

# World's oldest ship timbers found in Egypt

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The world's oldest remains of a seafaring ship have been found in caves at the edge of the Egyptian desert.

The discovery suggests ancient Egyptians sailed nearly 1,000 miles on rough waters to get treasures from a place they called God's Land, or Punt.

Florida State University anthropology Professor Cheryl Ward says wooden planks found in the manmade caves are about 4,000 years old -- making them the world's most ancient ship timbers.

Shipworms that had tunneled into the planks indicated the ships had weathered a long voyage of a few months, likely to the fabled southern Red Sea trading center of Punt -- a place referenced in hieroglyphics on empty cargo boxes found in the caves, Ward said.

"The archaeological site is like a mothballed military base, and the artifacts there tell a story of some of the best organized administrators the world has ever seen," she said. "It's a site that has kept its secrets for 40 centuries."

Ward will detail the discovery in an upcoming issue of the International Journal of Nautical Archaeology.

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