

was found not guilty in court. The cargo was sold at auction.

### *Hero of the Nile*

This 356-ton wooden barque sank at Long Point in October 1876. All cargo was lost and the wreck provides an interesting dive.

### *Bungaree*

This 84-ton wood schooner ran aground at Murray Reef, at 4.30 am on 13 June, 1876. The 32 tons of cargo containing tea, sugar and coconuts was lost. Fortunately all crew were saved and landed at Long Point, 2 miles from their wrecked vessel. The lookout cried 'breakers on the starboard bow', however the captain was unable to avert disaster.

### *Belle of Bunbury*

This 42-ton coastal schooner was stranded in Bunbury in August 1879. After being repaired and refloated it was finally wrecked in December 1886. It struck a rock just off Penguin Island and sailed only 90 yards before sinking in 3 fathoms, losing its cargo of 6 tons of potatoes and 70 bales of wool.



*Star*

### *Star*

This 69-ton wooden schooner struck the Murray Reef on October of 1880 after a whaling expedition and the

wreck now lies 1.5 miles south of the Sister Rocks. *Star* was built in Fremantle by Thomas Mews in 1876. The owner John Bateman was on board but he was unable to save it or the valuable whaling gear including harpoons, trypots etc.

### *Star Queen*

This 264-ton barque was stranded on the Sisters Reef, it later drifted inside the reef and was anchored at Long Point. After a few minor repairs, it was refloated.

### *James Service*

This 441-ton iron barque came to a tragic end on 23 July, 1878, on the Murray Reef while on a voyage from India to Melbourne carrying members of a theatrical troupe. All lives were lost in what is the Mandurah area's worst shipping disaster. A remote area at the time, in the police and community searches over the following days many decomposed and disfigured bodies were found but proved difficult or impossible to identify, and were buried in the sand dunes close to where they were found. Some of the bodies were recovered and buried in the Christ Church graveyard on Pinjarra Road where there is now an anchor from the wreck as a memorial to the *James Service* shipwreck victims.

For further information on historic shipwrecks contact the WA Museum Shipwreck Galleries or the WA Heritage Council:  
<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/collections/maritime/march/march.asp>  
<http://tourism.heritage.wa.gov.au>

Text by Malcom Brooks, Harvey Agricultural Senior High School. work experience, WA Museum. Updated by Jessica Berry, Tracey Miller and Jessica Reynolds, WAM 2008.



#### Diving notes

Access to the wrecks requires boat. Divers need to be fit and qualified. A divers flag must be displayed. Never dive alone or leave boat unattended. Persons using this trail do so at their own risk. Persons diving on these wrecks do so at their own risk. These wrecks are part of Western Australia's heritage. They are protected under legislation. Please enjoy them but do not disturb them.

# THE MANDURAH SHIPWRECK TRAIL

## Introduction

The Aboriginal name originally given to the area was 'Mandjar' meaning 'trading place'. Different Aboriginal groups met here to trade and exchange tools and ornaments. The European settler Thomas Peel adopted the native name which soon became changed to its present form.

Mandurah's coast presented hazards for early seafarers, being an exposed coastline with a chain of submerged offshore reefs—the Murray Reefs. The limitations of using early navigational equipment combined with weather conditions and the natural hazards of the area resulted in several vessels being wrecked.



*Orizaba's bell*

## Mandurah wrecks and casualties

### *Black Swan*

This 14-ton cutter was reported lost in May 1851. It ran aground on a low sand bar out of the Murray Estuary with a cargo of cattle from farms of settlers around the Cape Naturaliste to market at Fremantle. It was simply referred to as 'lost'.

### *Young Shepherd*

This 15-ton schooner was lost on 15 May, 1847 on a voyage from Bunbury to Perth. The cargo of flour, 500 kg of butter and casks of beef were all salvaged, but the mails were lost. Luckily, all crew were able to escape the sinking ship.

### *Leviathan*

This ketch was run aground on a sand bar far off Mandurah's shore in 1921. Its hull is visible to divers about 1.5 km off shore.



*Orizaba*

### *Orizaba*

This 3 325-ton Orient Liner can be found west north-west of Penguin Island. It was wrecked on a 5 fathom bank in 1905, and is a fascinating dive for the more daring.

### *Highland Forrest*

This 998-ton iron barque was totally destroyed on 29 April, 1901, on a voyage from New York. Its captain Alex Chapman, was unable to save her cargo of general goods from the Murray Reef, 4 miles south of Safety Bay. It eventually settled in 2.5 fathoms, about 4 miles from the shore and very close to the shallow reef. A famous second mate of the *Highland Forrest* was the author Joseph Conrad.

### *Carlisle Castle*

This 1 484-ton iron barque struck Coventry Reef in 1899. It sank quickly, and the wreck lies 2 miles out from Warnbro Sound.



*Carlisle Castle*

### *Coorong*

This 369-ton barque was stranded on Murray Reef in February 1889, after its voyage from Adelaide. Capt. Hayward was unable to see the land due to hazy conditions and grounded his vessel of general cargo. It was later rescued and harboured for repairs.

### *Alert*

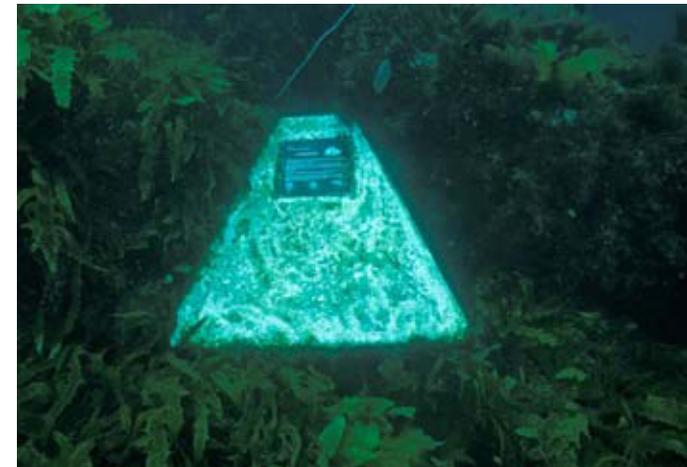
This 19-ton cutter bound for Fremantle was wrecked on the Murray Reef on 28 July, 1875.

### *Chalmers*

This 606-ton British wood ship struck the Murray Reef on 19 March, 1874 and was wrecked. Capt. William Alexander was tried in court for wrecking the three-masted sailing barque and his certificate was cancelled. He appealed without success, saying that he had seen a bushfire on the land and believed it to be Rottneest light. The wreck can be visited by divers in 4 to 7 metres depth near Sisters Reef.

### *Lass of Geraldton*

This 32-ton wooden schooner capsized and sank north west of Mandurah on 25 March, 1867. The four crewmen and two passengers died including her owner, G. Shenton. Capt. W. O'Grady and an Indian crewman were the only survivors and swam 7 miles to shore. After attempts to refloat it failed the wreck was abandoned in 14 meters of water about 4 km out to sea.



*Robertina*

### *Robertina*

This 213-ton wood brig with a cargo of timber, flour and whale oil went down near Murray Reef on 2 November, 1859. It sank immediately leaving little time for the 12 crew and seven passengers to reach the boats. Capt. Davis was charged for neglect of duty but