



Email Shed Some Light on Forming Reefs in a West Bay Canal

GALVESTON — Normally, the daily report leads off with a short statement focusing on the day's top events, but for today only, I'm going to refurbish that blueprint just a bit. Instead of informing you that such and such fish were caught, what I'd like to remind you to do is check the email received late Monday from Albert a Houston. I think you will find it quite interesting.

The following email from Albert in Houston is printed in its entirety:

Producing Oyster Reefs: Vince, The open forum of your article (Sunday) inspired me to write you this email. In fact, it reminded me – when was the last time I went fishing? Oh yeah, yesterday – way too long!

Anyhow, we live in Houston and own a beach house in Pirates Cove and have recently purchased aquatic underwater lights, which seem to be the big rage of late. Ironically, our canal is inundated with these lights – it is awesome at night. More importantly these lights have brought a new dimension to giving back to the bay or should I say, give it vitality.

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vitality. Ever since the canals were built, they have laid stagnate due to the silty / muddy bottom which is common in West Bay canals. Yes, you have trout come in and out at night under lights, but primarily everything is pretty lifeless in the canals. The reason simply is the fact there is really nothing for

fish to live on or to develop habitat due to the thick layer of bottom silt. Things have changed lately with these new lights. Due to the fact that they come on at dusk every night, they create a feeding pattern for the baitfish, shrimp, crustaceans and game fish. The unique aspect about the lights is that they develop natural oyster reefs around the base of the light, which is like developing crops in a fallow field.

What my brother-in-law and I have done is to take it one step further. We have sunk concrete blocks, crushed concrete and shells, around the area of the lights. Through the natural process of the bay, algae, barnacles and eventually oysters will form on top and around them within a couple of years. Additionally, we have collected buckets and buckets of large empty oyster shells and dispersed around the blocks.

Again this will create growth. Why are we doing this? It's simple. When the reef is created, then

all of the marine life, like sea lice, small shrimp etc. will live there year round. This will keep game fish there year round. Call it preserve if you will, but it gives West Bay a new dimension in regards to natural reproduction. I have already seen fish and shrimp over our reef that I have never seen before, especially in the winter. I do not work for or represent anything relating to these lights, I just wanted to share this bit of information because I know how much you love this bay system. Hopefully, these oyster reefs will flourish in the future especially in areas that were once deep dark mud canals.

I read your articles daily on the Internet. ... Thanks for all that you do!

- *Albert in Houston*