

Artificial Reefs

Search 

 [Artificial Reefs - Home](#)

Artificial Reefs

[Artificial Reef Locator](#)

[Special Management Zone](#)

[Reef News and Feedback](#)

[Donate Tax Free](#)

[Weather Conditions](#)

[About the Program](#)

[Additional Information](#)

[Related Resources](#)

[DERM Home](#)

 [Resident](#)  [Visitor](#)  [Business](#)  [Employee](#)  [Government](#)

From Distributing Girl Scout Cookies, to Developing Artificial Reefs

Rebecca Schultz went above and beyond her call of duty as a Senior Girl Scout with her Gold Award project, in which she and a group of scouts and students from Plantation High School developed and deployed 23 artificial reef modules. On Sunday, July 9th Rebecca shared her Gold Award project with the community, which was a Reef Ball artificial reef, at Oleta River State Park in North Miami.

Reef Ball® modules are hollow concrete domes that provide solid surface for marine organisms to grow on, and plenty of holes for fish to access the internal cavity for refuge. Reef Ball Foundation loaned the Reef Ball mold to the Scout group for pouring the modules. Reef Innovations, Inc. donated staff time and resources to ensure safe, precise placement of the modules.

DERM was among one of the local agencies that assisted Rebecca by supplying information and resources throughout the project. Tim McIntosh, Environmental Resource Project Supervisor, Sara Thanner, Biologist II, and Maurice Pierre, Biologist I all contributed their knowledge, expertise, and time to the project. They provided logistical coordination and introduced the group of Girl Scouts to the administrators at Oleta State Park, who were instrumental in facilitating the inshore reef construction by providing facilities and beach access. DERM staff also put the Scouts in contact with the contractors who facilitated the offshore deployment at the Golden Beach site.

The first phase of the project consisted of the creation and deployment of the artificial reef balls in two separate study sites; one in Oleta River Artificial Reef Site in Biscayne Bay near the park, and the other about 3 mile offshore of north Miami-Dade County in the Golden Beach Artificial Reef Site. The second phase will be a study consisting of ongoing monitoring and periodic reporting on the status and comparison of the deployed reef balls. Rebecca is also going to implement an education program for students so they can learn how artificial reefs play a major role in our waterways. Therefore, her project will continue to promote environmental awareness in our community and nationwide!

 [Click here](#) to visit the photo gallery.

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[Artificial Reefs - Home](#) | [Artificial Reef Locator](#) | [Special Management Zone](#) | [Reef News and Feedback](#) | [Weather Conditions](#) | [About the Program](#) | [Additional Information](#) | [Related Resources](#) | [DERM Home](#)

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