese whiz down with me. Small and large reef fish would come up and feed. I would just sit and pet these fish while my husband ran around taking pictures. It was kind of comical. We dove there by the (I think)3 Palms near the Kings palace. Sometimes we went south of Jeddah quite a ways. It was not really a wall dive. It was more of a bottom dive in about 60 ft. Had a small manta ray 200lbs pass over my head and circle us. Saw sea turtles there too.



*Photo credit: Arturo de Frias Marques. CC BY-SA 4.0.*

A bunch of American divers that worked in Jeddah got together and dove. It

was fun. We did go to Yanbu north of Jeddah about four hours. People we knew went diving on a wreck in about 90 ft. So we went with some other divers we knew. It was near a coastguard shack. We saw a bunch of clay pots that dumped in a pile all fused together. Saw pieces of a wooden boat. The people who discovered it the year before said there were pots big enough to stand in. They took a piece of wood to have it carbon dated in England. The wood was 800 years old. That was pretty cool.

Sometimes we would go night diving not far from Jeddah but that wasn't really my favorite diving. I always felt like something was looking at me as a meal. We did do daylight diving before he would go to work near Jeddah. It was clear water there but not as pristine as farther north.

That began our diving for the next ten years. We dove in many places. We dove off the coast of Africa in the Indian Ocean, we dove all around Florida, in the Caribbean around the Caymans and our last trip was a private 7 day cruise around Belize. My husband died in 1988. I lost my interest but not my love of diving. Does that make sense? We had a wonderful life. I envy all these young people their adventures.

Happy times,  
Ann Schroll

*Read more on the [diving in Saudi Arabia](#).*

If you have a diving story to share we'd love to hear it - e-mail [news@scubatravel.co.uk](mailto:news@scubatravel.co.uk).

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## Diving News From Around the World

Our round up of the more interesting underwater news stories of the past month. For breaking news see our [Twitter page](#) or [RSS feed](#)



### **Scuba Bestsellers of 2015**



SCUBA Travel are pleased to release the newly updated list of the 2015 best selling SCUBA books and dvds.

### **Scuba diving fatalities down 2015**


The British Sub-Aqua Club (BSAC) has published its Annual Diving Incident Report for 2015. This year's report records a total of

226 incidents, up by ten on last year. However, fatalities were the lowest for twenty years.

### **Stealthy cuttlefish use electric cloaking**

Cuttlefish are renowned for their tremendous camouflage capabilities  changing the colour and texture of their skin to match their surroundings. They have another weapon in their hide and seek armoury though  electric cloaking.

### **Bird vomit to help gauge sardine abundance**

Fisheries researcher Dr Lachlan McLeay has developed an approach to gauging sardine abundance through looking at the diet, health and population dynamics of crested terns  by studying their vomit.

### **Coral reefs could be more vulnerable to coastal development than predicted**

For years, many scientists thought we had a secret weapon to protect coral reefs from nutrients flushed into the seas by human activity. Experiments suggested that herbivores such as fish, urchins and sea turtles could keep corals and their ecosystems healthy by eating up extra algae that grew in the presence of these nutrients. But a new University of Florida study sheds doubt on that idea, underscoring the importance of sustainable growth in coastal areas.

### **US to ban soaps and other products containing microbeads**

New act would phase out the tiny pieces of plastic found in soap, toothpaste and body washes, which pollute waters and spread throughout the food chain

### **Japan to resume whaling in defiance of international court ruling**

Less than 2 years after the International Court of Justice in the Netherlands ruled that Japan must stop killing whales, Japan has announced that it will relaunch its program to hunt minke whales in the Antarctic.

### **Saving Deep-Sea Corals**

As fantastic as the deep-sea corals are, they are also very fragile. Fishing gear that contacts the bottom can easily break or topple the structures. Once they are destroyed, the benefits these corals provide as habitat are lost for decades, if not centuries.

### **Shipwrecks at risk from fishing 'bulldozers'**

Fishing boats that use heavyweight bottom-trawling and shellfish-dredging equipment are annihilating precious artefacts and sunken ships.

### **Breakthrough in development of underwater glue**

Important step toward creating a practical underwater glue

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