The coast and outlying reefs of Rottnest Island have claimed at least 12 vessels since 1842 when the schooner *Transit* was lost. Underwater and land plaques are now positioned giving details of the wrecks of Rottnest Island, and visitors are invited to view the sites by using the trails explained in this pamphlet: Land Trail (by foot or bike), snorkel dives, semi-submersible tour, boat trail and dives.

**City Of York 1899**
This Glasgow-built iron 1 194-ton barque was lost with her master and 11 crew on 12 July, 1899 while bound from San Francisco with a cargo of timber and 5 000 doors. At 6.45 am, the assistant lighthouse-keeper challenged the barque with a flare-up from the lighthouse in the centre of the island. Capt. Jones knew that a flare-up in the international code was used only on a pilot boat when in safe water, as a signal for the ship to approach. He replied with customary blue lights and steered his ship towards what he thought to be the pilot boat. It struck a reef and appeared in danger of sinking. Although lifeboats were manned, the rope of the first boat snapped and it drifted away. The remaining 20 crew boarded the last craft. After several hours they considered it safe to reboard the ship, which, though on the reef, was still intact. The lifeboat capsized, drowning 12 men. The vessel lies in the bay now bearing its name, a tangle of iron plates, ribs and beams. GPS position: 31°59.649' S 115°29.3394' E.

**Kiryo Maru I 1984**
On August 6, 1984, the Japanese tuna boat *Kiryo Maru* I was on its way to Fremantle when it went aground 50 metres offshore at Cathedral Rocks. One seaman swam ashore with a line and the other 17 men followed safely. After a careful analysis by an environmental study group, it was decided to leave the wreck *in situ* because any efforts to remove it may have resulted in irreversible damage to the fragile reef. GPS position 32°01' S 115°27' E.


Garden gloves are useful protection.

**Semi-submersible/glass-bottomed boat tour**

The semi-submersible/glass-bottomed boat leaves takes visitors to the aquatic life and reefs of Thomson Bay visiting the iron vessels *Macedon*, *Denton Holme* and occasionally the wooden cutter *Gem*. The visit is highly recommended to divers and non-divers alike.

**Boat trail and dives**

The WA Museum and Public Works Department (PWD) marked the wreck sites on PWD Chart WA 54153 Rottnest Island 1:25000. Experienced boat skippers can visit the areas where the Rottnest Island wrecks were lost and on calm, clear days, see some of these (notably Lady Elizabeth and Macedon) from the surface. Navigation is often difficult due to wreckage and reefs lying close to the surface and care must be taken in anchoring to avoid snagging the wreck. The wrecks and reefs of Rottnest are dangerous and the inexperienced boat skippers and divers should not attempt to visit the wrecks. Snorkels and dives can also be made in good conditions, though qualifications and experience are a must. The major wrecks are marked with underwater information plaques and the wrecks themselves vary from scattered, almost non-existent sites, e.g. *Transit* and *Raven* to large hull sections, e.g. *Macedon*, *Denton Holme*, *Lady Elizabeth*, *City of York* and *Mira Flores*.

**The Vessels**

**Transit 1842**

This 124-ton wooden, two-masted schooner, was wrecked on 18 May, 1842, rounding Rottnest, on a voyage from Port Leschenault to Fremantle. The master gave directions to steer in to Gage Roads Anchorage and went below. Soon after, it struck Duck Rock and sank. The cabin rapidly filled with water and the captain saved only his chronometer and desk containing 120 gold sovereigns. It broke up and little remains. GPS position: 31°30' S; 112°00' E.

**Gem 1876**

This British–built iron screw steamer of 562 tons was wrecked on 30 November, 1886. It was sighted by the lookout at 5.30 am and shortly after, struck Horseshoe Reef. GPS position: 32°00' S 115°32' E.

**Raven 1891**

This British–built three-masted wooden barque of 343 tons was wrecked with no loss of life on 11 March, 1891 whilst on a voyage from Fremantle to Bunbury in ballast. The inquiry held on 13 March, 1891 disclosed that it left port under a drunken skipper and while attempting the South Passage, struck the reefs surrounding Dyer Island. The crew returned to Fremantle in the boats and Raven soon broke up. The wreckage lies partly buried in sand and week in 6 metres of water and is difficult to distinguish from the surrounding reef. GPS position 32°01' S 115°33' E.

**Janet 1887**

This 211-ton, three-masted schooner, was built of jarrah on 18 May, 1842, rounding Rottnest, on a voyage from Port Leschenault to Fremantle. The master gave directions to steer in to Gage Roads Anchorage and went below. Soon after, it struck Duck Rock and sank. The cabin rapidly filled with water and the captain saved only his chronometer and desk containing 120 gold sovereigns. It broke up and little remains. GPS position: 31°30' S; 112°00' E.

**Macedon 1883**

This British–built iron screw steamer of 562 tons was wrecked on 21 March, 1883, with 50 passengers, about 40 horses, mail, specie, general cargo and a survey party containing Alexander and John Forrest and Walter James, a future Premier. The captain took in tow a party of officials on business on Rottnest, and in displaying such hospitality, took his vessel too close to the reefs. After releasing the tow and turning north, the vessel struck. Attempts were made to get it off but the hull was holed. It sank with no loss of life. The captain’s certificate was suspended for three months. This wreck, along with the nearby Denton Holme, lies in 3–6 metres of water. GPS position: 31°59' S 115°33' E.

**Shark 1939**

This hopper barge was wrecked in 1939. According to one source she broke free from moorings at Fremantle and drifted on to Henrietta Rocks where she was wrecked. Its remains are visible above water where it lies offshore in 4 metres, immediately below Lookout Hill. It is an accessible wreck for snorklers, unless the wind and waves are high. GPS position 32°00' S 115°32' E.

**Uribes**

This 117.59-tonne auxiliary schooner was wrecked in June or July 1942 laden with military stores and two motor vehicles. The motors cut out near Phillip Rock. With anchors dragging *Uribes* drifted and was wrecked near the base of the natural jetty. It quickly sank and filled with sand. Built in 1868 at Stockton-on-Tees, *Uribes* was quite an old ship when wrecked. The remains lie in 3–4 metres of water close to the shore, machinery and parts of the hull are well preserved. It is a safe dive for snorklers, unless the wind and waves are blowing on shore.

**Mira Flores 1886**

This German-owned, British–built iron barque of 500 tons was wrecked on 30 November, 1886. It was sighted by the lookout at 5.30 am and shortly after, struck Horseshoe Reef. GPS position 32°01' S 115°33' E.

**Vessels**

- Lady Elizabeth 1878
- Transit 1842
- Gem 1876
- Raven 1891
- Janet 1887
- Janet 1887
- Shark 1939
- Uribes
- Mira Flores 1886