

## Historic Shipwrecks are protected

Legislation encourages the responsible use of South Australia's historic wrecks. It benefits diving and fishing interests by ensuring that wreck sites and their associated marine life are protected for the future.

Under the *Commonwealth Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976* and South Australia's *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1981* interference with Historic Shipwrecks is prohibited. Wreck material must not be damaged, moved on site or taken from a wreck.



▲ Bow of the *Zanoni*, Ardrossan

The highly significant *Zanoni* wreck in Gulf St Vincent has a declared Protected Zone which cannot be entered for any reason without a permit issued by Heritage SA.

Penalties for breaches of the Historic Shipwrecks Acts are severe and include confiscation of boats and equipment, fines and jail terms.

A small reef anchor can exert great force when attached to a five-metre dinghy. It takes only a slight knock to rip fragile timbers, to destroy marine life or to dislodge the protective concretions on objects. Iron uncovered in this way remains unprotected for some time, and will corrode ten times faster than before the damage occurred.

### Heritage South Australia

Level 8 Chesser House  
91-97 Grenfell Street  
Adelaide SA 5000

GPO Box 1047  
Adelaide SA 5001

Phone (08) 8204 9245  
Fax (08) 8204 9455

Email: [heritage@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:heritage@saugov.sa.gov.au)  
Web: [www.heritage.sa.gov.au](http://www.heritage.sa.gov.au)

### Publications available from:

The Environment Shop  
77 Grenfell Street  
Adelaide SA 5000

### Cover photograph:

SS *Australian*, Wardang Island



# Anchoring on Shipwrecks



## *Shipwrecks – fragile marine habitats*



Heritage South Australia



Government  
of South Australia

## Historic Shipwrecks are irreplaceable

Shipwrecks are time capsules revealing rare information about the past. As artificial reefs they are fragile havens for a variety of marine life. Once a wreck site is damaged or disturbed disintegration of the wreck is accelerated and these valuable assets are eventually lost.



▲ Marion, Troubridge Shoals

To minimise anchor damage on some of South Australia's most popular wreck sites Heritage SA, through the National Moorings Program, has recently installed mooring buoys on the *Australian*, *Songvaar*, *Moorara*, *Investigator* and *MacIntyre* wrecks at Wardang Island. Buoys have also been placed at the *Portland Maru* north of Kangaroo Island, the *Star of Greece* near Port Willunga, the *Norma* off Semaphore and the *Zanoni* (for which a permit is required) and a hopper barge south-east of Ardrossan.



▲ Charles Carter, Troubridge Shoals

## Great dive sites and popular fishing spots!

Boat anchors are a major threat to historic wrecks – tearing the structure, disturbing the site and destroying sensitive marine life.

Boat operators should remember that it is illegal to anchor into an Historic Shipwreck as this will inevitably cause damage. As most wrecks do not have permanent mooring facilities, recreational divers and anglers should anchor off the wreck and allow the vessel to drift back to the required position.



## Recommended anchoring procedures

- Locate the wreck (generally using an echo sounder).
- Mark the position of the wreck by dropping a small marker buoy attached to a line and small weight (sufficient to resist any current but light enough that the wreck is not damaged).
- Motor upwind or, if appropriate, up-current of the wreck site.
- Drop an anchor suitable to the size of the boat and to the type of seabed beneath (eg reef or sand).
- Lay back on the anchor line until the boat is positioned near to or over the wreck site (ie close to the marker buoy already dropped).
- If there is little wind or current that could move the marker buoy off site it can be left in place, otherwise retrieve it.

### For divers:

- Drop a shot line so that it hovers over the site, about five metres above the wreck. The line should be appropriately marked for decompression stops.
- Use another line to secure the shot to the sea floor – preferably clear of the wreck. If a fixture is not available, and if conditions allow, leave the shot line hovering above the wreck. If the only option is to attach the line to the wreck, choose a very light line and attach it to a stable section of the wreck so that the line will break under stress without damage to the wreck.

If shipwrecks are not cared for their potential for archaeological research, tourism and recreation is greatly diminished.