

# Anguilla's Artificial Reefs

## Reefs: the facts

- Coral reefs are living structures. They are formed of colonies of coral polyps held together by calcium carbonate.
- Corals are animals. Microscopic algae called zooxanthellae live inside of them. The zooxanthellae photosynthesize to create energy for the coral polyp. The relationship is symbiotic. Both the polyp and algae benefit
- Coral reefs cover less than 1% of the earth's surface but a staggering 1/3 of all all marine life depends on them for survival.
- Their value to humans is estimated at US\$170 billion per year in terms of fisheries, coastal protection, and tourism.
- But corals are under threat from:
  - overfishing
  - invasive species, such as lionfish
  - coastal development
  - damage caused by boat anchors
  - sun screen
  - climate change

For more information about Anguilla's coral and artificial reefs, contact:

Anguilla National Trust  
PO Box 1234  
The Valley Anguilla

Tel. 264 497 5297  
Email. [antadmin@anguillanet.com](mailto:antadmin@anguillanet.com)

Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources  
PO Box 60  
The Valley Anguilla

Tel. 264 497 2871  
Email. [fisheriesmr@gov.ai](mailto:fisheriesmr@gov.ai)

## Restoring Little Bay Marine Park

- In 2018, Anguilla's first artificial reef was installed in Little Bay Marine Park.
- The reef, made of concrete structures of various sizes provides homes for juvenile lobster, reef fish and many other species.
- The hard structures also provide substrate to encourage and allow the re-growth of hard and soft corals.
- The artificial reef has been designed as a dive and snorkel trail with underwater information signs and buoys marking the trail and the way.



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