

Artificial reef generates surfers' waves

July 1 2005

Two New Zealand companies have developed an artificial rubber reef that can be used to create surfing-quality waves in a swimming pool.

But don't look for the Versareef in backyard pools.

The Ron Jon Surf Park with three Versareef pools is expected to open next year in Orlando, Fla.

Shaw Mead of ASR and Kerry Black of Surf Pools spent five years surveying reefs in the Pacific to determine what conditions produce the best waves, New Scientist reported.

"Then we created computer-controlled, movable pool bottoms to mimic those characteristics and generate really powerful waves," said Black.

The Versareef produces four kinds of wave, the Australia, California, Hawaii and Indonesia. The slower and gentler California waves are deemed to be the best for newbie surfers.

The Versareef can provide a ride of more than 200 feet on waves up to 10 feet high.

Black hopes scientists will join surfers at the surf park to study wave mechanics.

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Citation: Artificial reef generates surfers' waves (2005, July 1) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2005-07-artificial-reef-surfers.html>

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