The Copenhagen was built in England in 1898 and was one of several single-screw steamships that became the pride of Glasgow’s merchant fleet. Constructed for cargo capacity and strength with a double bottom, and powered by triple expansion steam engines, the ship was put into service under contracts across the Atlantic. Her career was cut short, on May 26, 1900, when she ran hard aground on a rocky ledge close to shore just south of Pompano Beach. She was carrying 4,940 tons of coal on a voyage from Philadelphia to Havana. Despite extensive salvage efforts, the ship could not be freed from the reef, although her cargo was saved. The Copenhagen remained visible above the water for years until WWII naval fighter pilots helped her to become part of the reef by using her for target practice.

LOCATION

The wreck of the Copenhagen is located approximately 3.3 nautical miles south of Hillsboro Inlet just outside the second reef on the “Pompano Drop Off” adjacent to mooring buoys 3 and 4. Wreckage is scattered over an area of approximately 300 feet or more. The wreck lies with her bow pointed to the south and is approximately parallel to the reef. The depth varies from 16 to 31 feet, making it an ideal recreational dive spot.

LORAN Coordinates: 14269.7, 62103.7
GPS Coordinates: 26°12.349′N, 80°05.108′W

As with all other historical or archaeological sites on submerged bottomlands, the Copenhagen is protected by Florida laws forbidding the unauthorized disturbance, excavation or removal of artifacts. Please help keep the site intact for others and have a safe visit by observing the following rules:

• Please do not anchor on the site; tie your boat to the mooring buoys.
• If you are not using the buoys, anchor only in sand, as it is against Florida law to anchor in coral.
• Maneuver slowly in the area of buoys and watch for divers.
• Do not disturb or remove any coral on the reef.
• Use safe diving practices and display a diver’s down flag.
• Divers should use caution and avoid sharp edges and rough surfaces. Beware of becoming entangled in stray fishing lines.
• Please do not spearfish, collect or harvest marine life on the wreck or within 500 feet.

BROWARD COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION

This public document was promulgated at a cost of $107.63 per copy to educate the public on Broward County’s first Underwater Archaeological Preserve.

An equal opportunity employer and provider of services (minority/female/incapacitated veteran).
THE VIEW FROM DOWN UNDER

The Copenhagen provides an ideal haven for an abundance of marine life. Although much of the wreckage has been flattened over time, the frame and knees of the lower hull are readily apparent. The steel hull provides a substrate for hard and soft corals and multi-colored sponges. Juvenile reef fish and tropicals of many varieties dart in and out of the twisted structure, which serves as a sheltered nursery. Gorgonians and sea fans sway in the gentle surge along the length of the ship. The pillow block which supported the propeller shaft is a focal point for curious parrotfish. The empty beds for the ship's two boilers house a population of damselfish and sergeant majors energetically defending their niche in the sunken wreck. Coal from the ship's bunkers, although camouflaged by marine growth, litters the sea bottom near the wreck. Small lumps of black anthracite are visible around the periphery of the wreckage.