Lab: Nautical Charts

A nautical chart is a graphical representation of a maritime area and adjacent coastal areas. Think of it as a topographical map of marine, estuarine and freshwater areas for use by boaters and researchers. Answer the following questions based on the nautical chart given to you.

1. This chart was reproduced from charts made from what agency?

2. What was the year this chart corrected to (updated)?

3. Given that this chart is older, how might the area have changed over time?

4. Describe the general location of your chart on the map of Florida presented in class.

5. What is the major body of water shown on your chart?

6. What is the closest major city to the area depicted?

7. What is the range of latitude shown? (given in degrees (º) and minutes (ˊ) along the sides)

8. What is the range of longitude shown? (given in degrees (º) and minutes (ˊ) along the top and bottom)

9. What is the scale used?

10. Using the scale, relate nautical miles and yards.

11. What is the depth interval used? (what is the smallest difference between two adjacent depths?)

12. Located the compass rose and describe its direction compared to the chart. Does north point straight up on the paper? Why or why not?

13. The inner circle of the compass says "magnetic". What does this indicate and why does it not line up with the outer circle?

14. List five major landmarks on your chart.

15. Identify and describe an underwater area with a steep slope. (depths changing rapidly over a small distance)

16. Identify and describe an underwater area with a gentle slope. (depths changing slowly over a large distance)

17. Where would you look for salt marshes or mangroves in this area? Why?

18. Shipwrecks are identified by a picture of a tipping ship or a ship frame. Find a shipwreck and describe its general location and water depth. With that in mind, why might that ship have sunk?

19. Are there any protected areas on your chart? If so, what are they?

20. What would be the three biggest human impacts on this area?