



During May 2010 I will start my journey and it is my intention to:

- Paddle the TOURA-SKI sponsored by STEALTH.
- Document on video the beauty of the coastline and marine life when conditions are favourable/ allow .
- Complete the trip unsupported with sleeping arrangements made on landfall wherever that may be.
- Paddle over the last known positions of 10 of the most prominent wrecks and record a short history of events surrounding the sinking of each vessel.
- Troll for supper along the way.
- Photograph, and record details of each capture.
- Donate any sponsorship generated from this excursion towards legal costs of “Save Vetch’s Association” because I strongly believe that sites such as Vetch’s Pier are being exploited at the expense of the grounding effect of the ocean and the healing attributes of nature.



The ski will be E’chipped to enable the monitoring of progress on the website [www.savevetchs.com](http://www.savevetchs.com) by clicking on the tab

“African Wave Adventure”  
(site hosted by greenpoint technologies )

The web page will also daily display (signal dependant) images of fish , views of prominent land masses, prevailing sea and surf conditions and a review of the shipwreck located.

A journal of the trip will be available to fishing/paddling media.

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**Mantra of this adventure:**

**Too often we are caught up with replays of the past or imaginings of the future; consequently, missing out on the beauty of the here-and-now!**

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Ten Prominent Wrecks Between “Kei River and Ponta do Ouro”

Kei River mouth to Port Edward

This beautiful, unspoilt stretch of coast , also know as the Wild Coast, is the traditional home of the Xhosa and Pondo people. It is a long , rocky coast interspersed with sandy beaches, river mouths and estuaries. The sea is warm due to the Agulhas current, but the shore is usually pounded by heavy ground swells. The coast is a popular tourist venue noted for its unspoilt character. The climate is warm and humid and the vegetation on land is lush. The only major settlement along the coast is Port St Johns, a popular holiday resort situated at the Mzimvubu River mouth.

The river cuts through a deep ravine cloaked with sub-tropical vegetation before spilling out into the sea on a wide sandy beach.

Place names associated with shipwrecks are Agate Terrace at Port St Johns, named after the trade beads from the *Nossa Senhora de Belem* (1635) which wash up there;

Clan Lindsay Rocks at Mazeppa Bay, named after the the steamer *Clan Lindsay* wrecked there in 1898; Port Grosvenor on the Pondoland coast, the supposed but incorrect spot of the wrecking of the *Grosvenor* in 1782; and Twine Point near the Xhora River, named after the cargo of hemp which washed ashore from the wreck of the *Calcutta* in 1881.

*Nossa Senhora de Belem*

31\*37.00S, 29\*34.00E

Although not include on the list of wrecks I intend paddling over due to the fact that its location is too far out to sea, I have included a short transcript as it has relevance to a prominent place name.

Wrecked a little north-east of Port St Johns on 24 July 1635 while on a homeward bound voyage from Goa to Lisbon with a cargo of Eastern goods and pepper. Her crew of 145 men were ill with scurvy and the ship was unsound. No lives were lost; the crew stayed at the wreck site for six months and built two boats. The one boat reached Luanda 48 days later, but the other was lost.

1) *SS Clan Lindsay*

32\* 28.80S, 28\* 39.0E

Clan Line steamer of 2 668 tons, built in 1896 and commanded by Capt J.Schofield . Wrecked at Clan Lindsay Rocks in Mazeppa bay on the Transkei coast on 20 March 1898 while on a voyage to Mauritius. No lives were lost.

2) *Idomene*

32\* 26.50S, 28\* 41.00E

British iron ship of 1 390 tons, built in 1874 and commanded by Capt William Roy. Wrecked at the Qora River in Transkei on 14 November 1887 at night while on a voyage from Rangoon to London with a cargo of rice. The captain and 12 seamen drowned and buried at Qora Rive. Eleven other crew members were saved and taken to East London by ox-wagon.

3) *Calcutta*

32° 10.00S, 28° 59.00E

American ship of 843 tons commanded by Capt Andrew J. Smith. Wrecked a little south-west of the Qora River mouth in the Transkei on 28 July 1881 while on a voyage from Cebu in the Philippines to Boston with a cargo of flax, sugar and manila hemp. The captain and 12 crew drowned; three were saved. The vessel was wrecked at Twine Point, named after the hemp (twine) which washed ashore.

4) *Grosvenor*

31° 22.40S, 29° 55.00E

British vessel of 729 tons in the service of the English East India Company, commanded by Capt John Coxcon. Wrecked in the big gully to the north-east of the Tezani Stream, near Port Grosvenor in Pondoland, on 4 August 1782 at night during a south-west gale while on a homeward-bound voyage from Trincomalee in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Of the 150 people on board, 128 set out on an epic journey to the Cape through native territory. The vessel was reputed to carry a fortune of gold. Captain Sydney Turner recovered cast iron cannon and gold and silver coins in 1880. Iron ballast and cannon are evident on the site.

5) *Sa`o Bento*

31° 19.60S, 29° 59.00E

Portuguese East-Indiaman of 22 guns, commanded by Ferna`o D'Alvares Cabral. Wrecked at the mouth of a gully on the seaward side of the island at the Msakaba River mouth on the Pondoland Coast after being disabled in a storm on 21 April 1554 while on a homeward-bound voyage from Cochin, India, which she had left on 15 February 1554 with a cargo including pepper, cotton, Chinese porcelain, coconuts, silk and spices packed in 72 crates. Forty-four Portuguese and over 100 slaves lost their lives; 98 Portuguese and 224 slaves landed safely and travelled overland to Delagoa Bay (Maputo) but only a few made it.

They passed the *Sa`o Jo`ao* wreck (1552) on the way. A great deal of broken porcelain has been found scattered on the island. Eighteen bronze cannon have been recovered; many lead cannon-balls have also been recovered.

### Port Edward to the South Pier, Durban, and the Aliwal Shoal

This densely populated stretch is a popular tourist venue in South Africa. The coastline consists of many sandy beaches, estuaries and river mouths interspersed with rocky headlands. The sea is warm due to the Mozambique current and the shore although less severe than the “Wild Coast” can also be affected by heavy ground swells.

Spearfisherman and fishermen visit the coast regularly, but sharks are a very real danger and many of the holiday beaches have anti-shark nets installed. The climate is sub-tropical and vegetation on land is lush. Aliwal Shoal is a large, submerged reef lying offshore. It is a popular diving venue and water is usually clear. Tropical fish can be found on the reefs. The coast has many small settlements such as Port Edward, Margate, Scottburgh and Amanzimtoti. Place names associated with shipwrecks are Ivy Point, named after the British barque *Ivy* wrecked there in 1878; and Winkelspruit, named after the shop Capt Sydney Turner set up to sell the cargo of the British schooner, wrecked in 1875, which he had bought.

#### 6) *Sa`o Joa`o*

32° 02.00S, 30° 14.20E

Portuguese East-Indiaman commanded by Manuel de Sousa Sepulveda. Wrecked on the Natal South Coast north of the Mtamvuna River on 11 June 1552 after being disabled during a storm while on a homeward-bound voyage from Cochin, India, in the company of the *Sa`o Jeronymo*, which was wrecked on the Zululand Coast. Of the more than 200 Portuguese and more than 400 slaves on board, over 100 drowned. The survivors walked to Delagoa Bay (Maputo) and were later rescued by boat and taken to Mozambique. The *Sa`o Bento* survivors claim to have passed the wreck site in 1554.

7) *MV Produce*

30° 15.00S, 30° 49.30E

Norwegian bulk carrier of 13 358 tons, built in 1960 and commanded by Capt Tormod Boge. Struck Aliwal Shoal and sank about 3 km off the Mkomaas River on the Natal South Coast on 11 August 1974 while on a voyage from Durban to the United Kingdom with a full cargo of molasses. No lives were lost, as they were rescued by the Safmarine freighter *SA Oranjeland*, which was wrecked at East London on 13 August 1974.

Durban to Ponta do Ouro

Known as the Natal North Coast/Zululand, this stretch of coast consists of long sandy beaches. The water is warm due to the Mozambique current; in the north it is usually clear, and the first signs of tropical coral appear on the reefs. The coast is popular tourist venue and is often visited by divers and spearfishermen. Sharks are a very real danger. The climate is sub-tropical, with an extremely high humidity. The main settlements along the coast are Ballito and Richards Bay, which has developed into a large port. The main features are the large St Lucia Estuary, which is home to hippos and crocodiles and many other species of animal. There are many inland bodies of water along the coast, and malaria can be a problem. Ponta do Ouro demarcates the border between South Africa and Mozambique.

8) *SS Octopus*

29° 33.00S, 31° 12.60E

British registered steel twin-screw hopper dredger of 969 tons commanded by Capt Thomas Ogilvie. Ran ashore a little south of Ballito Bay on the Natal North Coast on 15 October 1906. She had been sold by her former owners the Natal Government, to the Administration of Geelong in Australia and had been working in Durban for many years. She was being delivered to her new owners in Australia and was heavily laden with 780 tons of coal for the voyage. Shortly after leaving Durban harbor she experienced heavy weather and began taking water, which extinguished her furnaces. She was abandoned by her crew after they had released a messenger pigeon, and then ran ashore.

9) *SS Timavo*

27\* 52.00S, 32\* 36.50E

Italian cargo vessel 7 549 tons, built in 1920. Beached a few kilometers north of Leven Point in Zululand in June 1940. She had slipped out of Durban harbour after Italy had declared war on the Allies, and was making her way up the coast when she was forced ashore by Air Force aircraft. She lies 200 m offshore in the sand.

10) *SS Saxon*

26\* 55.60S, 32\* 53.20E

Portuguese iron screw steamer of 462 tons, built in 1887. Wrecked on a reef 1 km south of the mouth of Kosi Bay near the Mozambique border on 29 January 1896 while on a voyage from Durban to Maputo. The crew and passengers landed safely in Delagoa Bay in the lifeboats. This wreck is the most northerly on the coast of South Africa and is a popular diving venue.

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