



Help protect shipwrecks!

In Australia, all shipwrecks and their associated relics that are older than 75 years are protected by law. Shipwrecks are underwater museums that reflect the history of discovery, trade and colonisation and provide important scientific, historical and educational information. When artefacts are removed from a shipwreck, valuable archaeological information is lost forever. Shipwrecks are fragile and once lost, cannot be replaced.

Interfering with or damaging shipwrecks is prohibited. The most common actions that damage or interfere with shipwrecks include:

- divers holding on to fragile structures
- divers uncovering parts of the wreck by digging or 'hand fanning'
- taking anything from a shipwreck site
- anchoring on a shipwreck
- attaching lines directly to a shipwreck.



**Take only photos,
leave only bubbles!**

The Great Barrier Reef is a unique underwater playground for divers. Protecting these precious marine areas and their natural and cultural heritage is everyone's responsibility. Visit www.qld.gov.au to find shipwreck locations on the reef, or visit www.reeffacts.qld.gov.au for information about how the iconic Great Barrier Reef world heritage area is being protected.

Your safety is your responsibility.

DIVE into history



SS Yongala (1911)



▼ The exposed engine



▼ The bow lying astern with anchors still fixed in place



SS Yongala (1911)

Vessel type Steel, single screw steamer

Built United Kingdom, 1903

Dimensions Length: 350ft Width: 45.2ft
 Depth: 27.2ft Tonnage: 3664

General information

At 1.40pm on 23 March 1911, the *Yongala* left Mackay bound for Townsville. Officially, there were 29 first saloon passengers, 19 second saloon passengers, and 73 (including the captain) crew members on board. Five hours later, the vessel passed the lighthouse on Dent Island in the Whitsunday Passage, steaming into what was described as ‘worsening weather’. With no radio on board, the captain had little warning of the impending cyclone. This was the last sighting of the *Yongala*. The Marine Board concluded that the cause of the wreck was unknown, but ultimately linked the loss of the ship with the cyclone. The ship and all people on board were lost.

In 1947 a shipwreck was located by the Royal Australian Navy. It was not officially identified as the *Yongala* until 1958.

Site map of SS Yongala

The *Yongala* sits proud of the seabed; listing to starboard at an angle of 60 to 70 degrees. The wreck is mainly intact except for the collapse of the top decks and loss of superstructure. Shifting sands can cover or expose parts of the hull and decking.

Site marine life

The wreck of the *Yongala* is a habitat which provides food and shelter for a variety of marine life. Dominant species include the wrasse, damselfish, sea perch, cods and coral trout, soft corals, sea fans and whips, oysters, sponges and hard coral. The hard and soft corals that cover the *Yongala* help to protect the historic fabric of the ship.



Dive site information

Dive rating The *Yongala* is suitable for advanced and experienced divers only.

Protected zone Radius: 797m

Note: The *Yongala* is in a protected zone and requires a permit to dive. A protected zone helps to protect shipwrecks, and the fragile and archaeologically important sites in which they are situated, from interference and damage.

Dive permits are free. Application forms can be completed online and take up to 10 working days to process: www.environment.gov.au. Moorings have been installed to help protect the *Yongala* from anchor damage and are available for a fee.

Location The *Yongala* is located in the central section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, approximately 12 nautical miles east of Cape Bowling Green and approximately 46 nautical miles east-south-east of Townsville.

Max depth 30m **AVG depth** 20m

AVG visibility 12-30m

Current/winds The site is fully exposed to all weather conditions and can be affected by strong currents of up to 2 knots throughout the year. It is recommended that the wreck be dived at the turn of the tide and in good sea conditions.

Restrictions Anchoring within the inner circle of the protected zone and penetration diving is prohibited. Please check the *Yongala* protected zone visitation guidelines and permit conditions.

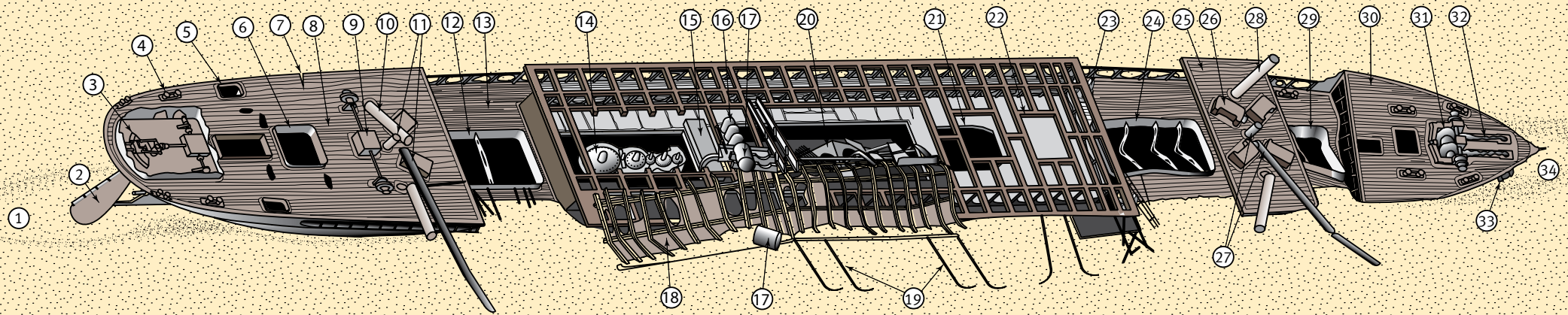
Note: *Yongala* is the final resting place for an estimated 122 people. Please be respectful when diving.

This shipwreck diver guide was produced by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP) to increase community awareness and to help protect, manage, and interpret Queensland’s unique underwater cultural heritage.



S.S. YONGALA

Sketch map of wreck site



1. scour pit under stern
2. rudder
3. steam steering gear
4. mooring bits
5. stairway down to upper deck
6. number 4 cargo hold
7. break in hull
8. poop deck
9. steam winch
10. derrick post
11. after mast
12. number 3 cargo hold
13. upper deck
14. main steam engine
15. galley range
16. steam cooking pots
17. water tanks
18. remains of boat deck
19. lifeboat davits
20. boiler casings and uptakes
21. main staircase to first class dining saloon
22. skylight for first class dining saloon
23. 1-1/2 ton steam crane
24. number 2 cargo hold
25. winch deck
26. four steam cargo handling winches
27. foremast
28. derrick post
29. number 1 cargo hold
30. forecastle deck
31. anchor windlass
32. anchor chains
33. starboard anchor
34. scour pit under bow

Site conditions vary and will affect how much of the wreck and its relics can be seen. If you notice something suspicious or see items not marked on the plan, please contact EHP.

Drawing developed by Geoffrey Hewitt.



Australian Government
Department of the Environment



Queensland
Government