

# Horseshoe crab artificial reef sculpture shatters during installation at Jersey Shore

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The barge landed on top of the sunken sculpture, further shattering it, according to a report in Ocean City Patch, an online news site.

"Chris is devastated," Hugh Carberry, director of the state's artificial-reef program, told Patch.

Wojcik, 44, of Point Pleasant, N.J., did not return calls Thursday seeking comment.

The mishap came weeks after the first planned sinking was canceled due to bad weather. Anything but calm weather could have caused the crab to sink prematurely.

New Jersey's artificial-reef program is designed to support fish habitats and recreational fishing. The goal was for Wojcik's crab eventually to be buried by algae, mussels, and other marine organisms that would attach to the sculpture, creating an underwater community.

The work also was intended to be a destination for scuba divers. Wojcik, a scuba instructor, chose the design of a horseshoe crab because it's "an icon of the mid-Atlantic coast. It has basically been around unchanged longer than anything else."

The sculpture was a great shape for an artificial reef, Wojcik said in an earlier interview. "It has a lot of surface area for algae and mussels to grow on, but it's also hollow underneath, a great benefit for fish."

Underwater sculpture is not new. In Cancun, Mexico, Jason deCaires Taylor sank five-ton sculptures of men, women, and children near the Mesoamerican Reef, the second-largest barrier reef system in the world.

Wojcik financed the \$96,000 project with the help of donors, including the Brielle (N.J.) Chamber of Commerce and a Moorestown company, Reefmakers, that has expertise in artificial reefs.

The wrecked sculpture will "still make a nice reef," Carberry told Patch after the mishap. "But we would have

liked to have seen it [whole] on the bottom."

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