

# WWII Japanese Submarine Found Near Hawaii

**HONOLULU (AP) - The wreckage of a large World War II-era Japanese submarine has been found by researchers in waters off Hawaii.**

A research team from the University of Hawaii discovered the I-401 submarine Thursday during test dives off Oahu.

"We thought it was rocks at first, it was so huge," said Terry Kerby, pilot of the research craft that found the vessel. "But the sides of it kept going up and up and up, three and four stories tall. It's a leviathan down there, a monster."

The submarine is from the I-400 Sensuikan Toku class of subs, the largest built before the nuclear ballistic missile submarines of the 1960s.

They were 400 feet long and nearly 40 feet high and could carry a crew of 144. The submarines were designed to carry three "fold-up" bombers that could be assembled for flight within minutes.

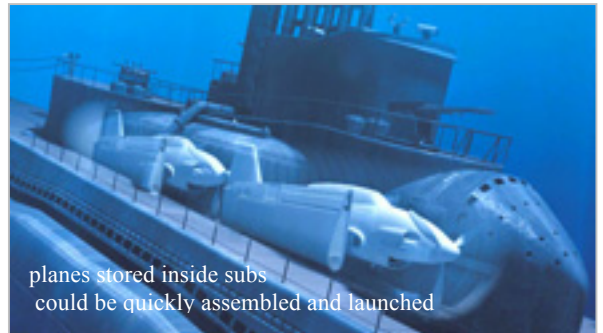
Kerby said the main hull is sitting upright and is in good shape. The I-401 numbers are clearly visible on the sides, and the anti-aircraft guns are in almost perfect condition, he said.

An I-400 and I-401 were captured at sea a week after the Japanese surrendered in 1945. Their mission - which was never completed - reportedly was to use the aircraft to drop rats and insects infected with bubonic plague, cholera, typhus and other diseases on U.S. cities.

When the bacteriological bombs could not be prepared in time, the mission was reportedly changed to bomb the Panama Canal.

Both submarines were ordered to sail to Pearl Harbor and were deliberately sunk later, partly because Russian scientists were demanding access to them.

The submarine found Thursday is the second Japanese vessel discovered off Oahu by the Hawaii Undersea Research Laboratory. In 2002, researchers found the wreckage of a much smaller Japanese sub that was sunk on Dec. 7, 1941, off Pearl Harbor.



## Japanese Subs Discovered... 6 Decades After U.S. Intentionally Sank Them

<http://blogs.discovermagazine.com/8obeats/2009/11/13/japanese-subs-discovered-6-decades-after-u-s-intentionally-sank-them/>

American scientists have rediscovered the remains of two advanced Japanese submarines from World War II, buried in the waters off Hawaii. But these shipwrecks, the I-14 and I-201, aren't relics of a great Pacific Theater battle. Rather, the U.S. captured and then sank them on purpose, along with three other Japanese ships including the gargantuan I-401, which was found back in 2005.

The I-401, along with the I-14 and I-201, were captured at war's end and sailed to Hawaii, where US naval intelligence officers could plumb the ships' secrets... All were scuttled to avoid having to share the information with the Pacific war's late-comer and co-claimant to such prizes, the former Soviet Union [*Christian Science Monitor*].

The United States was extra anxious to bury these boats because they were among the most

sophisticated of the era. The I-201 attack sub was twice as fast as any in the American fleet. The I-14 was slower, but packed lethal cargo. Specifically designed for a stealth attack on the U.S. East Coast—perhaps targeting Washington, D.C., and New York City—the “samurai subs” were fast, far-ranging, and in some cases carried folding-wing aircraft [*National Geographic News*]. However, the two subs were commissioned at the end of the war, and never saw battle. The I-14 was also the forerunner of Japan’s I-400 series, which could travel around the world one and a half times without refueling.

Japan wasn’t sprinting toward naval superiority in every capacity—its radar still lagged behind U.S. technology at the end of WWII. But had the war not concluded in 1945, the Allies might have gotten a taste of Japan’s new naval prowess. “What really jumps out is these three submarines [found so far] represent quite an advanced concept of military technology that was ahead of its time,” said archaeologist Hans Van Tilburg of NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries [*Los Angeles Times*].