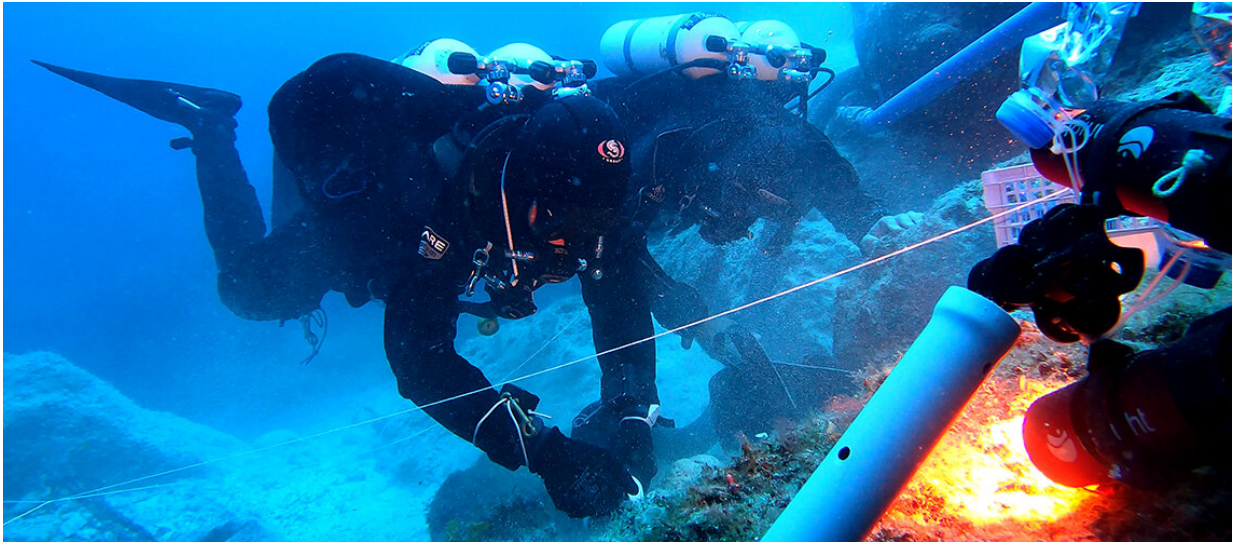


# New discoveries on the wreck of Antikythera

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Underwater excavation work. Credit: ESAG-UNIGE

The wreck of Antikythera was recently brought into the spotlight by the film "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny." Far from the cinematic imagination, an international team of archaeologists, divers, engineers and physical and natural scientists is currently excavating the famous wreck.

This year, the researchers have made significant progress in acquiring detailed knowledge of the site's structure, stratigraphy, the [wreck](#) itself and its precious cargo. In addition, previously unexplored areas have been meticulously documented, enabling a more transparent and precise

understanding of this legendary vessel.

The expedition, which took place from 19 May to 18 June 2023, was led by Dr. Angeliki G. Simosi, Head of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Piraeus and the Islands, and Lorenz Baumer, professor of Archaeology at the University of Geneva (UNIGE).

It is part of a five-year UNIGE research program (2021-2025). The overall aim of these excavations is to better understand the circumstances surrounding the sinking, by closely examining the wreck's preservation and positioning, its possible route and its cargo. This season's discoveries are essential to formulating a global vision of this tragic historical event.

## **Cutting-edge technologies**

The progress of the excavations was meticulously documented using remote-controlled drones and digital capture by the divers. This data was processed daily using 3D modeling software, enabling the site to be visualized and analyzed with remarkable precision. In addition, all [archaeological finds](#) were rigorously documented and continuously integrated into a Geographic Information System (GIS), enabling the spatial and temporal distribution of discoveries to be analyzed.

The database for this ambitious project includes all known data on the wreck of Antikythera, dating back to the first excavations carried out in 1900-1901. This [holistic approach](#) enables an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the site, taking into account all previously collected information.

## **Second ship discovered**

Excavations focused on the area at the eastern edge of the shipwreck site, where last year parts of monumental marble statues were found after the removal of a group of large natural boulders. This time, the team discovered the bone remains of at least one other individual, a tragic victim of this devastating shipwreck.

Artifacts characteristic of the wreck of Antikythera, such as fragments of marble statues, pottery, glassware and copper alloy, lead and wooden elements of the ship's structure, were also unearthed. Among the marble fragments discovered, one most probably belongs to the beard of the head of Herakles, previously discovered during the 2022 expedition. These finds confirm the cultural and artistic importance of the Antikythera wreck.

In addition, an exciting discovery was made at a higher stratigraphic level. Several fragments of late ceramics have been unearthed, indicating that another, probably much smaller, vessel suffered the same tragic fate in proto-Byzantine times.

This new information opens up exciting perspectives on the maritime history of the region, and underlines the importance of continuing [archaeological research](#) in this area.

The wreck of Antikythera, dating from the first half of the 1st century BC, is the richest ancient wreck ever discovered in Greece. Located by chance off the coast of the island of Antikythera in 1900, it was excavated by Commander Cousteau in the 1970s and then by Greek archaeologists between 2012 and 2020. Since 2021, the project has been coordinated by the University of Geneva under the aegis of the Swiss Archaeological School in Greece.

Provided by University of Geneva

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