

Dolphinfish Research Program™

Made possible by a grant from the Guy Harvey Foundation

June 2023



Reported and Received Tagging Progress from 5/30/2023-6/29/2023!

Captain Don Gates (**Killin' Time II**) 136
 Captain David Wamer (**Wam-Jam**) 32
 Captain Matt Joyce (**Munson Scout**) 9
 Captain Jason Hampson (**Early Retirement**) 6
 Captain Nick Carullo (**Wire Transfer**) 4
 Captain George Garcia (**Blue Devil**) 4
 Captain Tim Heiser (**Irish Wake**) 3
 Captain Dave Falabella (**Onda Star**) 3
 Captain Robert Pustizzi (**Cutting Edge**) 2
 Captain Aaron Bumgarner (**Salty Waves**) 1

Captain Juandre Geldenhys (**Yellowfin 03**) 33
 Captain Julien Brossel (**Madatet**) 10
 Captain David Wamer (**WamJam**) 6
 Captain Richard Maylon (**Grandslam Charters**) 6
 Captain Scott Frost (**Lightning Strike**) 3
 Captain Willie Howard (**Captain Willie's Charters**) 3
 Captain Dennis Sukil (**Be Easy II**) 2
 Casa Vieja Lodge (**Rumlin**) 2
 Captain Eddie Bairez (**Captain Hook**) 2
 Guatemala (**Gypsy**) 1

Year to 6/29/2023 for Reported Releases:

684 tagged & released for conservation and science by 63 different vessels

**16 Recaptures to date in 2023 15 verified
 7 Satellite tags deployed
 6 Satellite tag movements
 1 Acoustic Tag**

Fishing off San Juan, Puerto Rico, continues to be slow. We embarked on two outings last week and did not find any mahi despite running 25 miles offshore and finding large weed mats. Dives on the FADs revealed plenty of forage and bait fish species but no predators. Out of 62 trips documented off SJ in June only 14 mahi were landed. Of those 62 trips, 42 trips had no fish landed. However, a report from one of our sources in PR stated that fishing activity off of DR has been a different story with some anglers reporting large catches of mahi on their FADs. In the Florida Straits, fishing tournaments continue to produce lackluster results. In the June Captain's Cup the largest fish caught was 9.2 pounds out of 10 boats and 21 pounds won Team Contagious the three fish aggregate category and the tournament. In the western Caribbean Sea off Mexico, one Captain said fishing is slow there, too, as well as off the Caymans.

Reported Recaptures Since 5/30/2023

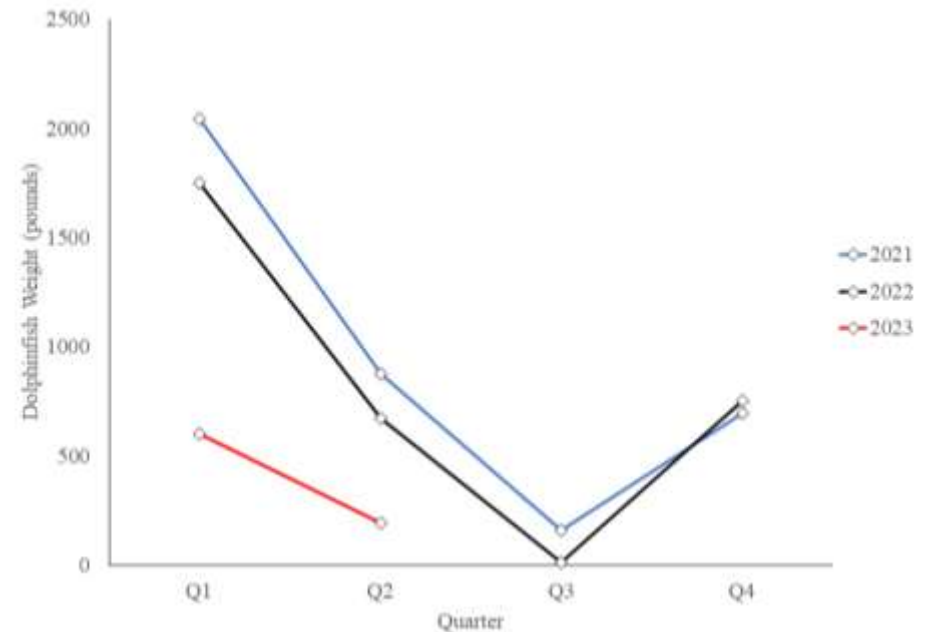
Milton Noguera reported a fish tagged by **Killin' Time II**
Abdullah Alhammadi reported a fish tagged by **Grandslam Charters**

Monitoring Dolphinfish as a Seafood



Issues facing the Western Central Atlantic (WCA) stock, such as a decline in abundance, seasonal persistence, and the size of fish encountered, are not just occurring in Florida. Our research program has been active in Puerto Rico since 2008, and beginning in 2018, we started collecting seafood data for every seafood purchase from a restaurant on the north coast of Puerto Rico known as [MenTa](#). Dolphinfish has been the top species acquired and served by weight at this restaurant since 2018, whereby 9,989.5 pounds of dolphinfish were served. This past year, however, had the lowest amount acquired over the 5.5-year dataset, and this is nearly 3 times lower when comparing Q1 2023, to Q1 2022, and Q1 2021. In this issue of our newsletter, we will discuss our ongoing seafood research with [MenTa](#). This research began as a pilot program funded by the [Waitt Foundation](#) in 2018 to implement a seafood traceability pilot program in Puerto Rico. Below is a video that we released at the end of 2018 that highlights the successful implementation of that pilot program. While funding has expired for that program we still continued to work with [MenTa](#) to acquire and log their daily seafood data. To date, we have documented 1,793 seafood transactions, with 59.7% representing locally sourced seafood purchases. Dolphinfish was the top single species served by weight, 1.5x higher than all other pelagic species combined

(YFT, SWO, BLK, SKJ, WAH, ALB), and higher than the second most dominant species acquired, queen snapper. However, when looked at by quarter beginning in 2021 following the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic, acquisition of dolphinfish has dropped, with the most drastic decline observed for Q1 2023 (see graph below). This year's decline is consistent with many anglers' comments to our program that it was the worst year for dolphinfish (and wahoo) that they can remember in Puerto Rico. [Click here](#) to learn more about how this ongoing research is important to document trends in the population status of dolphinfish, and other species, in the northeast Caribbean Sea.



Dolphinfish Management Update



Photo: Dr. Guy Harvey

At its June quarterly meeting, the **South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (SAFMC)** reviewed its direction for the management of dolphin along the U.S. East Coast. The Council elected to delay the development of Regulatory Amendment (RA3) until the dolphin Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) report is available or to the December 2024 Council meeting. RA3 includes consideration of extending the 20" minimum size north of South Carolina and possibly lowering the vessel limit below the current 54 per day. The delay in RA3 began a year ago at the June 2022 Council meeting and now may extend to two and a half years. As pointed out in the management update in our March newsletter ([click here](#)) and in our recent letter to the Council ([click here](#)), the MSE is a worthwhile project. That said, the long-term decline of the fishery to its current state warrants a timelier progression of RA3. As covered in the April newsletter ([click here](#)), the U.S. Caribbean Fisheries Management Council is actively moving forward its amendment to strengthen the management of dolphin in its areas of jurisdiction, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. [Click here](#) to learn more.

June Dolphinfish Recaptures

(click images to enlarge)

Florida Key's June Dolphinfish Recaptures

Recapture Vessel Counts: 0
ALL SELECTED
KILLIN TIME II

In the Florida Straits, two fish tagged by the *Killin' Time II* fishing team were recovered off of Marathon and Islamorada. Both fish were tagged off of Cudjoe Key. The fish recaptured off of Marathon was caught the day after it was tagged. The fish caught off of Islamorada was recaptured 4 days after it was tagged and was re-released because it was short. The fish recaptured after one day moved 40 miles overnight. The fish recovered after four days moved 78 miles or 19.5 miles per day.

Gulf of Oman June Dolphinfish Recaptures

Recapture Vessel Counts: 0
ALL SELECTED
GRANDSLAM CHARTERS

Our first recaptures in the Gulf of Oman occurred in June from tagging activity onboard *Grandslam Charters*. The first was reported by a vessel processor who mentioned that the fish was caught inside the Strait of Hormuz a day after it was tagged. The second was a fish recaptured after 3 days at liberty aboard a recreational vessel called *Almadra East Coast*. This female moved only 6 miles and was caught on a FAD. The fish was also tagged and released on a FAD. Anglers in this region report that small dolphins this time of year are found in good abundance in water temperatures up 70 degrees Fahrenheit! Anglers actually mentioned larger fish occur in the fall but abundance decreases in December. Dolphin season here predominantly occurs from May to September.

Support Our Fisheries Research

We are happy to release our organization's 990 for fiscal year 2022. [Click here](#) to examine our 2022 financial information. We share this information here as well as on [Guidestar.org](https://www.guidestar.org) to document our financial health as a fisheries research nonprofit. Five years ago we formed the **Beyond Our Shores Foundation** to build the **Dolphinfish Research Program**. Thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, the **DRP** is expanding and making a big impact. We also formed the **BOSF** to continue and grow our work on [fish aggregating devices](#) (FADs) in the U.S. Caribbean Sea. Our attention to both programs has led to new published studies, additional information for dolphin and FAD management, enhanced angler participation, and ongoing data collection in Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. We have also expanded our work on new species (wahoo and yellowfin tuna) and fishery topics (submerged FADs). While this work has been met with steady growth in our donor base, tagging program, and fishery research nonprofit, as well as new program sponsors, we need more support to continue. As of today, we have shipped out 284 tagging kits this year. Of those, nine were wahoo tagging kits. In 2023, our goal is to distribute 450 kits and 6,000 tags. Last year, we distributed 6,763 tags in 501 kits to 399 anglers in 12 nations. You can help us achieve and exceed our goal by supporting our work. Help support our work by purchasing a kit, shirt, or making a tax-deductible donation via the links below. Thank you for your support!

[Click to Shop](#)

[Click to Donate](#)

Scan to Donate



Tag Kit and Shirt Purchases Help Support Our Work



To Donate by Check [click here](#), Make Checks out to: Beyond Our Shores, Inc./Dolphinfish Research Program

Mail to:

Wessley Merten, Ph.D.
Dolphinfish Research Program
Beyond Our Shores, Inc.
PO BOX 3506,
Newport, RI, 02840,
Email: wess@beyondourshores.org

New Financial Supporters 2023

Department of Natural and Environmental
Resources, Puerto Rico
Guy Harvey Foundation
William Torode, FL
Patrick Humphrey, FL
Joan Vernon, FL
Captain Willie Howard, FL
The Tackle Box, FL
David Jones, UAE

Financial Supporters Beyond Our Shores Foundation 2023

Guy Harvey Foundation, Davie, FL
Grady-White Boats, Greenville, NC
American Fishing Tackle Co, Santa Ana, CA
SiriusXM Marine, NY
Terry Winn, FL
David Warner, SC
Cedric Yaquin, PR
Dave Hill, FL
Bryant Stokes, SC
Chris Whitley, FL
Perry and Neblett, FL
David Avellar Neblett, FL
Toni Neblett, FL
Jeff Brehm, NJ
Dane Dellenbach, FL
Don Gates, FL
Jim Rose, NC
Walter Warren, SC
Todd Floyd, WA
Kakike Gonzalez, PR
Joe Kang, CA
Jim Santa, CA
Jim Ivey, FL
Ray Shinneman, FL,
Richard Adler, IL
Dan Duke, VA
Jennifer Mitchell, SC
David Suarez, FL
Robert Strange, SC
Miles Marks, GA
Robin Knov, CO
Thomas Rice, FL
Karin Sherif, Egypt
Alex Duarte, FL
Terry Lewis, FL
Shane Hawkins, SC
Irving Rivera, PR
Jeffrey Burns, FL,
Roger Muller, NJ,
Thomas Sikes, FL,
Larry Cordell, FL
Takemura Ryngo, Japan
Dave Peterson, FL
Fernando de Osma, Peru
Cole Kennedy, NJ
James Wheeler, FL
Jeff Brehm, NJ
Angelo Massullo, FL
Sarah Boden
Brian Dalieva
Gino M
Jim Howland
Chris Gonyer
Veronica Chubanian
Greg Donofio
Rick Usher
Blake Gardner
Bill Mitchell
Alison Au
Ed Sikes
Antonella Pasquariello
Adam Izbicki
Bryan Lang
Mike Moore
Tom Calef
Jonathan Polchichi
Kenneth Babineau
Michael Kapopoulous
Bob Hubbe II
Dillon McDonald

Grupo Coen
Puerto Rico Department of Natural and
Environmental Resources, San Juan, PR
Uncle B's Outdoors, Florence, SC
Muller Insurance, NJ
Sea Grant Puerto Rico
Panropic Power, FL
West Palm Beach Fishing Club
Central Florida Offshore Anglers, FL
Florida Sport Fishing Association, FL
Florence Blue Water Fishing Club, SC
Harris Huddle, NC
Richard and Bob Delizza, Rock Boat Fishing Team
The Greenery, SC
Mitchell Scott, SC
Dean Mayer, VA
Tony Gonzalez, FL
Chris Jones, NJ
Johnson & Johnson
Irving Rivera, PR
Scott Kerrigan, FL
Tim and Michelle Helser, FL
Benevity,
Debra Kossman, FL
30A Light Tackle Fishing, FL
James Sander, FL
Edward Demarce, SC
Dominic Fuceno, FL
Cristine Hurst, FL
Louis Lusseter, NV
Thomas Hilton, TX
Mameel Botello, PR
Benjamin Bravo, PR
Curtis Boyd, FL
Ray Shinneman, FL,
David Hoover, GA,
Bill Duffy, VA
Carlos Farchette, USVI
Dillon McDonald
Joseph Tarres
Jared Wobka
Cory Carlson
Avery Topper
Nick Dube
Chris Rurosa
Jack Pierciak
Carl Sakonits
Andrew Prietti
Justin Kudlacz
Paul Leclair
Matthew Baryshyn
Casey McGuire
Mike Totman
Peter Frangis
Jeff Adams
Mark Stewart, SC
Justin Kudlacz, RI
Jeffrey Thomas, FL
Riley Family, SC
Steven Rider, AL
Robert Reuther, SC
David Jones, UAE
Joan Vernon, FL
Patrick Humphrey, FL
Captain Willie Howard, FL
William Torode, FL

