

Robot completes first underwater crossing of Atlantic Ocean

December 9 2009



People surround the battery-powered underwater glider "Scarlet Knight" after its arrival at the port of Baiona, northwestern Spain. Spain on Wednesday handed back to the United States a robot which last week completed the first underwater crossing of the Atlantic Ocean to help monitor climate change by tracking temperatures.

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The yellow glider, which resembles a rocket with wings on its sides, traveled the 7,400 kilometres (4,600 miles) between New Jersey on the US east coast and Galicia in Spain's northwestern coast in 225 days using only a battery and aided ocean currents.

Dubbed the "Scarlet Knight", it was brought ashore on Friday at Baiona, the town where Christopher Columbus landed in 1493 during the return journey from his initial trip to the Americas.

Spanish Transport Minister Jose Blanco handed the robot to Jerry Miller of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy at a ceremony held in Baiona.

"We are going to continue to cooperate in initiatives like this," he said.

The [robot](#) -- which can reach depths of 200 metres (650 feet) and survive storms -- gathered information on ocean currents and salt levels as well as temperature during its voyage.

It will now be put on display at the Smithsonian museum in Washington while a replica of the glider will be on view in Baiona.

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