<Back

1998 Sharing Success Program Descriptions in Environmental Education

Artificial Reef Construction and Deployment
Spanish River Community High School, Palm Beach County

At Spanish River Community High School in Boca Raton, a group of seven senior students enrolled in an honors marine research class are constructing modular reef units called "reef balls." The program, which was initiated in 1996, deployed 12 "reef balls" in June 1997. Students obtained $10,000 in funding for the project by writing and submitting numerous grant proposals to private foundations. Six months following the first deployment, the teacher and a group of SCUBA-certified current and former students assessed the new reef ball habitat during dives at the deployment site. They observed numerous fish species in or around the reef ball structures, which were completely encrusted with marine growth. From these observations, the team concluded that their reef habitat project was successful. Through the program, students learn concepts in marine and environmental science and interact with local scientists in marine or environmental fields. Public speaking and presentations to elementary students and the general public concerning the project and its marine habitat benefits build students' oral communication skills. Writing and submitting grant proposals and site permit applications strengthen written communication and technical writing. The program helps students meet several Science and Language Arts benchmarks in the Florida Sunshine State Standards. Assessment of student learning takes place via the quality of their science fair projects, the effectiveness of their permit applications and grant proposals, their oral presentations to elementary school students and others, and their participation in reef ball construction and deployment.

Contact: Mr. Ken Weemhoff, Teacher
Supervisor: Dr. Wallis J. Sherman, Spanish River Community High School
Initiated: 1996
Grades: 12
Phone: (561)241-2226   ext. 2495

Back to Sharing Success Programs Page

<Back