

DON FERRIS
DIVING GUIDE

To

UNDERWATER
MASSACHUSETTS

Donald L. Ferris



This is the fourth in a series of guide books by the author. The first book, *Beneath the Waters of Cape Cod* was published in 1992 and is now out of print. It was updated in 1993 with new dive sites and was republished as *Exploring The Waters of Cape Cod*. The third book, *Beneath the Waters of Massachusetts Bay, A Divers Guide from Cape Ann to Plymouth Massachusetts*, is now out of print, but all the information from these previous guide books are now found in this consolidated version.

ALSO BY THE AUTHOR:

BENEATH THE WATERS OF CAPE COD

EXPLORING THE WATERS OF CAPE COD

*BENEATH THE WATERS OF
MASSACHUSETTS BAY*

*THE ANTHOLOGY OF
CAPE COD SHIPWRECKS*

*DIVERS GUIDE TO UNDERWATER
MASSACHUSETTS*



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Norman's Woe off Magnolia, MA

Shore Dive

This is a spectacular site, but be prepared - it's about a 300 yard walk from your car to the water. Bring sturdy shoes with good ankle support. Everyone agrees it is well worth the hike, but always make sure you visually check the conditions before hiking all the way in with your equipment.

Ocean upwelling can occur here bringing 40 to 60 foot visibility. Large car-sized rocks and slabs of stone litter the bottom, and there is kelp growing throughout the area. The depths are from 10 to 60 feet.

Lobster divers know this to be a good spot to find the bugs. Cod, pollock and striped bass inhabit the area and dogfish can be encountered in the deeper water during the late summer months. Electric rays have been seen here numerous times. **DON'T TOUCH THE ELECTRIC RAYS**, their shock is very powerful and can stop your heart. At night, the schools of squid make a very pretty sight.

This is considered an advanced shore dive, and entry and exits can be very tricky. Ask other divers who might be diving the site for assistance on where to enter and exit. Most use a giant stride entry off the large rocks directly in front of the path, or you can slide into the water from the area to the right of the path. This also should be your expected exit point.

To get there, take Route 128 (north) to exit 15. Turn right onto School Street to Lincoln Street to Route 127. Left on Route 127 to Hesperus Avenue. Right onto Hesperus Avenue and proceed through the Town of Magnolia. One mile past the flagpole in Magnolia center, you will find the parking area on your right. Don't blink or you'll

miss it. Try to be quiet because the site is surrounded by a residential area. You can park on both sides of the road, but make sure you are between the parking signs.

HAZARDS

Only dive this site in calm conditions. Take note of your entry point and keep track of it because this is where you will have to exit. There can be a lot of boat traffic here. Use a flag, surface cautiously and be aware of any traffic.



Divemaster John Lewczyk suits up at Norman's Woe, one of the best shore dives on the North Shore.



Master Instructor Kim Catlin gets ready for the plunge off Norman's Woe. Kim enjoys taking an advanced class for a dive off Norman's, catching a few lobsters and then grilling them for the class on the BBQ while the divers are still in their wet suits. That's New England diving at its very best!

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THE WRECK OF THE LANSFORD Orleans Boat Dive

Sunk in 1918 by a German submarine, the *Lansford* was part of a three barge chain being towed by a tug boat, the *Perth Amboy*. Witnesses saw the submarine surface and then, using its deck gun, shoot at the barge chain. All the barges were sunk, but the tugboat escaped with its cabin shot off. And one crew member badly injured. The submarine disappeared after the engagement.

Men of the nearby Truro Air Base were alerted to the attack. They had been playing baseball at a local field. Unfortunately, no one had a key for the ammunition storage locker and no gunfire was exchanged with the submarine. This encounter marked the only foreign shells to land on U.S. soil during WWI.

Due to the depth and current, this is considered an advanced dive. There is a hard sand and gravel bottom with the wreck sitting at approximately 120 feet. Visibility is usually 30 to 45 feet or better. Around the wreck, you will find cod, pollock, dogfish, fluke, flounder, scup and cunners. It's also possible to come by a few lobsters hiding under pieces of the wreck strewn across the bottom.

The wreck of the *Lansford* and the other two barges are approximately three miles off Nauset Beach in Orleans.

Barge #703: N41 47.447 / W069 52.532

Barge #766 (bow) N41 47.539 / W069 52.632

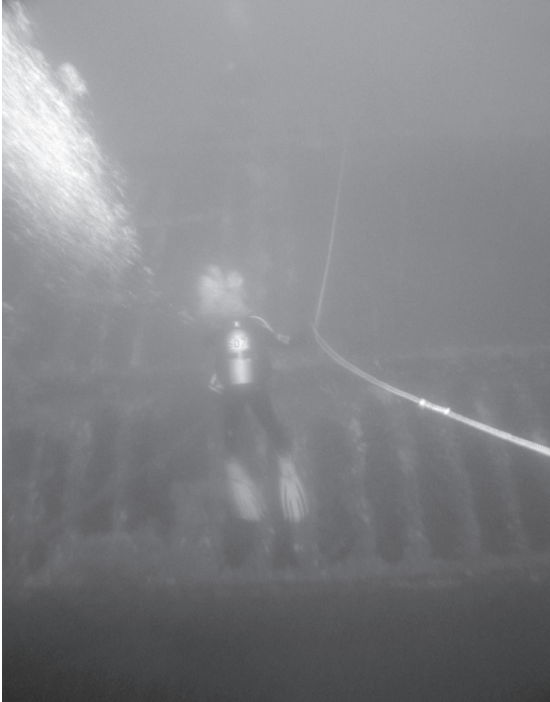
Barge #766 (stern) N41 47.555 / W069 52.615

Barge #744 (bow) N41 47.606 / W069 52.552

Barge #744 (stern) N41 47.627 / W069 52.588

HAZARDS

**This area is loaded with Great White sharks in the summer and fall. Be careful diving here. There can be a very strong current.*



Jack Powers descends to the “*Stone Barge*” one of three barges sunk by a German submarine in WWI off Orleans, MA



Don McNichol at the bow of the *Stone Barge*. This site usually offers great visibility, but it is well known for Great White sharks in the area.



Don McNichol, explores the wreck of the *Lansford* at 120 feet off Orleans, MA The *Lansford* was sunk in 1918 by a German Submarine along with two other barges.

GERMAN SUBMARINE SINKS THREE BARGES

**Tug and Fourth Barge Damaged—Shell Land on Orleans Beach
—U. S. Airplanes Bomb Raider—Two Men Hurt**

**JACK AINSLEIGH AND FLAG
HE SHOOK AT GERMANS**



**Four Women, Two Boys, Among
32 Who Fled in Boats Amid
Hail of Shell**

11-Year-Old Boy Waves U.S. Flag



The author (right) with dive buddy Don McNichol (left) with a big bull lobster caught off Nauset Beach, Orleans

Donald Ferris has been teaching scuba diving and exploring the shipwrecks of Cape Cod for over 40 years. Don is the author of the best selling scuba dive guide book series to Massachusetts.

His articles and adventures have been featured in Cape Cod Life Magazine, Skin Diver Magazine, Cape Cod Times, Boston Herald and other publications. He has been a speaker at the Boston Sea Rovers Show five times.

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