

The Royal Order of the Honorary St James Oyster “Our Community Driven Project” Oyster Shell Recycling & Reef Building Projects

- Attended March, 2006 NC Coastal Federation Workshop
- St James’ Partnerships – NC Coastal Federation, UNCW, DENR
- Mayor & Town Council approval for annual funding
- St James Volunteers build reefs annually with UNCW Interns & Ocean17 Campers ++ Church youth and “Boys and Girls Club” + Grandkids
- UNCW Interns sample each month and hold regular workshops + Spat Racks
- Next: Recycling Bins, 5th Annual Oyster Dinner, & Major Permit Approval

Every coastal community is a candidate for this kind of effort!





St. James Oyster Reefs



Built early August 2007, the oyster reefs at St. James have exhibited growth beyond expectation. Thanks to the many volunteers that helped bag thousands of recycled oyster shell, the reefs have flourished. Providing a habitat for blue crabs, shrimp, and many species of fish, the reefs also serve to protect against erosion.



I used three different techniques to sample the habitat of the reefs. By pulling seine nets, sweeps, and using breeder traps, I was able to get a general idea of what was living in the area. My most common catches were several species of grass shrimp, anchovies and an abundance of Pinfish. There were also many juvenile and mature Blue Crabs that were caught sampling. Besides sampling the area directly surrounding the reef, I also sampled the reef itself. By randomly selecting bags from the reef to pull and bring back to the lab for processing, I was able to measure the growth of the individual oysters and the reef as a whole.

Most Common Catches:

Lesser Blue Crab

Callinectes similis



Picture: dnr.sc.org

Commercial Blue Crab

Callinectes sapidus



Picture: dnr.sc.org

Pinfish

Lagodon rhomboides



Picture: floridaconservation.org

Grass Shrimp

Palaemonetes vulgaris



Picture: dnr.sc.gov

Bay Anchovy

Anchoa mitchilli



Picture: dnr.sc.gov

Growth

Average oyster length: 20.60mm

Average number of crabs per bag: 43.67

Average number of muscles per bag: 38.33

Average number of scars per bag: 126.33

