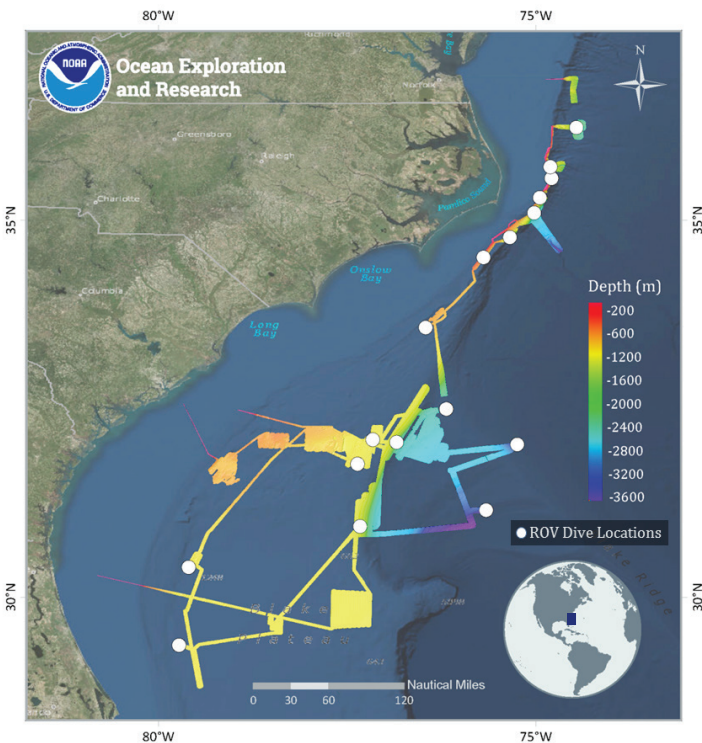


# Windows to the Deep 2018: Exploration of the Southeast U.S. Continental Margin (EX1805 and EX1806)

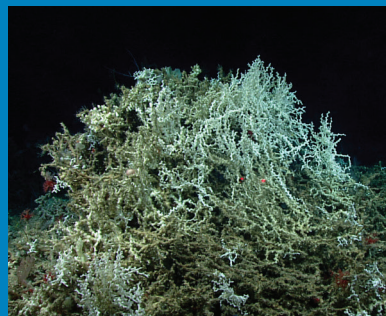
NOAA Ship *Okeanos Explorer*  
May 22 – July 2, 2018



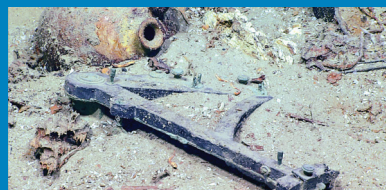
Ocean Exploration  
and Research



Overview map showing seafloor bathymetry and ROV dives completed during the **Windows to the Deep 2018** expedition. Map courtesy of the NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research.



The Windows to the Deep 2018 Expedition and previous *Okeanos Explorer* mapping efforts, revealed one of the largest areas of potential deep-sea coral reef habitat that has been discovered to date in U.S. waters. Through both mapping and visual surveys, this expedition added substantial evidence that the numerous mounds on the Stetson Mesa offshore of Florida and Georgia appear to be the slow accumulation of *Lophelia pertusa* coral skeletal material over hundreds of thousands of years. This expedition only explored three mounds, but all were rich with live coral stands at their crests. New data highlights the vastness of potential deep-sea coral habitat in this region.



Characterized the [Blake Ridge Wreck](#) and collected data that was used by BOEM to make a [3D photogrammetry model](#). This wreck was originally discovered by a team from Duke University in 2015 and is likely an early 19th century wreck.



Conducted six ship tours for 66 people, including tours for the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean, Virginia Sea Grant, NOAA partners, South Carolina Aquarium and Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum staff, and students from the College of Charleston.



29,600+ square kilometers of seafloor mapped



17 ROV dives at a depth range of 325 to 3,436 meters



175 biological and 38 geological samples collected



corals and sponges were documented during 16 ROV dives



140+ participating scientists, resource managers, and students



245,700+ live video views and coverage from 80+ news articles