

Oceanographic Student and Professor deploy Artificial Reef Modules in Mexico



Spieler and Kilfoyle overseeing the deployment operation on one of the Parque's patrol boats in Puerto Morelos.

Oceanographic M.S. student, Kirk Kilfoyle, and his professor, Richard Spieler, Ph.D., were recently in Mexico for a month to deploy a series of artificial reefs for the World Bank's Restoration and Remediation Working Group.

With the help of other members of Spieler's lab, 48 artificial reef modules were deployed in Puerto Morelos and 12 in Akumal, both small towns south of Cancun. The Puerto Morelos reefs were deployed in the Arrecife de Puerto Morelos Parque Nacional and the team from NSU worked closely with the Parque's director Daniella Guevara and several other members of the Parque's field staff. In Akumal, the team was working with Centro Ecological Akumal, headed by Paul Sanchez-Navarro (www.ceakumal.org).

The study is part of Kilfoyle's thesis research and will focus on the interactions of fish assemblages, invertebrates, and coral recruitment on the artificial reefs. Spieler and Kilfoyle are planning another trip in early December to transplant 60 corals onto the artificial reef modules, and regularly scheduled monitoring trips are slated to begin in the spring of 2007.



Kilfoyle and Pat Quinn (one of the NSU team) placing cinder blocks into the interior of the artificial reefs to increase internal refuge space complexity.

