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REEF BALLS

105 down and (maybe) 9,395 to go

Last week the Charlotte Harbor Reef Association set 105 precast concrete reef balls in place on the southern half of the Bridge or Alligator Reef site in Charlotte Harbor. According to association president Jerry Jensen, 35 sites each received a trio of one large and two medium-size reef balls. In October the northern half of the reef will be seeded with another 105 Reef Balls.

The project, the first of its kind in the United States, according to Jensen, will then move on to place 180 or 200 under the docks in Punta Gorda Isles and 72 more under the Laishley and Gilchrist piers. The group has manufactured over 500 reef balls for the project.

Jensen said that there is no cost for the reef balls they are placing under the PGI docks but there is a \$40 fee for "installation labor,"

"We have all the upcoming sites decided upon and about 100 names on a waiting list, Jensen said, noting that for now they are only taking names for Punta Gorda since it is a Punta Gorda city sponsored project. There are 9,000 docks in Charlotte County and "it is not inconceivable that a reef ball could eventually reside under each one," Jensen pointed out.

The Marine Fisheries Commission is watching the project carefully.

Interested parties can join the Charlotte Harbor Reef Association for \$25 per year. For information call Jerry Jensen at 637-0005

or Fred Counter at 505-1290

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