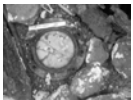


Ocean 11

Shipwrecks



Dive Sites

#### Bird Islands

- Location**
  - 59km (36miles) west of Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Access**
  - from Sydney travel west on route 125 to route 105 to the Big Bras D'or turn off. Travel approx. 8km (5miles) and turn left on Factory road, drive to the wharf. From here you will travel by boat for half an hour to the islands.
- Depth**
  - ranges from 2m (7ft) to in excess of 25m (80ft)
- Bottom**
  - large rocks scattered over bedrock and covered with kelp and moss.
- What To See**
  - crevices and small caverns
  - abundant marine life such as seal, pollock, lobster, dogfish, wolffish, ocean perch and many more.
- Hazards**
  - tour boats visiting the bird islands
  - currents can vary from mild to strong, depending on where you dive
- Level**
  - novice to advanced

#### Englishtown

- Location**
  - 64km (40miles) northwest of Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Access**
  - from Sydney travel west on route 125 to route 105 to route 312 to the Englishtown wharf
- Depth**
  - ranges from 3m (10ft) to in excess of 24m (80ft)
- Bottom**
  - gravel
  - stone
  - sand
- What To See**
  - marine life is abundant.
  - some days you may see dogfish, mackerel.
  - lobster, crab, mussels, scallops and sculpins are quite common.
- Hazards**
  - strong rip current at certain times of the day. Best time to dive is between tides.
  - if you like drift diving, this is a great spot -- but be careful not to drift under the Englishtown ferry.
- Level**
  - experienced to advanced

#### Gooseberry Cove

- Location**
  - 40km (25 miles) east of Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Access**
  - from Sydney travel east on route 22 towards Louisbourg. Turn left at the Little Lorraine Road. Travel approx. 7km (4 miles). Turn right on a small gravel road to Gooseberry Cove.
- Depth**
  - 4m (12ft) to in excess of 27m (90ft)
- Bottom**
  - rock ridges
  - large boulders
  - patches of kelp
- What To See**
  - wreck of the "Montara", and the "Suzia"
  - rock formations
  - marine life such as sea urchins, pollock, lobster, crabs and many more
- Hazards**
  - winds and seas from the south
  - swells in shallow waters of the cove
  - rocky entries and exits
- Level**
  - novice to advanced



#### Green Cove

- Location**
  - 140km (87miles) northwest of Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Access**
  - from Sydney travel west via route 125 to route 105 to route 312 past Ingonish to approx. 10km (6 miles) from Neil's Harbour.
- Depth**
  - 2m (7ft) to in excess of 17m (55ft)
- Bottom**
  - rocky ledges
  - small channels
  - crevices
- What To See**
  - abundant marine life such as mussels, lobster, ocean perch, sea urchins, pollock and many more.
  - heavy kelp bottom. The kelp overshadows crevices and makes them look like tunnels.
  - sea anemones are also abundant and if you take a dive light, you can enjoy their beautiful colours
- Hazards**
  - open to the North Atlantic.
  - watch for onshore winds and swells.
  - watch for lobster boats from May to July.
- Level**
  - novice to experienced

#### Kennington Cove

- Location**
  - Kennington Cove, Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Access**
  - Stop at the first beach. From the parking area walk along the far left side of the grassy field to the sandy beach. Enter the water on the extreme left side of the beach and explore the area around the point.
- Depth**
  - 25 to 30 feet maximum.
- Bottom**
  - rocky
- What To See**
  - This is a favorite spot for lobster fishermen to set traps, so look for lobster, perch, urchins and lots of vegetation.
- Hazards**
  - Watch out for sea urchins.
  - Depending on the weather, there could be surf and surge underwater.
  - Try to keep your gear out of the sand!
  - Gear up on the grass and walk across the beach!
- Level**
  - novice to experienced

#### Murray Point

- Location**
  - Murray Point at North River approximately 85 km west of Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Access**
  - from Sydney travel west on route 125 and then continue west on route 105 to exit 11 (St. Anne's turn-off to Cabot Trail). Travel approx. 14 km to North River bridge and take gravel road on right just past the bridge. Drive to the end of gravel road to the ruins of an old mill.
  - Caution: as gravel road may be unsuitable for low cars. Dive site is at old pier.
- Depth**
  - 20 to 30+ feet
- Bottom**
  - Mostly soft mud bottom.
- What To See**
  - Near the old wharf pilings there are numerous fish.
  - Along the bottom are many flounder. Lobster and a few sculpins also are present. The old mill on shore is interesting to see and a good spot for lunch.
- Hazards**
  - Wharf pilings, and location is relatively remote.
  - This area is well protected against wind and waves.
- Level**
  - Novice to advanced

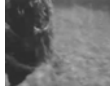
#### Neil's Harbour (Breakwater)

- Location**
  - 102km (62miles) northwest of Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Access**
  - from Sydney travel west on route 125 to route 105 to route 312 past Ingonish to Neil's Harbour wharf.
- Depth**
  - 3.5m (12ft) to over 17m (55ft)
- Bottom**
  - coarse sand
  - rocky ridges
  - caverns along break water
- What To See**
  - kelp forest
  - rocky caverns
  - abundant marine life such as sea anemones, sponges, pollock, ocean perch, lobster, sea urchins, crabs and many more
- Hazards**
  - floating boats around the wharf
  - some cavern openings are large but the exit is so small for a diver to swim through
- Level**
  - novice to experienced
  - advanced (if entering the caverns)

#### The Garden

- Location**
  - 64km (41 miles) northwest of Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Access**
  - from Sydney travel west via route 125 to route 105 to route 312 past the Englishtown ferry for approx. 1 km.
- Depth**
  - ranges from 1m (3ft) to 9m (30ft)
- Bottom**
  - stone and gravel bottom till you drop down to 7m (23ft), then it is a sandy bottom covered with kelp.
- What To See**
  - abundant marine life and vegetation, eg: scallops, lobster, ocean perch, crabs, mussels, sand dollars, sea urchins and many more
  - with all it's abundant vegetation this dive site resembles an english country garden
- Hazards**
  - strong rip tide at certain times of the day.
  - check the tide schedules. The best time to dive is at high and at low tides.
- Level**
  - novice to advanced

## The Yankee



## Our Underwater Heritage

Off the Coast of Cape Breton, hidden from view by the waters of the Atlantic, lies a part of our history that has survived, virtually untouched, for 240 years. From the days in the mid-1700's when the population of the colonial town of Louisbourg had grown to over 3,000, and the harbour was the fourth busiest seaport in the New World, ships have gone to their final resting place, off our Cape Breton shores.

For shipwreck enthusiasts, one of the most fascinating and accessible dive locations is Louisbourg Harbour. Twenty-six ships are documented as having sunk in or near the harbour of Louisbourg between the years 1713 and 1758. Most were small merchant or fishing schooners, blown ashore in storms and destroyed by the pounding surf. But it was the siege of 1758, a 33-day onslaught of the French fortification by British warships and land forces, that provides the historians of today with Canada's only remaining examples of state-of-the-art 18th century warships, and valuable clues about ship design and shipboard life of the period. No one knows exactly how many ships were sunk in Louisbourg Harbour during that siege, but Parks Canada marine archaeologists have located nine wrecks, which they believe all sank during the last 33 days of French life at Fortress Louisbourg.



## St. Paul's Island



## Le Chameau

### The Treasure of *Le Chameau*

On September 22, 1965, Alex Storm and his diving partner stared at each other in disbelief. Deep underwater, their hands were full of silver coins. Below them, in a crevice, lay heaps and layers of silver coins over top of the unmistakable glint of gold. They had found the legendary treasure ship *Le Chameau*, lost for a century and a half. The *Chameau* was a navy transport ship - large, fast and - with 44 cannons, heavily armed. Able to sail without escort, she was the pride of the French transport service. In July of 1725, the *Chameau* left France for Quebec with a precious cargo: dozens of military and political VIPs and a fortune in gold and silver.

She was never seen again.



On October 12, reports of wreckage at Kelpy Cove, just south of Louisbourg, brought officials out to make a gruesome discovery. The entire length of the cove was strewn with bodies. Wreckage, including a carved camel (the *Chameau's* namesake and figurehead), littered the coast for miles. All of the 316 people aboard had perished.

Salvage work began almost at once, directed by Pierre Morpain, a famous French privateer, but the treasure eluded them. With only grease on their skin and rations of chocolate to protect them from the cold, they couldn't locate the main portion of the wreckage. For years afterwards, legends of the treasure lingered: glimpses of silver and gold in crevices and tales of lobster fisherman pulling up a few handfuls of coins.



In 1961, a discovery of cannons scattered on the sea bottom alerted Alex Storm, a diver working part-time on a fishing trawler from Louisbourg. Braving the dangerous tides and freezing waters at Kelpy Cove, Storm carefully mapped the wreckage of the *Chameau* to locate the treasure compartment.

Storm's discovery triggered a rising interest in the wealth of shipwrecks off Nova Scotia's waters and brought legislation to protect them. Today, a steadily increasing number of divers flock to Nova Scotia, although most are seeking adventure, not treasure.



*Le Chameau*



*Le Chameau* treasure



Alex Storm



*Senora d'Atocha*



*Senora d'Atocha*



*Atocha* Video Questions

1. What was the *Atocha*?
2. When did it sail?
3. What was it carrying?
4. How much was this cargo worth?
5. How much did the search cost per day in 1970?
6. What object did they first find?
7. What did Mel Fisher use to locate objects?
8. What misled the Fishers into thinking that they had found the *Atocha*?

9. What was finally found to prove it was the true wreck site?
10. Who was killed while trying to find the wreck?
11. What does a magnetometer do?
12. What caused problems with its readings?
13. What did the court rule?
14. What instrument actually showed the *Atocha*?
15. Why was the wreck in two different locations?
16. Where is the treasure stored?

Answers

1. What was the *Atocha*? Spanish galleon
2. When did it sail? 1622
3. What was it carrying? gold and silver
4. How much was this cargo worth? \$150-400 million
5. How much did the search cost per day in 1970? \$500
6. What object did they first find? anchor
7. What did Mel Fisher use to locate objects? "mailbox" – forces water from the propeller in order to push away the sand (dis).
8. What misled the Fishers into thinking that they had found the *Atocha*? Spanish coins, astrolabe, silver bars

1. What was finally found to prove that it was the true wreck site? 2 bronze cannons
2. Who was killed while trying to find the wreck? Dirk Fisher, his wife and crew member
3. What does a magnetometer do? It finds metal objects (magnetic).
4. What caused problems with its readings? The area was a dumping ground for bombs.
5. What did the court rule? By a 4-1 ruling in 1982, Mel Fisher became the owner of the wreck *Margarita*.

6. What instrument actually showed the *Atocha*? Sidescan sonar
7. Why was the wreck in two different locations? The *Atocha* sank in deep water and a storm scattered the pieces to a spot 10 miles away.
8. Where is the treasure stored? Most of the treasure is in "private hands" – the investors. Some is kept in Mel Fisher's treasure museum in Florida.

Next: Scuba History