

Fairhope supports Eagle Reef Project with placement of 14 reefs under city piers



Eagle Reef Project makes bay water cleaner

By [Hal Scheurich](#)

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FAIRHOPE, Ala. ([WALA](#)) - Mobile Bay waters will be just a little bit cleaner thanks to the placement of 60 Mini Reefs along Alabama shorelines Tuesday, December 5, 2023. The city of Fairhope purchased 14 of them through the Eagle Reef Project and had them put under several of the city's piers.



David Wolf with Ocean Habitats secures the first four of fourteen Mini-Reefs purchased by Fairhope to support cleaner water and provide marine habitat (Hal Scheurich)

The Eagle Reef Project was started by John Shell of Boy Scout Troop 147 in Mobile as his Eagle Project. Shell wanted to give property owners along Mobile Bay a way they could provide an easy and affordable marine habitat. Shell's program partnered with Mobile-based Partners for Environmental Progress (PEP) and USA's Stoke's School of Marine and Environmental Sciences over the summer with the hope of creating even more interest in the program.

"It eventually got to a point where a lot of people were talking about it and when some person had a reef under their wharf, they're like, hey, what's that? Neighbors were like, what's that and so, it kind of expanded and overcame that challenge," Shell explained during an interview this summer.

Shell had already put out 175 Mini Reefs on his own and PEP now has a goal of 1,000 of the crustacean condos going in by the end of 2024. The unique design immediately attracts barnacles, oysters and mussels which, in turn attract small bait fish and well, you get the idea. Before you know it, you've got your own little ecosystem right there under your pier.

“PEP’s mission is to apply best environmental practices to both community and business issues and helping individuals learn and be good environmental stewards,” said PEP Executive Director, Jennifer Denson. “Our companies are good environmental stewards. This is an opportunity to educate their employees and the community et all on how to not just do the bare minimum but go above and beyond.”

The city of Fairhope is doing its part to support the program and recognizes more than just the environmental benefit. City leaders see it as a big win for those who will visit the piers to learn about marine habitat.

“We’re going to use it really as an educational tool. We have the Pelican’s Nest here. We’re going to bring students down here all the time,” said Fairhope mayor, Sherry Sullivan. “We have a lot of visitors to our bayfront so...we want to educate the people about what these reefs do, how they help pour ecosystem, how they help the bay and how they can put these reefs on their wharfs as well.”

Once PEP reaches its goal of deploying 1,000 of the reefs around Mobile Bay, Dr. David Wood with Ocean Habitats said they’ll filter around 7.3 billion gallons of bay water annually.

The city of Fairhope spent less than \$5,000 on the 14 reefs put out Tuesday. If you’d like to purchase a reef to install under your dock or pier, visit The Eagle Reef Project online at www.theeaglereef.com

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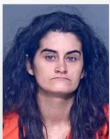


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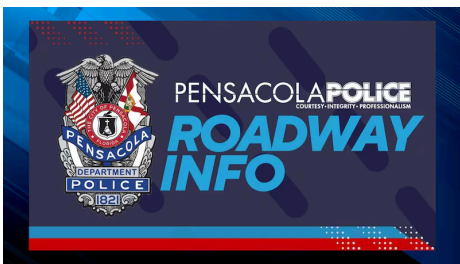
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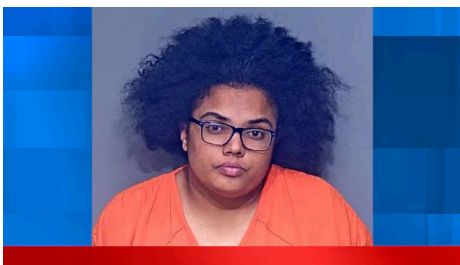
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