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NEPTUNE blue trails

THE HELLCAT



**Warning
FRAGILE**



Diving



**Cultural and
natural**



**Low
frequentation**

Geographic location

France, Région Sud, Le Rayol-Canadel

Name of the conservation area (or protected area)

Marine area adjacent to Port-Cros National Park

Level of environmental protection

Natura 2000 Var coast

Name of the dive site

THE HELLCAT

Geographic coordinates (reference system)

LAT	N 42°59'592"
LONG	E 06°16'436"
Reference system	EPSG-4326 - WGS 84 system



LOCATION



Access to the dive site by boat

Site characteristics

Maximum depth

57 metres

Difficulty

deepwater wreck



Cultural and natural

Information about the managing body

Port-Cros National Park manages the adjacent marine area. The marine observatory of the Golfe de St-Tropez District Community Council manages the Var coast of the Natura 2000 zone. Together, they conduct concertation between professional divers and fishermen, municipalities, government bodies, etc., to define the actions and protective measures to carry out.



INFORMATION



Diving



**Permit not
required**

WARNING

Due to the presence of fishing lines, nets, sharp metal parts, and fragile structures that can break without warning, wrecks can be dangerous for divers. Entering a wreck requires skill and specific training and equipment as well as the respect of safety rules.



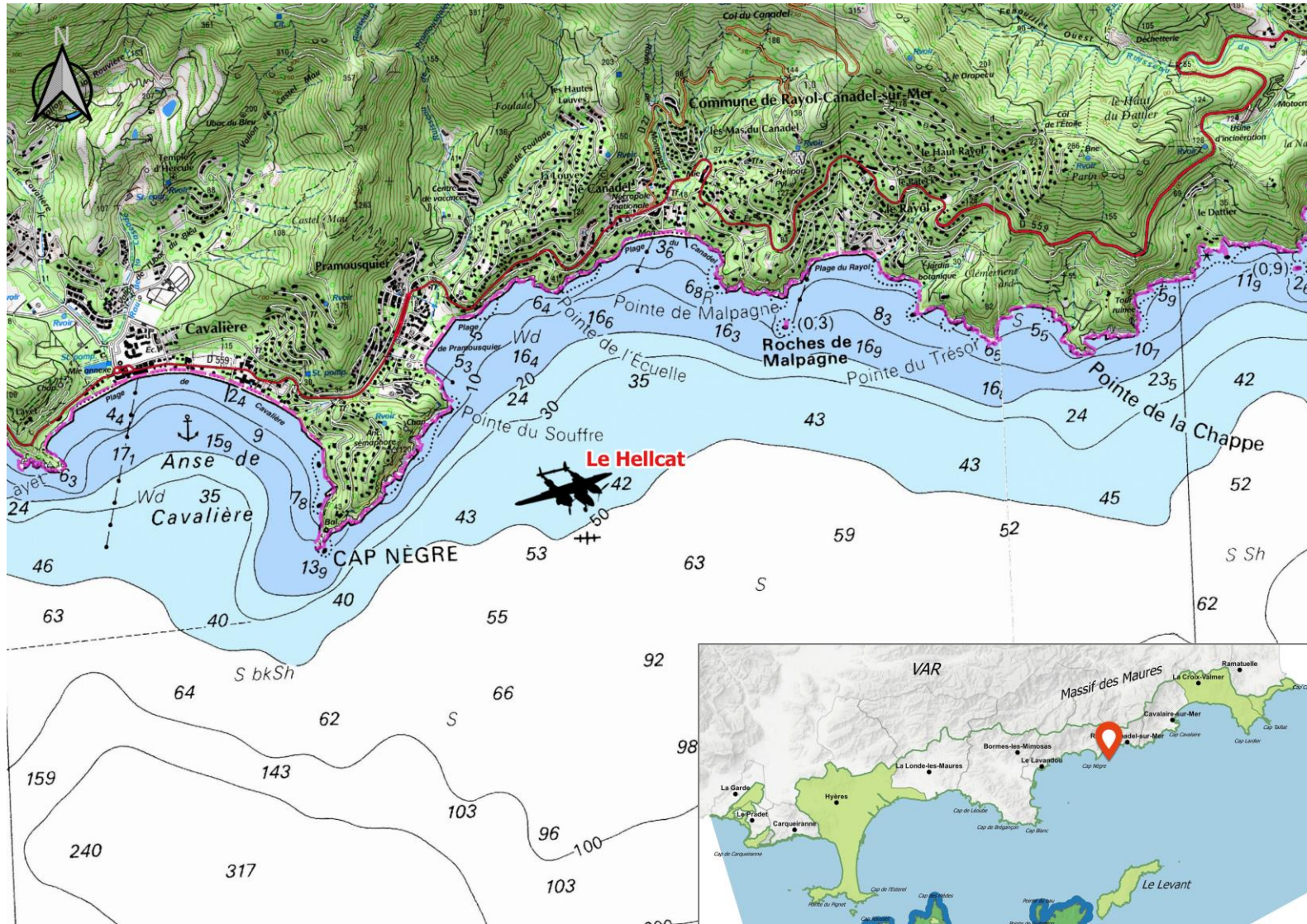
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MAP

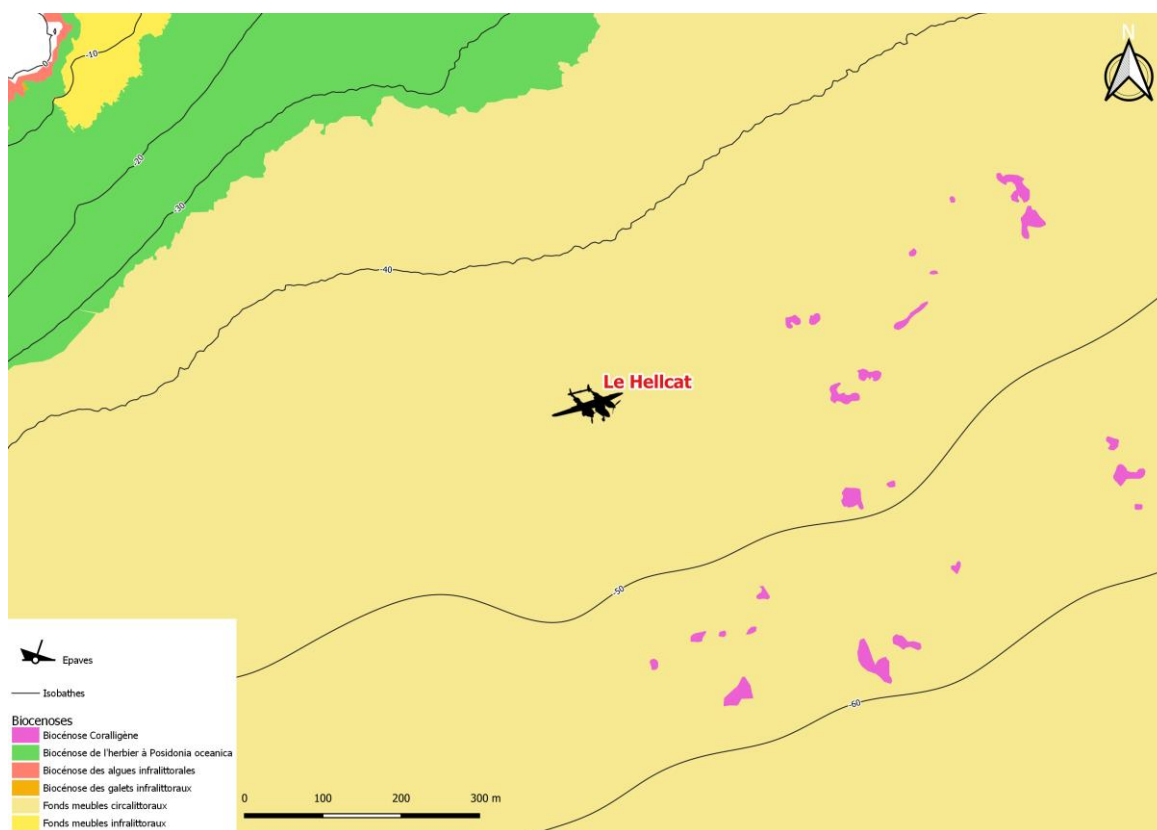


Warning FRAGILE



Description of the site of natural interest

The wreck lies on a sandy bed that is incessantly explored by striped red mullet (*Mullus surmuletus*). It is home to conger eels (*Conger conger*), a few swallowtail sea perch (*Anthias anthias*), small red scorpionfish (*Scorpaena notata*) and the occasional melon sea urchin (*Echinus melo*).



NATURAL

Area of the main habitats (within a radius of 100 m around the site):

- **Unconsolidated bottom in the circalittoral zone**

To protect biodiversity

- Avoid touching underwater flora and fauna
- Do not chase fish
- Do not feed them
- Do not bring anything to the surface
- Beware of uncontrolled flipper movements, check your floatation gear
- Check that your emergency regulator is properly attached to your BCD jacket and in no case allow your equipment to trail behind you as it risks getting caught on flora and fauna.



NATURAL

Small red scorpionfish, *Scorpaena notata*
Parc national de Port-Cros © Jean-Georges HARMELIN



The Hellcat, Melon sea urchin, *Echinus melo*
Parc national de Port-Cros © Dominique BARRAY



The Hellcat, Conger eel, *Conger conger*
Parc national de Port-Cros © Dominique BARRAY



Striped red mullet, *Mullus surmuletus*
Parc national de Port-Cros © Jean-Georges HARMELIN

List of main species

- **Swallowtail sea perch** , *Anthias anthias*
- **Conger eel**, *Conger conger*
- **Melon sea urchin**, *Echinus melo*
- **Small red scorpionfish**, *Scorpaena notata*
- **Striped red mullet**, *Mullus surmuletus*

Description of the site of cultural interest

The Hellcat fighter-bomber was designed by Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corp. during the Second World War to replace the Wildcat. 12,275 units were built from 1942 to 1945. It had a wingspan of 13.05 m and a length of 10.2 m. It was powered by a 2000 hp Pratt and Whitney R-2800-10, and could reach 605 kph with a ceiling of 11,450 m. It had a range of 1755 km. This unit was purchased by France in 1950 and served in Indochina before being brought to Hyères in August 1954.

The wreck:

On 14 May 1956, second master Jack Langin was at the controls. A young pilot freshly out of the American pilot school who had been assigned to the 54S squadron based in Hyères, he was carrying out a low-altitude manoeuvrability exercise in order to obtain his aircraft carrier landing qualification. An error of judgement caused him to brutally hit the surface twice. The engine stalled and the aircraft sank. The pilot was saved with a fracture. Today, the aircraft lies flat on a gentle slope amid rocks. The propellor is missing and the cockpit is open. One of the wings touches the sand and the other is in open water.

Illustration of the Hellcat
@ Jean-Pierre JONCHERAY





CULTURAL

Photos of underwater cultural heritage

WARNING

Wrecks and all traces of underwater cultural heritage are protected by law. It is prohibited to bring anything to the surface.

Le Hellcat, tail - Parc national de Port-Cros
© Dominique BARRAY



The Hellcat, ambiance
Parc national de Port-Cros © Dominique BARRAY



The Hellcat, ambiance - Parc national de Port-Cros
© Dominique BARRAY



The Hellcat, melon sea urchin - Parc national de Port-Cros
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