

*Lofthus*  
**Take an Underwater Tour**  
**Audio Transcript**

**Stern**

Along the east coast of Florida, near Boynton Inlet, lie the scattered remains of a 19<sup>th</sup> century barque, *Lofthus*. After being stripped of all useable items, the wreck and her cargo, consisting of 800,000 feet of lumber, were sold for \$1,000. Because the hull itself was not as valuable whole as what was contained inside, she was dynamited and scrapped for her remaining lumber. Today, what we see are pieces of iron rigging, iron frames, and iron decking.

**Amidships**

Beyond the school of spade fish rests the anchor, the designating plaque, and the remains of the vessel's mast. The anchor did not originally lie on top of the deck beams but was placed there in January 2005 by volunteers from the Marine Archaeological Research and Conservation team as a back mount for the site's designation plaque.

The 223-foot long iron sailing vessel ran hard aground on the sandy beach near Manalapan, Florida. The local sea-going tug, *Three Friends*, tried to assist the stranded barque, but she was quickly being pounded to pieces by the waves. This is dynamic environment can periodically cover and uncover the wreckage. Those elements that remain exposed provide an ideal haven for a diverse array of marine life; growing on and within the iron hull as well as living beneath the decking.

**Bow**

With her bow pointing northeast on a heading of 42° we swim along the remaining hull structure towards the apex of the bow. In 2001, the historical value was recognized when *Lofthus* was nominated to become Florida's 8<sup>th</sup> State Underwater Archaeological Preserve. In 2002, the Marine Archaeological Research & Conservation team, in conjunction with the Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society, volunteered to map the shipwreck site and prepare a report on the vessel's history. As a result, in 2003, *Lofthus* was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.