THE

ANGLER'S GUIDE TO SOUTH CAROLINA
ARTIFICIAL REEFS

BY

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SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
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AND
COASTAL PLAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION
ARTIFICIAL FISHING REEFS AND WRECKS OF SOUTH CAROLINA
PREFACE

The information contained in this booklet is intended for use by anglers and SCUBA divers so they can utilize South Carolina artificial reefs more efficiently. The information is not intended for navigational purposes and reef users are advised to obtain the proper NOAA chart and know how to use it before embarking on a trip to any offshore reefs.

The following charts can be obtained at a nominal fee from marinas, boating supply houses or from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Ocean Survey, Washington, D. C.

(1) Little River to Winyah Bay Entrance #11535
   Best Chart for: Little River Reef
   Paradise Reef
   10 Mile Reef
   Pawleys Reef
   Georgetown Wreck

(2) Winyah Bay Entrance to Isle of Palms #11531
   Best Chart for: Hector Wreck
   City of Richmond Wreck

(3) Charleston Harbor and Approaches #11521
   Best Chart for: Capers Reef
   Kiawah Reef

(4) St. Helena Sound to Savannah River #11513
   Best Chart for: Fripp Reef
   Hunting Island Reef
   Hilton Head Reef

The Wreck of Savannah and Wreck of Lawrence shown on Chart #11513 are hazardous and not recommended by the S. C. Marine Resources Division.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Gratitude is expressed to Mrs. Evelyn N. Myatt, Mr. David M. Cupka and Mr. Charles J. Moore for their suggestions and review of this guide. Special thanks are extended to Ms Karen Swanson and Mrs. Evelyn Myatt for the graphics, to Mrs. Betty Drews for typing, to Ms Donna Florio for her assistance in the publication process and to Ms Susan Smith of the National Marine Fisheries Service, who drew the fish that are used on the cover and throughout this brochure.

Messrs. Donald Hammond and Walter Pittam provided valuable assistance in obtaining data for the reef maps and helped in many small but essential tasks that made this work possible.
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DEDICATION

This publication is dedicated to the memory of William Y. Ripley, Jr.
a good friend and valued associate.
INTRODUCTION

This guide describes South Carolina's nine offshore artificial reef sites in detail and gives information on several other areas near ship wrecks and jetties that may be of special interest to anglers. An artificial reef may be defined as almost any type of object or objects not naturally occurring in the ocean which have been placed there by man.

South Carolina's artificial reefs are constructed by sinking a wide variety of material at easily located sites along the coast. These reefs serve dual roles in that they create spots for recreational fishing and they are an effective means of disposing of materials which are unsightly litter when accumulated on land. Reef sites are selected largely on the basis of public demand, but at the same time they must be carefully located so that they do not conflict with commercial fishing or navigational interests. Sites are also chosen if they are determined by surveys to have good fishing potential. When solid material is sunk on South Carolina's sandy continental shelf, fish are drawn to it as if by a magnet. Some marine biologists think that the first fish to arrive on new artificial reef material are those forced to leave other reef habitats because of overcrowding by other more dominant fish.

As sunken material remains on the ocean floor, encrusting organisms such as barnacles, algae, coral and other species similar to those that foul the untreated bottom of a boat become attached. These organisms provide an important food source for reef fish such as the sheepshead and trigger fish. A dynamic self-sustaining reef community develops that is so biologically rich, that excess fish are available for man to catch. Despite the abundance of life on our reefs, some of the larger, more desirable species of fish are subject to overfishing, especially during the summer months. To counteract this, the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department (SCWMRD) is continuing to expand and improve artificial reefs so that more fish will be available. We urge reef users not to take any more fish than they can use and to release the rest for future enjoyment.
# SOUTH CAROLINA ARTIFICIAL REEFS AND WRECKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF REEF OR WRECK</th>
<th>LOCATION AND DEPTH</th>
<th>REEF MARK</th>
<th>DATE OF CONSTRUCTION AND SIZE</th>
<th>MATERIAL</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little River Artificial Reef</td>
<td>2.6 miles bearing 155° magnetic from Little River Inlet buoy. Depth: 29 ft, Lat. 33°05.7’ N, Long. 79°31.3’ W</td>
<td>Two orange and white nun buoys with masts at NE and SW corners</td>
<td>July, 1975 Size: 1500’ x 3000’</td>
<td>Tires, baled (25, 400)</td>
<td>Built as cooperative venture with S.C. Marine Fisheries. Best fishing is for mackerel, sea bass, grouper and flounder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradise Reef</td>
<td>3.5 miles bearing 90° magnetic from Marrel’s Inlet bell buoy. Depth: 35 ft Lat. 33°30.7’ N, Long. 79°50.7’ W</td>
<td>Two orange &amp; white nun buoys with masts at NW &amp; SW corners and two spar buoys at NE &amp; SE corners</td>
<td>July, 1969 Size: 1500’ x 3000’</td>
<td>Tires, single &amp; baled (50, 300) Lifeboat (1) Barges (3) Concrete culvert Barge sections</td>
<td>Very popular reef which yields good catches of black sea bass, flounder, sea trout, and some Spanish and king mackerel, cobia, and amberjack. Barracuda frequently observed or caught at this site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Mile Reef</td>
<td>9.6 miles bearing 125° magnetic from Marrel’s Inlet bell buoy. Depth: 45 ft Lat. 33°26.1’ N, Long. 79°52.6’ W</td>
<td>One orange &amp; white nun buoy with mast NE corner of reef site and one spar buoy 900’ bearing 150° from nun buoy</td>
<td>July 1975 Size: 1500’ x 1500’</td>
<td>Tires, single &amp; baled (24,000) Ship hull (1) LCM-6 hull (1) Dredge tender (1)</td>
<td>Best reef in S.C. for king mackerel trolling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawleys Island Reef</td>
<td>4.8 miles bearing 170° magnetic from Marrel’s Inlet bell buoy. Depth: 37 ft Lat. 33°25.6’ N, Long. 79°00.5’ W</td>
<td>One orange &amp; white nun buoy with mast at center of reef &amp; one spar buoy 600 feet Northeast of nun buoy</td>
<td>August, 1973 Size: 1500’ x 1500’</td>
<td>Tires, single &amp; baled (31,000) LCM-6 hulls (4) LCPL hull (2)</td>
<td>Same fish present at this site as at Paradise Reef, but not as heavily fished as nearby Paradise Reef.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown Wreck</td>
<td>5.0 miles bearing 35° magnetic from Winchah Bay sea buoy. Depth: 40 ft Lat. 33°13.2’ N, Long. 79°00.1’ W</td>
<td>None at present time</td>
<td>Located June, 1975 Size: NA</td>
<td>Steel Shipwreck (1)</td>
<td>Located with help of U.S. Naval Mine Sweeper “Leader”. Excellent site for black sea bass fishing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Richmond Wreck</td>
<td>13.0 miles bearing 145° magnetic from Winchah Bay sea buoy. Depth: 49 ft Lat. 33°00.8’ N, Long. 76°55.5’ W</td>
<td>WR-2A U.S. Coast Guard Maintained</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Steel Shipwreck (1)</td>
<td>Yields good catches of king mackerel, amberjack, cobia, barracuda &amp; bluefish to trolls. Bottom fishermen catch grouper, pink pomfret, and some black sea bass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Reef or Wreck</td>
<td>Location and Depth</td>
<td>Reef Buoys</td>
<td>Date of Construction and Size</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hector Wreck</td>
<td>11.7 miles bearing 160° magnetic from Kinlaw Bay sea buoy. Depth: 30 ft. Lat. 32° 59.8' N. Lon. 79° 05.8' W.</td>
<td>WR-6 U.S. Coast Guard maintained</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Steel shipwreck (1) broken up</td>
<td>Noted for excellent fishing for 10 to 20 pound bluefish in early spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capers Reef (N-6)</td>
<td>12.1 miles bearing 90° magnetic from end of Charleston jetties. Depth: 45 ft. Lat. 32° 45.0' N. Lon. 79° 34.5' W.</td>
<td>One red buoy, SE corner (U.S. Coast Guard Maintained) One orange &amp; white dome buoy, SM corner. One orange &amp; white nun buoy, NW corner.</td>
<td>May, 1970 Size: 1500' x 1500'</td>
<td>Tires, single &amp; baled (30,000), Steel yacht (1) GMC-6 hulls (5) Wood &amp; Steel trawler (1) Steel hull (1) Schoolbus body, loaded with steel &amp; concrete (1) Tank truck body (1) Steel caisson (1) Steel milk crates (2) Amphibious vessel (1)</td>
<td>Good bluefishing in spring and early summer. Abundant amberjack &amp; mackerel summer and fall &amp; bottom fishing often very good for blackfish. Divers have seen groupers in excess of 250 lbs on this reef.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiawah Reef (SCI)</td>
<td>8.0 miles bearing 107° magnetic from North Edisto Inlet buoy (S-NE) Depth: 40 ft. Lat. 32° 27.9' N. Lon. 79° 52.1' W.</td>
<td>One orange &amp; white nun buoy with mast &amp; one orange and white dome buoy.</td>
<td>October, 1967 Size: 1500' x 3000'</td>
<td>Tires, single &amp; baled (47,000), Auto bodies 70 (75 GMC-6 hull (1) Drydock (1) Pontoon (4) Big boat (1) Mill sweepers (2) Concrete culvert (12 tons) Cabin cruiser (1) L.C.U. Hull (1)</td>
<td>Oldest offshore fishing reef in S.C. Big bluefish offer excellent fishing in spring. Spanish and king mackerel fishing good until late fall. Excellent bottom fishing for black sea bass, grouper &amp; pork, especially immediately after rough seas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting Island Reef (6HI)</td>
<td>9.0 miles bearing 210° magnetic from St. Helena entrance buoy STH. Depth: 50 ft. Lat. 32°18.9' N. Lon. 80°39.8' W.</td>
<td>One orange &amp; white nun buoy SE corner, with two orange &amp; white dome buoys between them; and red whistle buoy (U.S. Coast Guard maintained). 1/2 mile NE of reef.</td>
<td>August, 1971 Size: 1500' x 3000'</td>
<td>Tires, single &amp; baled (30,000) Barges (3) Dredge Tender (1) GMC-6 hulls (2) Barge sections (8) Cabin cruiser (1)</td>
<td>Best bottom fishing near U.S. Coast Guard buoys. Best trolling near S.C. Marine Resources buoys. Excellent trolling for mackerel, barracuda, and amberjack, with good catches of bluefish in spring. Most successful bottom fishing from drifting boats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fripp Island Reef</td>
<td>5.8 miles bearing 125° magnetic from Fripp Inlet. Depth: 35 ft. Lat. 32°16.6' N. Lon. 80°22.1' W.</td>
<td>One orange &amp; white nun buoy with mast, at center of reef &amp; one orange &amp; white spar buoy.</td>
<td>June, 1968 Size: 1500' x 3000'</td>
<td>Tires, single &amp; baled (8,000)</td>
<td>Good bottom fishing for black sea bass. State record sea trout caught on this reef in 1971. Good trolling over reef area for Spanish Mackerel. Drift fishermen often catch flounder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilton Head Reef</td>
<td>5 miles bearing 195° magnetic from Fort Royal sea buoy (2PF). Depth: 55 ft. Lat. 31°59.8' N. Lon. 80°35.8' W.</td>
<td>One orange &amp; white nun buoy with mast, at SE corner &amp; one orange &amp; white nun buoy at NW corner.</td>
<td>September 1976 Size: 1500' x 1800'</td>
<td>Tires, baled (8,000)</td>
<td>This reef is a joint venture with the State of Georgia. It is neatest of South Carolina's reefs. Most of the tires are sunk near the NW buoy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Little River Reef is being built as a cooperative venture with the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries and the South Carolina Wildlife & Marine Resources Department (SCWMRD). It is closer to shore than other S. C. Reefs and boaters can see the reef buoys from the mouth of Little River Inlet.

Reef Components:

Tires:

More than 25,400 truck and automobile tires have been sunk on this site. These tires were assembled into bales with 80% of these units clustered with cable to form patch reefs of 12 to 50 bales each. The tires have been sunk between the two buoys that mark the northeast and southwest boundaries of this site, few tires are sunk in the immediate vicinity of either buoy.

Although this reef is new, fishing can be very good for grouper, flounder and black sea bass by bottom fishing near the tire clusters. Spanish mackerel are caught by trolling small spoons over the reef near the buoys.

S.C. Artificial Reef Buoys

PRIMARY BUOYS:

TYPE "A"
NUN WITH MAST

TYPE "B"
NUN

STATION BUOYS:

TYPE "A"

TYPE "B"

It is unlawful to tie to reef buoys
LITTLE RIVER REEF

KEY

= PRIMARY BUOY

= TIRE CONCENTRATION

= BALE CLUSTER

300'

1500'

45° MAG.
PARADISE REEF

3.5 miles bearing 90° from Murrells Inlet bell buoy.

Depth: 30-35'
Date Construction Started: July, 1969

Paradise Reef, the most popular fish haven in South Carolina, was started by the Myrtle Beach-Murrells Inlet Fishing Paradise Association with assistance from SCMRD. SCMRD assumed full responsibility for this reef in 1975 in order to expedite the proper permits required and to assure the future maintenance of the reef. Although the Paradise Reef is fished very heavily, it yields good catches of fish, especially following a period of bad weather. We intend to increase the fishing capacity of this reef by adding more material each year.

Reef Components:

Tires:
More than 60,000 automobile tires are sunk at the Paradise Reef site. These tires have been assembled into a wide variety of configurations, with the most numerous types being single-tire units, eight-tire units and ten-tire bale units. These units are scattered within the buoyed area, with heavy concentrations near each buoy.

Steel Vessels:

3 Landing Craft (L.C.M.) hulls 57' Length
Half Landing Craft Personnel (L.C.P.L.) hull, original length 37'
2 Barges 100' x 35' x 7'
1 Sectional barge 50' x 20' x 4'
1 Lifeboat 26'

Other Material:

5 Concrete Mixers cut in half
50 Concrete culvert various sizes
20 Tons scrap steel and appliances

One L.C.M. loaded with ½ of an L.C.P.L. is marked by the northwest buoy. A 100 x 35' x 7' barge is sunk within 100 yards of the same buoy, bearing approximately 185°. The barge was loaded with culvert, tires and steel scrap, including 10 sections of concrete mixer drums which were cut in half.

The southeast spar buoy marks the approximate location of a small sectional barge, 50' x 20', and another concentration of tire units, landing craft and a 26-foot life boat are sunk on a line between the northeast barge and the southeast buoy. The landing craft is an especially good fishing spot and well worth the searching. It is within 150 yards of the northeast barge and surrounded with tire units. The lifeboat is sunk between the landing craft and the southeast barge. This vessel does not provide very high relief and is hard to locate, thus is not fished frequently.

The southwest buoy marks the location of a third landing craft and a concentration of tire units.
TEN MILE REEF

9.6 miles bearing 128° from Murrells Inlet, S. C. bell buoy

Depth: 33-45'
Date Construction Started: July, 1975

The Ten Mile Reef has proven to be an excellent location for king mackerel fishing and it is also very popular with SCUBA divers because of better than average water clarity and the large ship sunk at the NW corner.

Reef Components:

Tires:

Approximately 14,000 baled automobile tires were sunk on this reef as part of the cargo aboard the 200' ship. As the ship sank, the bales washed overboard and scattered to the southeast. These units are close together and provide excellent habitat for grouper, large pink porgy (silver snapper) and sheepshead. Another 10,000 tires in clusters of 120 each are in a southeasterly line that starts near the spar buoy.

Steel Vessels:

1 Ship 200' long
1 L.C.M. 57' long
1 Dredge Tender 40' long

The large buoy on the northwest corner of this site is chained to the hull of the 200' ship. This ship was originally a naval LSM which was acquired by Salmon's Dredging Corporation and converted into a floating crane named the Little Boss. The crane was removed in 1975 and the hull was donated by Salmon's Dredging Corporation to the SCMRD Artificial Reef Program.

40-foot dredge tender is sunk within 100 yards bearing southeast of the sunken ship. This small wreck is not buoyed. The spar buoy that is deployed 300 yards due south of the ship buoy marks the location of a Navy Surplus L.C.M. Tire units along with scrap steel are also sunk at this location. Party boat captains operating out of Murrells Inlet recommended this site since good fishing already existed there. The addition of an artificial reef changed a once-good fishing spot into an excellent one. We wish to thank the party boat captains of Murrells Inlet for their help in selecting this site which is now easily found by small boat anglers.
TEN MILE REEF

KEY

= PRIMARY BUOY
= SPAR BUOY
= 200' SHIP
= 57' LANDING CRAFT
= 40' DREDGE TENDER
= TIRE CONCENTRATION

= CLUSTERED TIRE BALE

1500' 1500'
300'

KINGFISH
(King Mackerel)

SPANISH MACKEREL

King Mackerel have spots on their sides when they are young and are frequently mistaken for Spanish mackerel. You can avoid this mistake by noting that the lateral line on the side of the king has an abrupt dip in it while the Spanish mackerel does not.
PAWLEYS REEF

4.8 miles bearing 170° magnetic from Murrells Inlet, S. C. bell buoy

Depth: 23-37'

The Pawleys Reef is built on sparse live bottom consisting of sponges, sea fans and other coral-like organisms. This reef does not receive the heavy fishing pressure that the Paradise and Ten Mile Reefs do, therefore it is a good place to try if the other sites are crowded.

Reef Components:

Tires:

Approximately 31,000 single and baled tires are sunk at this site. The majority of the tire units are concentrated near the buoys in the center of the reef area.

Steel Vessels:

4 L.C.M.'s 57' length
½ L.C.P.L. 37' original length

Other Material:

Concrete culvert - 50 sections.

Two L.C.M.'s are sunk at the center of the reef and marked with a large buoy; both hulls are close together. One-half of an L.C.P.L. was sunk as part of the cargo of one of the L.C.M.'s. The other L.C.M. was sunk with a load of truck and automobile tires. Two additional L.C.M.'s are sunk 45° magnetic from the large reef buoy. One L.C.M. is marked with a 12" diameter spar buoy; the other is sunk approximately 100 feet away on a bearing of about 70° magnetic from the spar buoy. Both of these L.C.M.'s were loaded with tires when sunk so heavy concentrations of tires can be found around each vessel.

Fishing on the Pawley's Reef is very similar to the Paradise Reef. However, one interesting difference is that the Pawley's Reef often yields large tautog or "northern black fish". The tautog is an excellent food fish but has a very tough skin with heavy scales, and should be skinned when prepared for eating. The tautog can be caught with the same fishing techniques as used for black sea bass, but they are especially fond of fiddlers, fished very close to the wrecks.
PAWLEYS ISLAND
FISH HAVEN.

= 55' LCM "6"
= 1/2·LCPL
= TIRE CONCENTRATIONS
(total = 31,000 tires)
· STATION BUOY
· FISH HAVEN BUOY

300'

LIMITS OF PERMIT

1500'

BLACKFISH
(Black Sea Bass)

TAUTOG
(Northern Blackfish)

SPADEFISH

Click here to continue