

Dolphinfish Research Program™

Made possible by a grant from the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation

August 2021



Reported and Received Tagging Progress from 7/28/2021-8/29/2021:

Chase Benedict (Dorado) 67	David Wamer (Wam-Jam) 52
Tim Heiser (Irish Wake) 23	Don Gates (Killin' Time II) 17
Jimbo Thomas (Thomas Flyer) 16	Andrew Selogy (Drs. Orders) 11
Bryan Gilmore (Wahoo) 11	Jeff Jones (Kraken) 8
Dane Dellenbach (Knotty Seacrets) 7	Matt Joyce (Osprey) 4
Jeff Fisher (Makara) 3	Willie Howard (Captain Willie's Charters) 3
Derek Biel (Obsession) 4	Don Dettlinger (Grander) 3
Rusty Yates (Rusty Hook) 1	Mike Peters (B Naughty) 1

Over the past month, three of the largest billfish tournaments in the world occurred in Ocean City, Maryland, and Cape May, New Jersey. In total, 757 boats entered three tournaments (WMO – 444; Mid-Atlantic; 203; Huk BFC – 110). With each boat fishing a maximum of three days during the WMO and Mid-Atlantic plus 2 days during the Huk BFC, that equates to 2,161 fishing days for these recreational vessels. That represents a substantial amount of fishing effort and can be used to gauge overall fishing success during the tournament waiting periods which ran from July 29th to August 20th, 2021. According to the *Pair of Docs* fishing team based out of Cape May, NJ, who fishes consistently from April through October in the MAB, despite some incredible fish being weighed for a lucky few, fishing was overall really slow. In terms of mahi, the largest fish weighed for the Huk BFC was 25.5 lbs, 34 lbs for the WHO, and 45 lbs for the Mid-Atlantic. The 45 lb mahi won *Amarula Sun* \$98,000! During that tournament, 42 dolphin were weighed and only 4 were larger than 30 pounds. Where are the 60-75 pound class fish that we saw in 2018 and 2019? The past two seasons we have not heard of these massive dolphin being caught in the MAB. Since our last report, sargassum has spread throughout the Caribbean Sea into the Florida Straits and many anglers are reporting very large patches. This sargassum has also been reported in the MAB Canyons. Since our last report we have had 6 fish recaptured and if you consider the area and number of releases against recaptures the recapture rate

Year to 8/29/2021 for Reported Releases:
1,467 tagged & released for conservation and science by 94 different vessels

equates to .8%, the lowest of our two decade study.

16 Recaptures to date in 2021 15 verified
1 PSAT movements
3 PSAT Deployments 0 Acoustic Tag
421 Kits Distributed

Reported Recaptures Since 7/27/2021

Robert Clarke reported a Wahoo tagged fish by Bryan Gilmore and Jorge Clero

Christopher Self reported a Wam-Jam tagged fish by Charles Wamer

Michelle Dalton reported a Wahoo tagged fish by Bryan Gilmore

Russel Yates reported a First In tagged fish by Ed Forrest

Sebastian Fraguera reported a Wahoo tagged fish by Bryan Gilmore

Lawrence Bromberek found a Mag E III tag on the beach given to Gary York in 2015

Michael Mintz reported an Explorer Scout tagged fish by Chase Benedict

30,000 Dolphin Tagged!



Just under two decades ago, during a mid-April fishing trip aboard *Summergirl* off South Carolina, **Don Hammond** tagged the first dolphin for this tagging program. Earlier this month, the *Wam-Jam Fishing Team*, fishing out of Marathon, Florida, tagged the 30,000th dolphin! While surpassing our 30,000th tagged dolphin is not a scientific goal of the program, it is symbolic of our program's history and dedication to distribute tags and tagging kits, recruit and engage anglers, and log the data to determine the movements and life history traits of this species throughout the Western Central Atlantic and Eastern Tropical Pacific Oceans. Given the program's steady growth in participation, which we estimate has grown to 6,000 anglers throughout our history, the level of data collection has subsequently grown, and as a result, we have learned a tremendous amount about this species' annual, semi-annual, and seasonal movements by tagging region (see table below). As with most scientific studies, there remains much work to be done; for our program, the two major locations for which we have very limited data are the **Mid-Atlantic Bight (MAB)** and the **Gulf of Mexico (GOM)**. Recently, two tagged dolphin were reported in the **MAB** (see article here) and thankfully, this year, we have had tagging

Tagging Region

Movements Webpage

Florida	dolphintagging.com/florida
U.S. East Coast	dolphintagging.com/us-east-coast
Bahamas	dolphintagging.com/bahamas
Caribbean Sea	dolphintagging.com/caribbean-sea
ETP	dolphintagging.com/eastern-tropical-pacific-ocean

participation within both regions. With a steady level of participation by anglers in the **MAB** and **GOM**, we hope that over the course of the next several years, as we push toward 40,000 tagged dolphin a significant proportion of those fish come from those zones. When combined with our satellite tag deployment efforts, we can effectively fill in knowledge gaps that exist for this species which can aid in improving species management and conservation. To learn more about our effort in the MAB, visit beyondourshores.org/mab, or to help this effort wherever you fish and reside, [click here](#) to request tags. A special thanks goes out to the thousands of anglers that have participated as well as the individuals, fishing industry companies, and organizations that have supported our work to achieve at this significant milestone in our history!



Request tags at:
dolphintagging.com/tags

Summer 2021 Dolphin Recaptures

Since our July newsletter, we have received six tag recoveries ranging from the Keys to the offshore canyons in the Mid-Atlantic Bight (see table below). **Captains Russel Yates** and **Robert Clarke** are the latest

Recapture Location	Tagged By	Reported By	DAL	Straight-Line	
				Distance (miles)	Movement Rate (mpd)
Hudson Canyon, NJ/NY	Ed Forrest	Russel Yates	50	1172.19	23.44
Poorman's Canyon, MD/NJ	Bryan Gilmore	Robert Clarke	31	1028.21	33.17
Bimini, Bahamas	Chase Benedict	Michael Mintz	5	159.32	31.86
off North Miami Beach, FL	Bryan Gilmore	Sebastian Fraguela	3	140.80	46.93
off Boynton Beach, FL	Bryan Gilmore	Mark Didario	4	162.70	40.67
off Key Largo, FL	Charles Wamer	Christopher Self	2	73.56	36.78

MAB anglers have recaptured a tagged dolphin that were originally released in the Florida Keys. These are rare recoveries, as evidenced by the fact that they represent the 21st and 22nd movements logged from the Keys to the MAB over the past two decades. When compared to past movements, these fish made the swim up the U.S. East Coast faster than previous events (40.5 days versus 57.9 days). The MAB recoveries were generated by **Captain Ed Forrest** and **Captain Bryan Gilmore** fishing off the Lower Florida Keys. In addition to the exciting MAB recoveries this past month, we received a recovery by **Captain Michael Mintz** fishing aboard *Chicama* off Bimini, Bahamas, as well as by



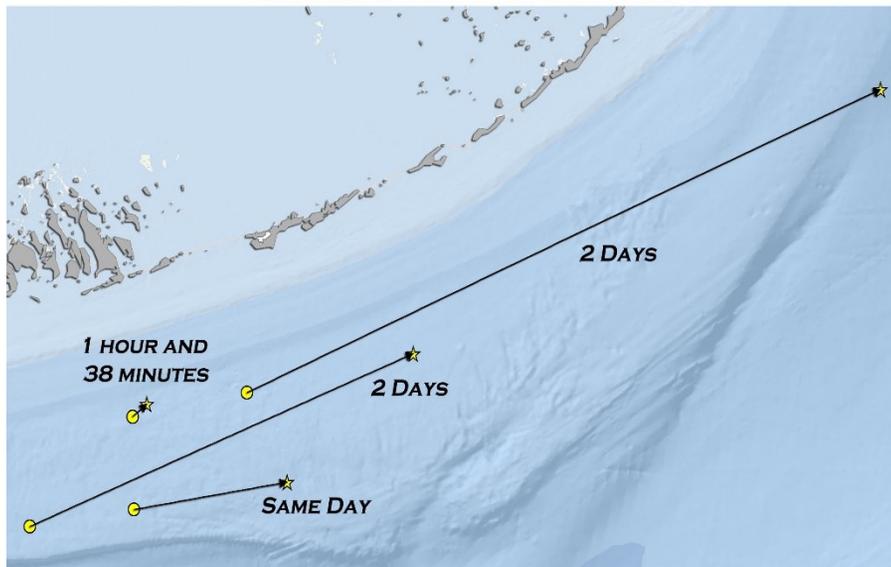
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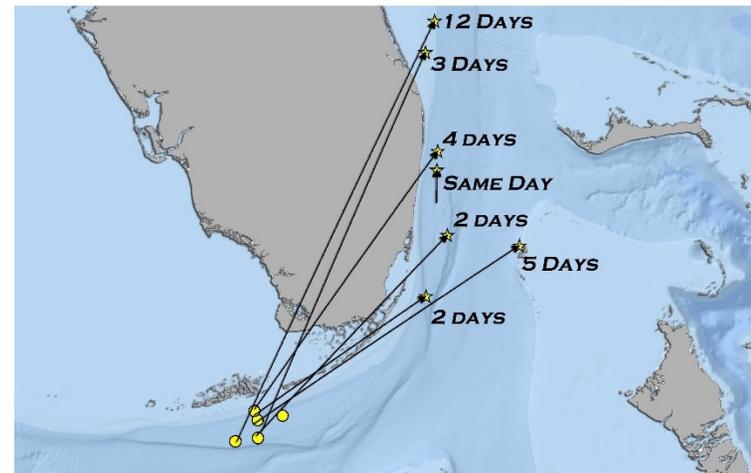
[Pelagic Gear](#) pro angler **Michelle Dalton** (pictured above) fishing with **Captain Mark Didario** off Boynton Beach, FL. These recoveries were generated through the tagging efforts of **Captains Chase Benedict** and **Gilmore**, both of whom represent staff with the **Scouts of America** based out of Summerland Key, Florida. In a remarkable effort this year, the **Scouts** tagged their seasonal high (198 dolphin ranging from 13.5" to 27" fork-length) and had four recoveries! Great work **Scouts**! All tagging captains will receive a **Guy Harvey** mini-print for their efforts and captains reporting recoveries will receive **AFTCO** performance fishing shirts. While we realize most anglers that participate in our program do so to help gather information on this amazing species and not to win awards, we truly appreciate our sponsors' support for providing additional incentives for tagging and reporting recoveries. We are halfway through the year and poised to have record participation at year's end. So far we have received tagging reports from 94 vessels. One of the main objectives of our tagging program is to get as many anglers involved by distributing tags. We are happy to report that

we achieved our ambitious goal set forth last December, which was to distribute 400 kits in 2021. To date, we have distributed 4,208 tags in 421 tag kits to anglers throughout the region! Send some back young. Request tags [here](#).

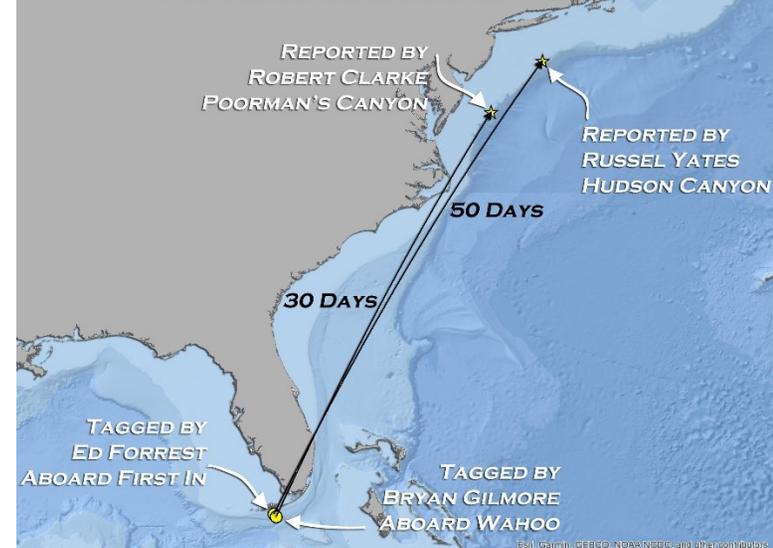
SUMMER FLORIDA KEYS RECOVERIES



SUMMER KEYS TO SOUTH AND CENTRAL FLORIDA RECOVERIES



AUGUST MID-ATLANTIC BIGHT RECOVERIES



Support Our Tagging Program.



Over the past few years, we have built an inventory of tagging program products that are available for purchase to help support our tagging program. We have a variety of styles and options in stock. Your purchase supports our tagging program to acquire more tags and tagging kit supplies, manage tagging kit distribution, and run overall program operations. [Click here](#) to shop and to support our work.

To Donate by Check [click here](#), Make Checks out to:

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Support the DRP in 2022!



In 2017, we formed the **Beyond Our Shores Foundation (BOSF)**, a [501\(c\)\(3\)](#), to support and expand the DRP. Given the rise in tagging kit demand and expansion of our tagging program, we recently started a DRP investment fund. This fund will grow monies to be used for offshore fisheries research to ultimately benefit the fishing community. We are committed to distribute a percentage of the fund

annually to further the goals of our tagging program. In the short-term, the immediate use will be to meet the demand in tagging kit supplies; in the long-term, we hope to use the fund to acquire satellite tags, provide scholarships to young fisheries scientists, and award grants to support research on dolphinfish, wahoo, and fish aggregating device fisheries. This is one strategy that we have developed as we begin to head into the charitable giving season and raise funds for next year's effort. To make a contribution today to help grow this fund just notify us that you would like your contribution to go toward the DRP Investment fund. You can also make a general donation today to help advance the expansion of the DRP. [Click here](#) to donate and thank you for your support.

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All 2021 Financial Supporters

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