

# M/V Ana Cecilia

## Palm Beach County's Artificial Reef Program

### Program History

- Waters off the coast of Palm Beach County have some of the most diverse populations of marine organisms and clear water due to the Gulfstream Current.
- Artificial reefs have been created in Palm Beach County since the 1960s using various materials including rock, old ships, heavy-gauge steel structures, concrete, and pre-fabricated modules.
- To date 51 ships, barges, tugboats, and other vessels have been scuttled and 127,000 tons of limestone boulders and 72,000 tons of concrete material have been deployed off the coast of Palm Beach County.

### Benefits

- Artificial reefs provide food, shelter, protection and spawning areas for numerous fish species and other marine and estuarine organisms.
- Artificial reefs provide alternate areas for use by SCUBA divers and anglers, reducing user pressures on the natural reef system.



- Built in 1972 in Louisiana, the *M/V Ana Cecilia* has had an interesting history from servicing oil platforms in the Gulf of Mexico to being the first ship in over 50 years to deliver humanitarian goods from Miami to Havana, Cuba.
- After 2012, the ship fell into the wrong hands and was used to smuggle drugs.
- In 2015, it was seized by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and was donated to Palm Beach County to be placed as an artificial reef.
- In 2016, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners voted to dedicate the *M/V Ana Cecilia* in honor of Perry Cohen, Austin Stephanos, Fernandez Jones, Jaden Jones, and Willis Bell.
- The 641-ton, 170' long ship has undergone a stringent process to remove all pollutants and to create openings for safe diver penetration.
- The *M/V Ana Cecilia* was scuttled 1.25 miles off the coast of Singer Island at Latitude 26°47.125 N and Longitude 80°00.96 W in 85 feet just south of the *M/V Mizpah*, making it the starting point in a line of 11 existing artificial reefs to provide a unique diving experience.



### Project Partners

Palm Beach County, United States Customs and Border Protection, Palm Beach County Diving Association



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