

DIVE THE F/V NORTH STAR SHIPWRECK

The F/V *North Star* shipwreck lies on top of Stellwagen Bank within the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary at a depth of 100 feet. Broken into several pieces that are now home to colorful anemones and sponges, schools of cod and pollock inhabit the wreck making it a fantastic dive. Northern Atlantic Dive Expeditions and the Stellwagen Bank sanctuary have partnered to place a dive mooring at the wreck to support recreational diver visitation.

Using the F/V *North Star* Mooring System:

The mooring system consists of a 700 lb. pyramid anchor with a 10-foot buoyed chain that requires the use of a specially designed shot line. Below is a list of items needed to create and deploy an appropriate shot line:

- 120 feet of anchor-type line with a thimble spliced into the end
- One 5/8 inch shackle attached to the thimble
- A medium sized orange buoy (20"-28" in diameter)
- A 30 pound weight with an attachment loop and stainless steel spring clip
- 50 pound liftbag
- An adjustable wrench

Attach the buoy to your shot line. Attach the shackle to the thimble end of the line and then clip on the weight. Using additional weight is sometimes helpful to keep the line in place if the current is strong, but don't make it too heavy!

Locate the wreck:

Hull Location: 42-23.052' N x 70-21.343' W - Decimal Minutes Format

Deck Location: 42-23.028' N x 70-21.366' W - Decimal Minutes Format

Mooring Location: 42-23.042' N x 70-21.357' W - Decimal Minutes Format

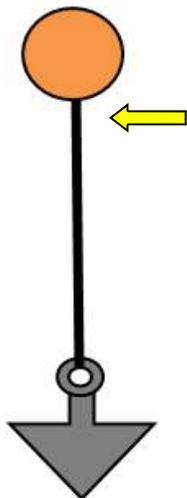
Using your GPS and echosounder, locate the wreck and plan your deployment location. In order to drop the shot line close to the mooring, it is important to consider wind, current, and the wreck's orientation. Generally, it is best to approach slowly (2-3 kts) heading up-current, up-wind and from a direction that allows you to pass over the largest area of wreckage.

Drop the shot line:

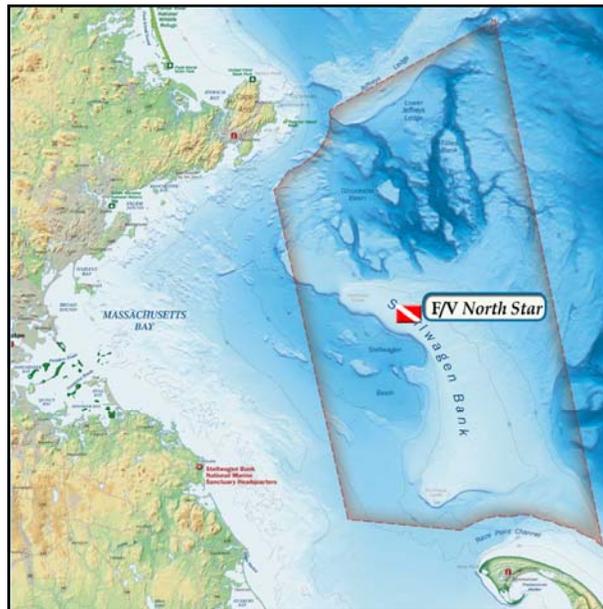
After determining the best approach, have someone ready to drop the shot line on your signal. Once you pass over the wreck on the echosounder, wait ~2 seconds and then give the signal to drop. This delay should prevent you from dropping the shot line weight on the wreck. Pay out the line quickly and cleanly—do not let it foul or get caught on anything. Check the accuracy of your drop by passing close to the buoy from different angles. You should see the wreck on your echosounder in close proximity to your shot line buoy. If you are in doubt, pull it up and drop again!

Attaching the line to the Mooring System:

Once the shot line is in the water, send in divers to attach it to the mooring system. The divers will need to descend to the bottom and swim the weight over to the mooring. The divers can then unclip the weight and shackle the shot line onto the mooring system at the large 3/4 inch shackle located just below the orange mooring buoy (marked by the yellow arrow to the left). Do not over-tighten your shackle pin with the wrench. Once the line is attached, the divers should send a signal to the surface so the dive boat knows it is okay to pick up the line. Divers can now visit the wreck using the shot line as a direct connection to the dive boat.



The last divers on the wreck are responsible for removing the line. This process begins with the removal divers signaling the dive boat to release the buoyed end of the shot line. If the divers attempt to remove the line with the boat attached, the line will have too much tension on it and be hard to control. The removal divers can then unshackle the line from the mooring and re-attach it to the drop weight on the bottom. The divers should then move the shot line about 20 feet down-current from the wreck so that it does not foul on the wreck when it is pulled up. Attach the lift bag to the weight and put some air in it before you leave the bottom to make pulling up the line easier. Ascend up the shot line. When all divers have surfaced, pull up the shot line.

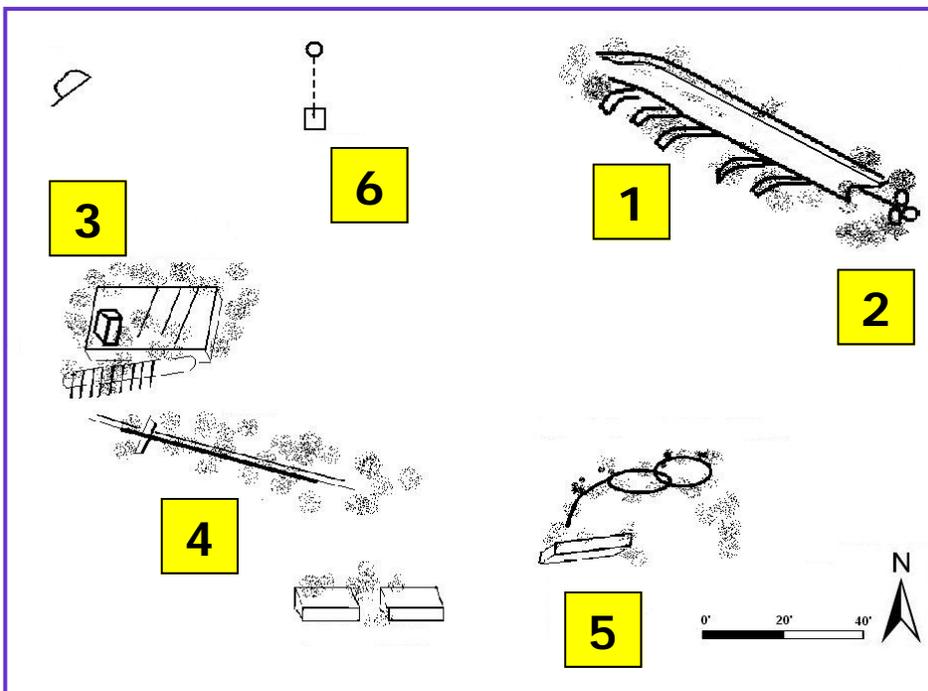


Mooring Support Provided By:

PADI FOUNDATION



Diving is a dangerous sport, always dive within the limits of your training. The above information is offered as a recommendation, the entire risk of acting on this information is borne by those who do so.



F/V North Star Site Description:

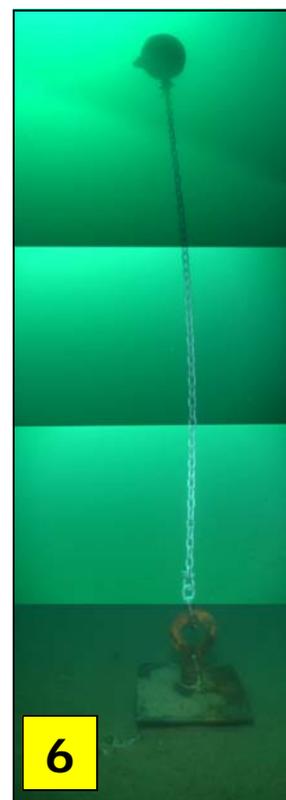
Hull: 1 & 2 - The vessel's wooden hull is almost inverted with its bow pointing west. Its 4-bladed propeller is still attached at the stern and its small engine now rests on the seafloor.

Forecastle Companionway: 3 - Located south of the mooring, the forecastle companionway is a steel sheathed deck structure.

Deck and Mast Section: 4 - The fishing vessel's deck and mast have peeled away from its hull and now lie in a jumble with hoses, ropes, and derelict fishing gear.

Clam Dredge: 5 -The large rock snagged by the clam dredge points to why the vessel sank. A tow cable still connects the dredge to the deck structure allowing for easy navigation.

Mooring: 6 - The mooring is located approximately 30 feet north of the forecastle companionway. It rises approximately 12 feet from the bottom.



F/V North Star in Gloucester Harbor, courtesy of the Parker Collection, Maritime Gloucester.

Built in 1967 by Royal K. Lowell of Portland, ME, the *North Star* (ex. *Bona-venture*) fished New England waters until August 2003 when it capsized while dredging for clams. Fortunately, all onboard were rescued.

PLEASE show respect for the shipwreck and Stellwagen Bank NMS by not disturbing the site or removing artifacts.

For more information visit: <http://stellwagen.noaa.gov>