



MAHS Survey and Field School 2014
Pickles Reef, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary





In June of 2013, MAHS returned to Pickles Reef, off Key Largo in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Work this season focused on metal debris tentatively identified as the remains of an iron-hulled schooner.





The project again combined survey work with the annual MAHS Field School.

As always, things began with a pre-dive briefing and a dry land walk through of the baseline trilateration mapping technique.

Left to right: MAHS volunteers Bart Hosley, Jim Smailes, Dave Shaw; class participants Jim Kinsella, Per Kistler, Erik Kistler.





Per and Eric Kistler on the dive boat preparing to depart on the first morning.

We were joined by Cammy Clark, a reporter from the *Miami Herald*, seen in the background talking with boat captain Gary Mace.





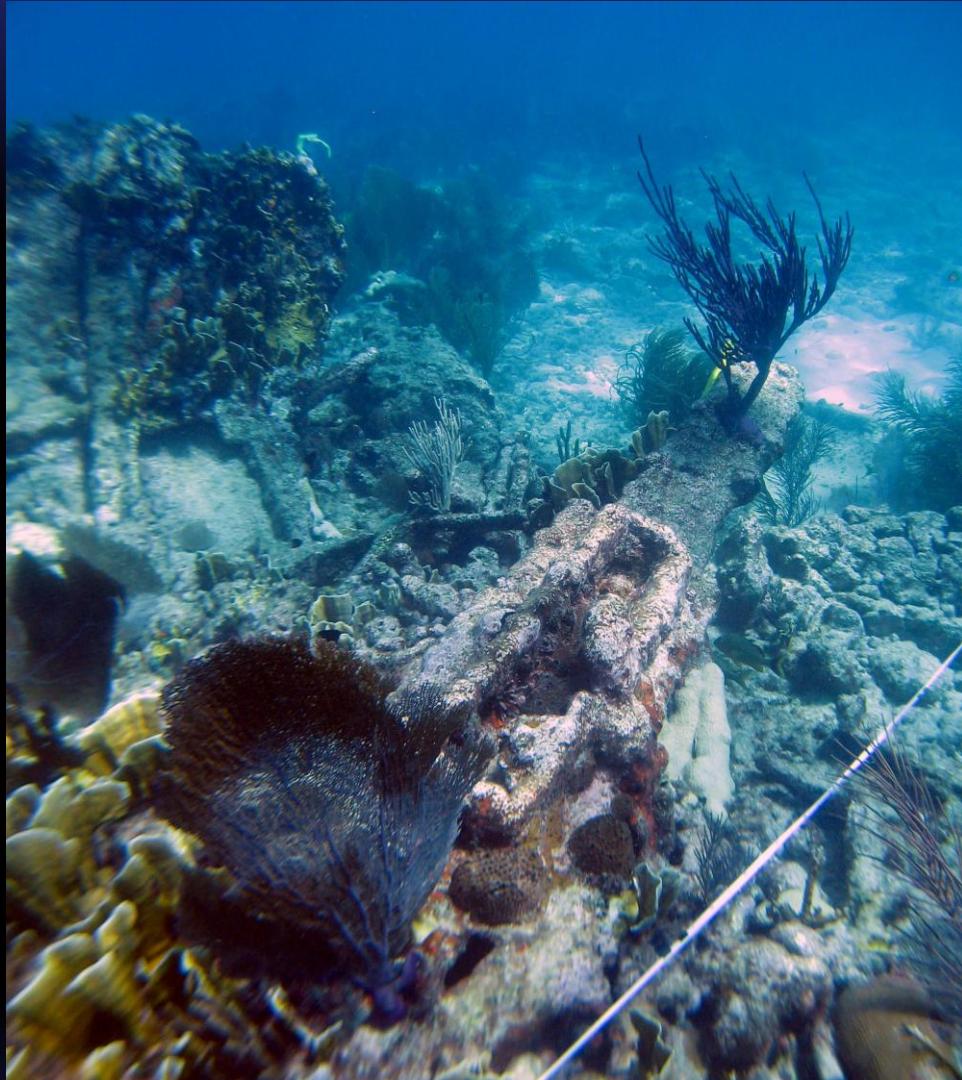
Unlike previous years, we had two days of good weather and calm seas.





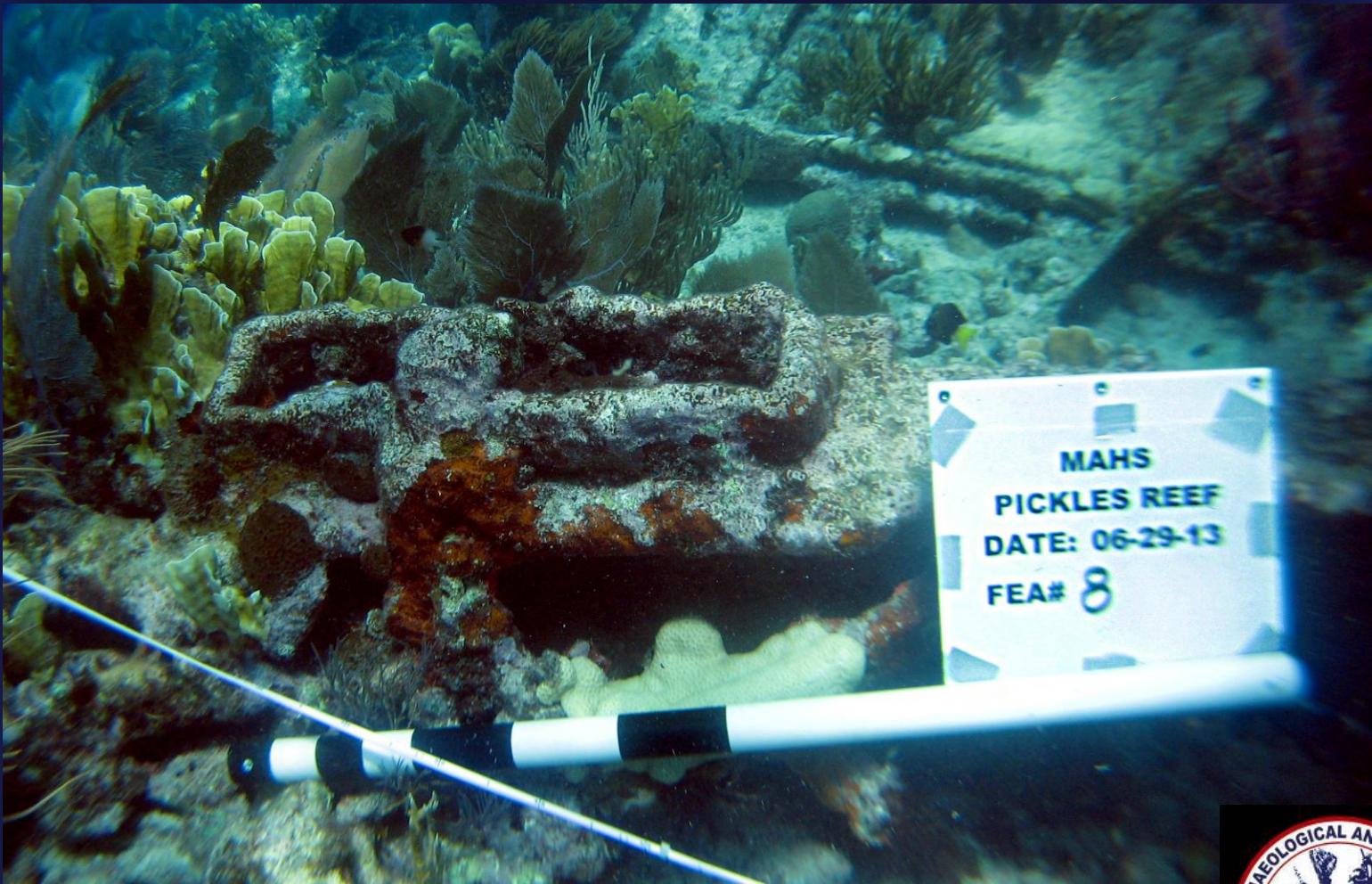
Off we go.





One of the main goals this year was to map and record two mast steps identified by Matthew Lawrence, archaeologist with Stellwagen Bank NMS.



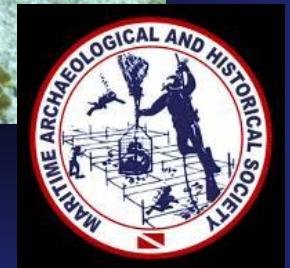


This is one of the two mast steps. The scale bar is metric and indicates that the feature is about 55 cm long, a little over one and a half feet.





It is still attached to what appears to be the keelson. In the background is a hull section rising out of the coral.



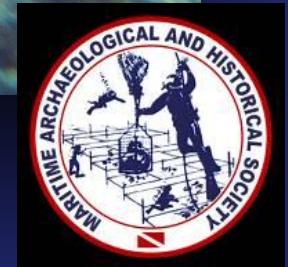


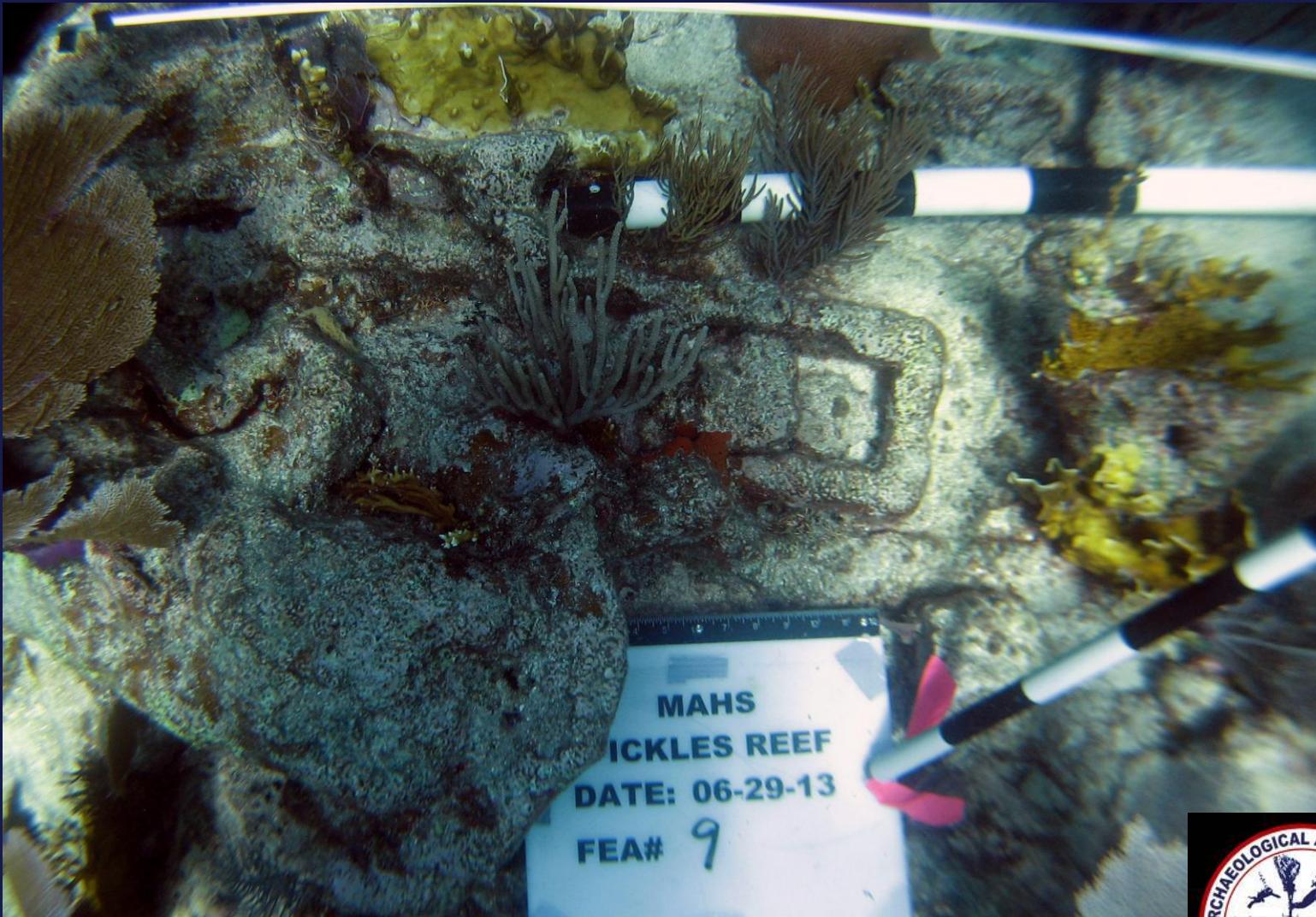
Jim Smailes and Jim Kinsella record the dimensions of the mast step.





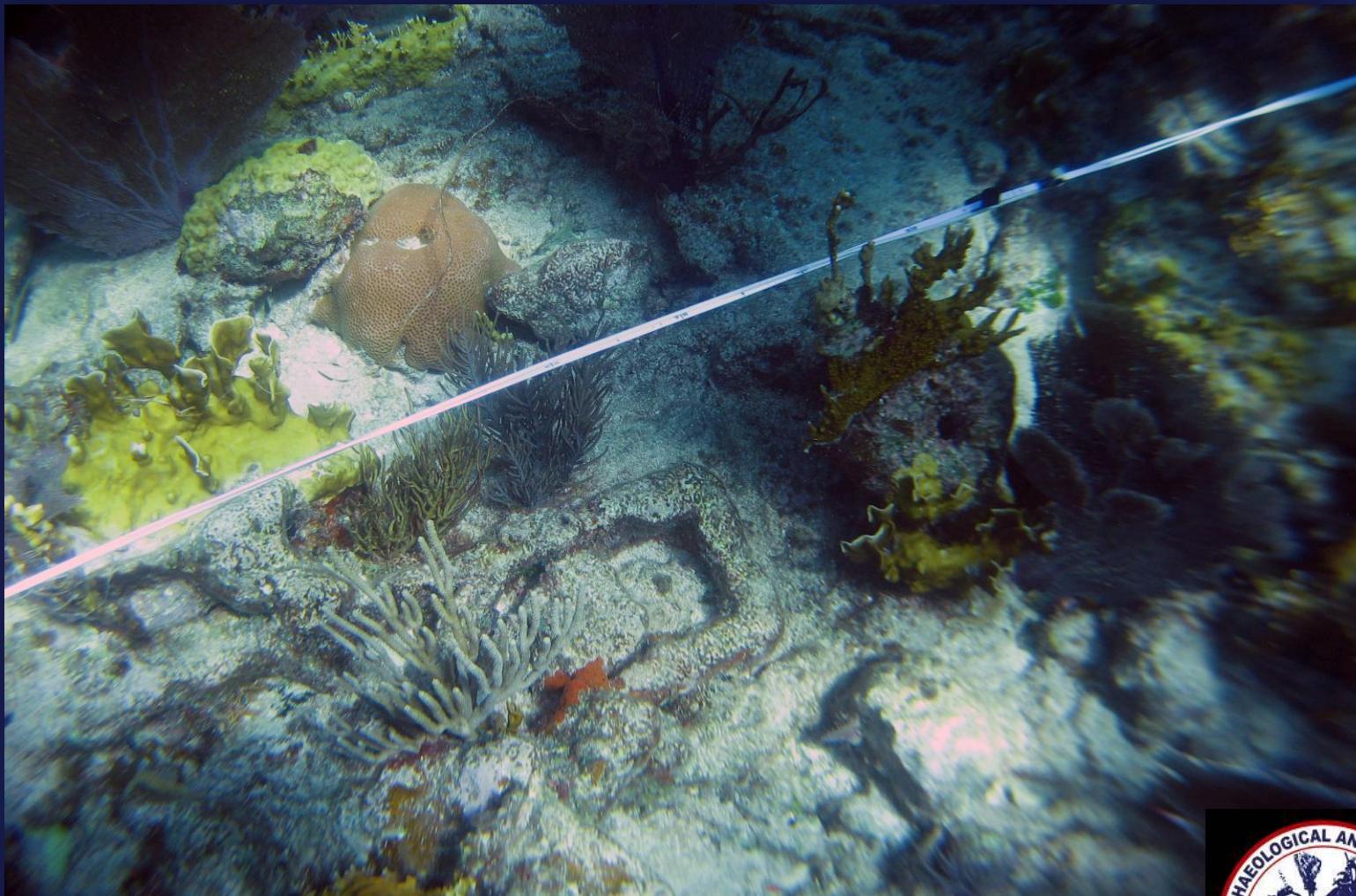
Eric and Per Kistler worked as a team documenting features near the mast step.





The second mast step, similar in size to the first, lies about 12 meters away along what would have been the centerline of the vessel.





Another view of the second mast step showing that it is more completely covered by coral and other marine growth.

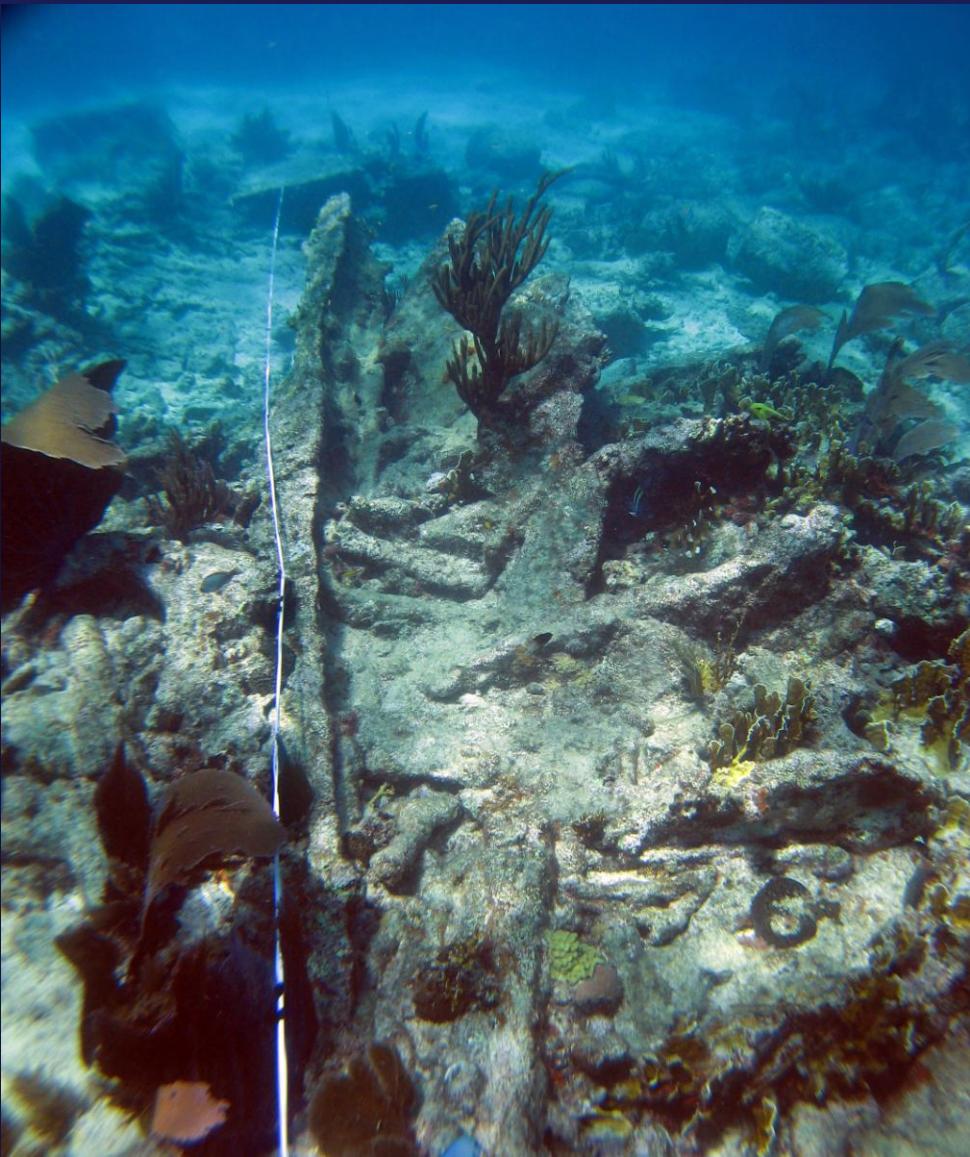




A conference at the stern of the dive boat.

This is something you wouldn't have seen previous years – the water would have been too rough to hang around this close to the ladder.





The baseline was established from the original site datum.

The datum lies in the sandy area in the background of the photo.

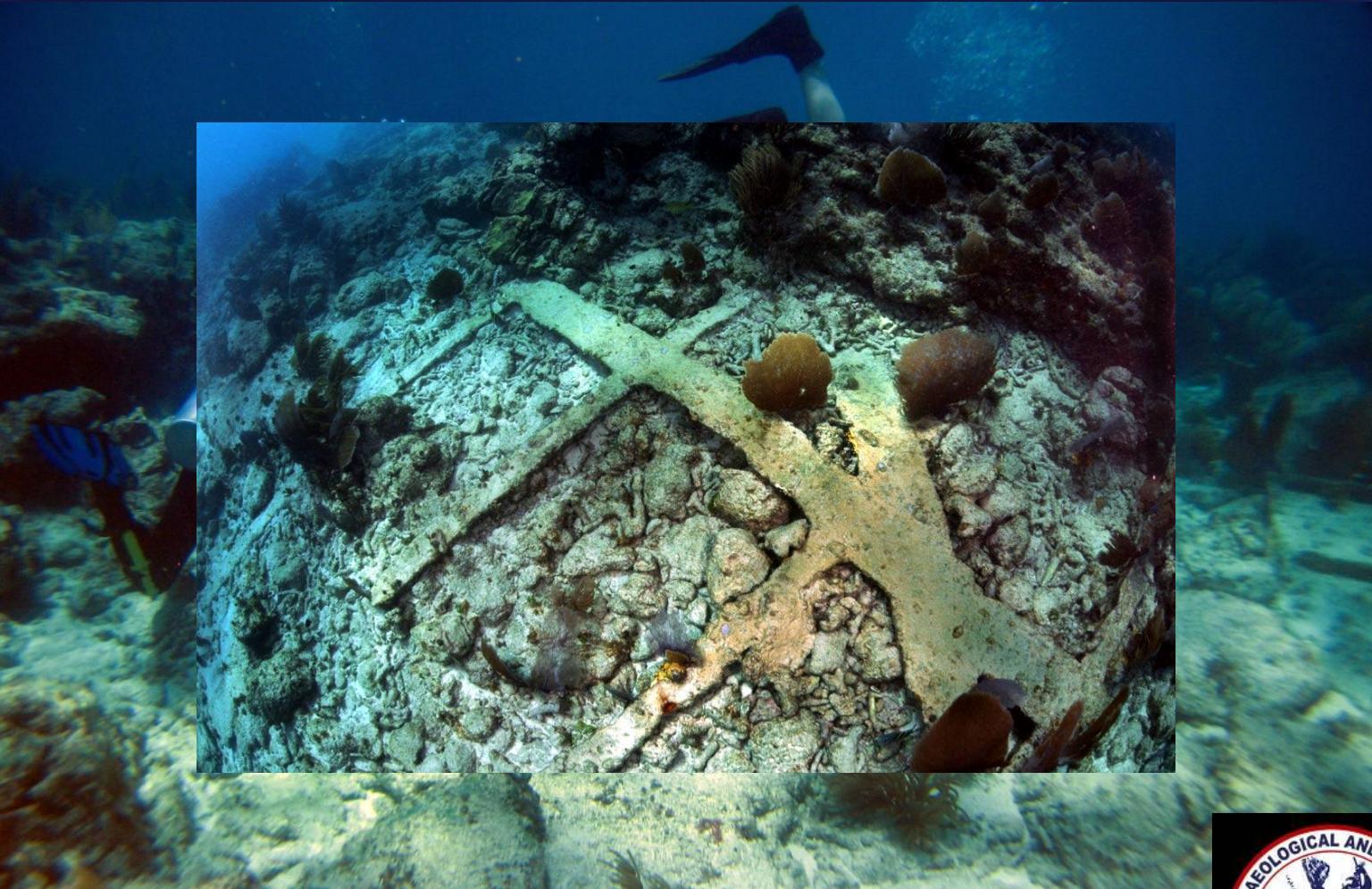
The line extends along a beam that approximates the centerline of the vessel and appears to be the keelson.





Steve Anthony and Bart Hosley document a feature separated from the main part of the wreck.





One idea is that the feature was part of the framing of the vessel.





Back at the mast steps, measuring and documentation continues.



Among the sea life on the reef this year were several large rays that cruised through the site several times.



At one point they circled back to watch a pair of divers measuring and drawing one of the site features.

Apparently satisfied with the job being done, they departed, wafting gracefully away into the distance.



The organizations involved in the project this season included:



MAHS – Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society, Washington, D.C.



NOAA / Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary



Conch Republic Divers



Photos by Erik Kistler, Jimmy Sommer, and Dennis Knepper.