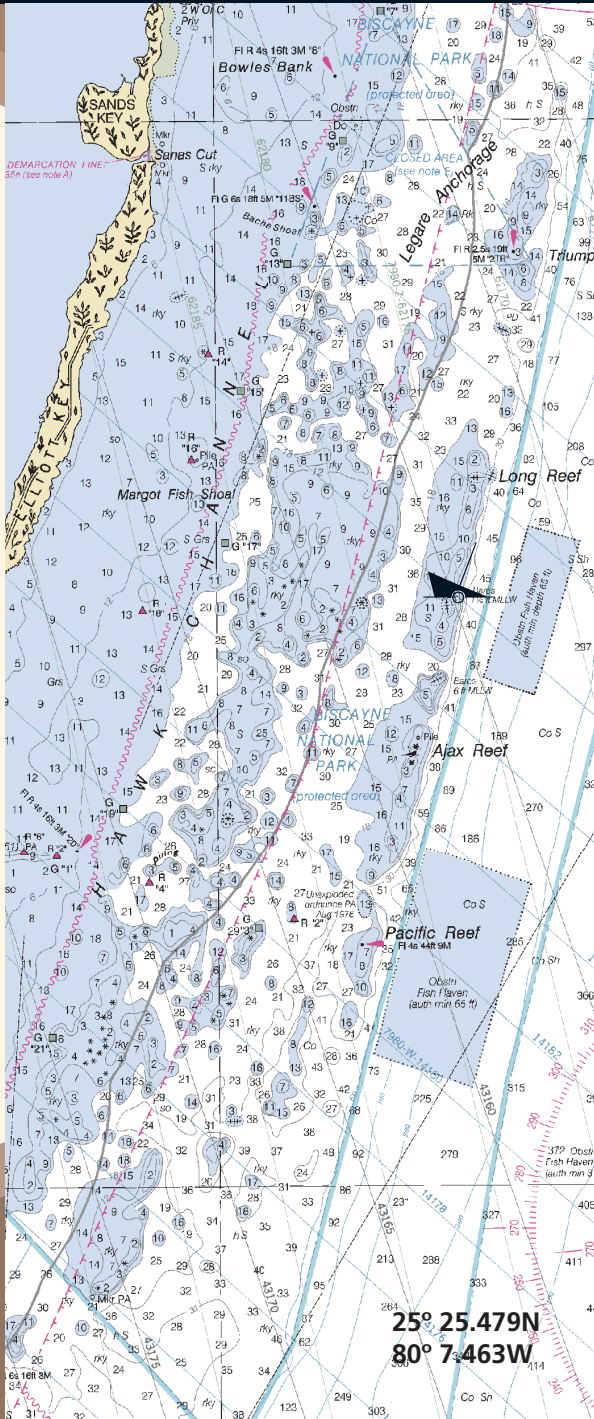


LOCATION



Biscayne

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Biscayne National Park was established as a national monument in 1968. In 1980 it was expanded to its current size of 173,000 acres and designated a national park to protect a rare combination of terrestrial and undersea life, to preserve a scenic subtropical setting, and to provide an outstanding spot for recreation and relaxation. The park is dedicated to the preservation and public enjoyment of natural and cultural resources.

Visit us online at: www.nps.gov/bisc



FLORIDA PUBLIC
ARCHAEOLOGY
NETWORK

The Florida Public Archaeology Network is dedicated to the protection of cultural resources, both on land and underwater, and to involving the public in the study of their past. Regional centers around Florida serve as clearinghouses for information, institutions for learning and training, and headquarters for public participation in archaeology.

Find out more at: www.flpublicarchaeology.org

Biscayne

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Biscayne National Park

Biscayne National Park Maritime Heritage Trail

Erl King

1865 - 1891



A lithograph of *Erl King* underway, created by Thomas G. Dutton from a painting by William Clark, probably made in 1865. (Image courtesy of the National Library of Australia)



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Erl King (1865 - 1891)

SITE PLAN

History

Erl King was a 306 foot, iron-hulled, three-masted steamer built by A. and J. Inglis Shipbuilders and Engineers of Glasgow, Scotland, in 1865. This barkentine-rigged steamship had a nearly 38 foot beam and displaced 2,178 tons. The ship's name is an English translation of the German Erlkonig (Alder King) who was a mythical mischief-making elf in German culture. The *Erl King* is most famously depicted in German poet Wolfgang Goethe's poem of the same name and in Franz Schubert's musical adaptation of the poem. *Erl King* was primarily a cargo ship, but also had first-class accommodations for 50 passengers.

Erl King was built for Robertson and Company of London, but sailed for several other firms under charter, and was captained by John Pinel while trading between China and Australia in its first few years of service.

Erl King ran aground at Tennessee Reef in the middle keys on January 18, 1881, but was removed, repaired, and returned to service. On December 16, 1891, she ran aground on Long Reef while on the way to New Orleans from Swansea, England. The steamer *Feliciana* noted that she was "afloat with two anchors out," while the crew was attempting to conduct repairs. Insurers from Key West reported that cargo was being salvaged, but the ship itself was doomed. Some of her machinery, as well as 200 tons of cargo were saved. Hull plates were reportedly removed for scrap metal during World War II.

The outline of *Erl King's* hull and remains of its cargo can now be seen in 18 feet of water on Long Reef. All that remains of its cargo are cylindrical-shaped concrete objects that were once wooden barrels filled with dry concrete mix. The wooden barrels have long since been consumed by shipworms, leaving the concrete casts we see today.

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Remember: Take Only Pictures, Leave Only Bubbles.

