

NEED A NEW FISH BOOK?

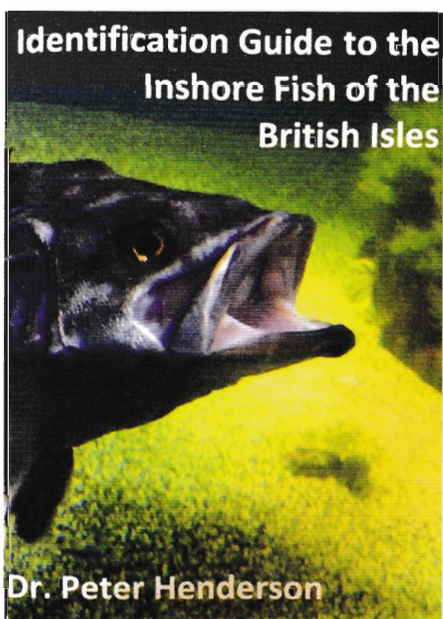
By Tim Butter

Guides to marine fishes are like buses – none for ages, then two come at once! However, although the subject matter is similar, these are two very different books (like a double decker bus and single deck coach maybe!).

Released in January 2015, first out of the blocks was the *Identification Guide to the Inshore Fishes of the British Isles* by Peter Henderson. This book is described as a comprehensive photographic guide to the coastal fish of the British Isles. As such, it includes most of those species likely to be encountered whilst diving in Irish waters (although the red blenny is, surprisingly, not included).

A total of 178 species are described in full with most getting a two page description which includes identification details, distribution maps, photos and line drawings, and details on habits and habitats. Information on seasonal occurrence is unusual but actually very helpful. A further 100 species are included in less detail. The real selling point for this book is that the identification information is definitive, but this may mean having a fish in the hand to count details such as the number of rays in a fin or number of scales along the side. This is essential information for fishery scientists and also useful for anglers, for example, but perhaps less useful for divers. Although many of the photos are of live animals underwater, quite a number are of fish out of water.

It follows the usual format for fish books of grouping related species together. There are chapters on the cod



family, goby family, wrasse family, etc. This makes it easy to find information and to compare closely related species if trying to make an identification. This book can be purchased direct from the publisher at www.pisces-conservation.com