

# Historic Shipwreck Protected Zones

Protected zones are intended to keep wrecks safe from damage caused by anchors and fishing line entanglements.



## Protecting historic shipwrecks

All shipwrecks over 75 years old are protected by law. Although most wrecks are open to access, protected zones have been declared around particularly important and fragile shipwrecks to protect them from interference and damage.

### Protected zones

There are nine protected zones in Victoria. Six of these are within Port Phillip Bay. The positions of all protected zones are marked on official navigation charts. **It is an offence to enter, anchor, trawl, fish or dive in a protected zone without a permit.**

### Penalties

If you enter, anchor, fish, or use certain equipment in one of these zones without a permit you may be issued with an infringement notice of more than **\$480**. Multiple fines can be issued if more than one offence is detected. Breaches can also be prosecuted in court and fines of over **\$8,000** may apply.

## Protected zones in Port Phillip

Refer to nautical charts:

- AUS 158 Port Phillip South and West Channels
- AUS 143 Port Phillip and the Rip

### SS City of Launceston

**Protected zone location -38.076829, 144.826321 (250m radius)**

The *City of Launceston* (1865) is one of Victoria's most significant wrecks. The original ferry between Melbourne and Tasmania, it is one of the most intact iron steamship wrecks of its age in Australian waters.

### Clarence

**Protected zone location -38.202570, 144.723253 (100m radius)**

*Clarence* (1850) is an early cargo trading vessel and is one of the most surveyed wrecks in the state.

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## Joanna

**Protected zone location -38.207960, 144.730102  
(100m radius)**

*Joanna* (1843) is a well-preserved wreck and one of the earliest known examples of a Victorian-built sailing ship to be found in Victorian waters.

## Will O' the Wisp

**Protected zone location -38.241498, 144.701159  
(50m radius)**

*Will O' the Wisp* (1853) is the wreck of a former opium schooner. When it was first discovered it was lying in two to three metres of water and a large part of the hull remained.

## William Salthouse

**Protected zone location -38.272943, 144.705493  
(250m radius)**

*William Salthouse* (1841) is one of the oldest and most important shipwrecks to be discovered in Victoria. It was the first cargo vessel to sail between Canada and Australia, directly flouting Britain's trading laws which banned direct trading between British colonies.

## HMVS Cerberus

**Protected zone location -37.967382, 145.007876 (0.5  
hectare rectangle)**

*HMVS Cerberus* (1926) is a highly significant shipwreck and landmark in Half Moon Bay, Black Rock. *Cerberus* was the first armoured fighting ship built for service in Australia and the first designed to operate without sails.



*SS Alert, 2013*

## Protected zones outside of Port Phillip

### SS Alert

**Protected zone location -38.486944, 144.750556  
(500m radius)**

Refer to nautical chart AUS 158 Port Phillip South and West Channels

*SS Alert* (1893) was a nineteenth century coastal steamer, which sank in a wild storm in the late 1800s with the loss of 15 crew onboard.

### PS Clonmel

**Protected zone location -38.744000, 146.677800  
(50m radius)**

Refer to nautical chart AUS 182 Approaches to Corner Inlet and Port Albert

*PS Clonmel* (1841) is a very significant site as the ship's wrecking directly enabled the opening up of Gippsland and the development of the small towns around Port Albert.

### SS Glenelg

**Protected zone location -38.5524, 147.2074 (500m  
radius)**

Refer to nautical chart AUS 182 Approaches to Corner Inlet and Port Albert

*SS Glenelg* (1900) is one of the worst maritime disasters in Victorian history with the deaths of 38 people and only three survivors. After the wreck was discovered it was subject to heavy looting and was placed in a protected zone to help prevent further theft.

## Which shipwrecks am I allowed to access?

You can access any other shipwreck in Victoria – if you don't damage or disturb it!

Some popular options are the J Class Submarines, Ex-HMAS Canberra, Loch Ard, Ozone.

## Still want further information?

Contact Heritage Victoria's Maritime Archaeology team.  
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