



MARINE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME

GUIDE: PREHISTORIC LANDSCAPES



WHY ARE PREHISTORIC LANDSCAPES IMPORTANT?

Some of the first things that spring to mind when you think of underwater heritage are shipwrecks and aircraft wrecks. Whilst shipwrecks are important, there is a huge range of other exciting and significant material that can be discovered under the sea. When sea levels were much lower than they are today our early ancestors would have exploited the vast areas of land which is now underwater. They may have left behind evidence of their activities. Prehistoric finds hold information which enables us to understand the human past so that we can protect it for future generations.



WHAT WOULD I EXPECT TO DISCOVER?

Finds relating to prehistoric landscapes often occur by chance through recreational divers and fishermen. Prehistoric finds include organic material, such as peat, charcoal, animal remains and fragments of bone, wood, leather and textiles, and stone tools and other artefacts. Prehistoric finds can be exposed on the seabed, although this is not always the case. The identification of sites is not always indicated through the presence of man-made objects. Prehistoric sites can be well preserved despite tidal currents on the seabed and multiple phases of sea level change and ice ages in the past.

There is a statutory obligation to report wreck to the Receiver of Wreck, part of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

For further information about the Marine Antiquities Scheme please visit: www.marinefinds.org.uk

The Marine Antiquities Scheme is supported by:

