



NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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20th Century Shipwreck in NOAA's Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary Listed on National Register of Historic Places

The wreck of a mid-20th century fishing vessel, representative of the highest technological advances of the time, has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. The *Edna G.* shipwreck site rests within NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

The *Edna G.* was a 54-foot groundfishing vessel launched in 1956 by the Morehead City Shipbuilding Corporation of Morehead City, N.C. From her launch until 1974, the *Edna G.* fished off the North Carolina and Virginia coasts, and in 1974 new owners moved it to New England. The vessel sank on June 30, 1988, off Gloucester, Mass., as her two-man crew set out its trawl net. A strange noise alerted the crew to water rapidly filling *Edna G.*'s engine room. The fishermen were able to abandon ship and were picked up by another fishing vessel. The exact cause of the sinking was never determined.

"*Edna G.* was listed on the National Register of Historic Places due to its exceptional importance as a remarkably intact example of 20th century fishing technology," said Craig MacDonald, superintendent, Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. "The shipwreck represents a rapidly disappearing watercraft variety emblematic of the region's maritime traditions."

Scientists from NOAA and the University of Connecticut's Northeast Underwater Research Technology and Education Center, or NURTEC, documented the shipwreck site in 2003 with a remotely operated vehicle. The fieldwork recorded the vessel's features including its intact wooden hull, wheelhouse and trawl winch. This information allows the sanctuary to interpret the site as a tangible connection to New England's fishing heritage, providing insights into vessel construction and gear development.

NOAA and NURTEC scientists have collaboratively located and documented more than three dozen historic shipwrecks in the sanctuary using side scan sonar and underwater robots. *Edna G.* is the sanctuary's fifth shipwreck site to be included on the National Register, administered by the U. S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service.

Edna G.'s location within Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary provides protection unavailable in other federal waters off Massachusetts. Sanctuary regulations prohibit moving, removing, or injuring, or any attempt to move any sanctuary historical resource, including artifacts and pieces from shipwrecks. Anyone violating this regulation is subject to civil penalties.

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary encompasses 638 square nautical miles of ocean, stretching between Cape Ann and Cape Cod offshore of Massachusetts. Renowned for

its remarkable productivity, the sanctuary is famous as a whale watching destination and supports a rich assortment of marine life, including marine mammals, seabirds, fishes and marine invertebrates. The sanctuary's location astride the historic shipping routes and fishing grounds for Massachusetts' oldest ports also make it a repository for shipwrecks representing several hundred years of maritime transportation and industry.

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Visit us at www.noaa.gov or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/usnoaagov.

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