

Cooperative Science Services, LLC Dolphin Tagging Research Project

September 2006



Dolphin Move North

Anglers reported recovering 5 tagged dolphin during August 2006. This brings the number of recaptures reported for 2006 to 43 and the total number reported for the study to 160.

All of the recoveries involved fish tagged off Florida. Three of the tagged fish made long treks while the other two never made it out of Florida. All provided important information for management.

The longest distance traveled among these five individuals was 994 miles. This fish was tagged by Tom McMurray aboard his sports fishing vessel *Makara* during a trip off the western side of the Little Bahamas Bank. Josh Haight of Hampton Bays, New York, recovered the fish while fishing on the *Mummichog* in Block Canyon, south of Providence, Rhode Island, 76 days after it was released. This is the second dolphin from the southern Florida region to be recovered in Block Canyon this year.

The month's second longest movement was by a dolphin tagged by Justin Brown fishing aboard *Draggin Dreams* off Islamorada, Florida. In its 20 days of liberty the fish had traveled 852 miles to Oregon Inlet, North Carolina, where it was recovered by Matt Winchester aboard the charter boat *Samana*. This is the eighth fish that Brown tagged in 2006 to be recovered and the second tagged dolphin recovered by the *Samana*.

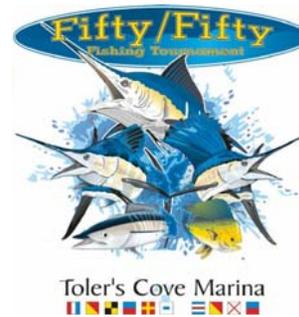
A fish tagged off West Palm Beach, Florida, also traveled to the North Carolina coast. Scott Frost of West

Palm Beach tagged the fish in late June. The fish was recovered 52 days later and 644 miles to the north off Cape Hatteras by Captain David Wilson of Frisco, North Carolina, aboard his charter boat *God Speed*.

The other two recaptures involved fish tagged off the Florida Keys and recovered off south Florida. One fish tagged by Bill Pomenti of Islamorada displayed a strong desire to leave the area where it was tagged. Recaptured the next day by Captain Jimbo Thomas's charter boat *Thomas Flyer*, the fish had moved 71 miles north of its original release site. The second recapture is the antithesis of the first and certainly not owning up to the term "highly migratory." Tagged off Marathon, Florida, in late May by Chuck DeBevec of Marathon, the fish remained free for 58 days before being recovered. Kyle Renuart captured the tagged fish off North Miami, Florida, only 112 miles from the release site. This is the longest period for a fish tagged in the spring in the Keys to be recovered in south Florida. Dolphin have gone from the Florida Keys to off New York in less time. What was this fish doing?

For a complete listing of recoveries of 2006 fish go to the "Study Results" page on www.dolphintagging.com.

Sponsored In Part By:



Marine Ventures
Foundation

CSS Dolphin Tagging Newsletter

September 2006

Page 2.

Dolphin Tagging Study Report Available

A report presenting the findings of the South Carolina Dolphin Tagging Study, 2002 – 2005 is currently available online. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' project completion report is available in PDF format on the CSS Dolphin Tagging Research Project's Web site at www.dolphintagging.com. The 15-page report focuses on the information gathered about the fishery and species life history. It can be found on the "Study Results" page of the Web site.

This paper summarizes and discusses the findings from the first four years of the study. It compares the number of dolphin tagged along the East Coast with the recreational harvest of dolphin and the impact that the "Full Freezer" factor has on tagging. The study found that 80% of all fish tagged off Florida that were recaptured were recovered off Florida. Only 7% of the tag recoveries came from waters north of the Carolinas.

It examines the numerous variations in the movement patterns for recovered dolphin tagged off Florida compared to those tagged off South Carolina. Differences in the dispersal patterns were observed among fish tagged in the different areas. In certain instances Florida fish were found to travel at over twice the average daily distance as South Carolina fish.

One of the most amazing revelations is that as much as 5% of the recaptures came from as far away as 2,500 miles in international waters or those belonging to another country. Another interesting fact is that not all fish were recovered to the north of where they were released.

Special Year-end Incentive Award Offered

The number of year-end awards has been increased to four. In addition to giving a Shimano TLD50 on a standup Star Rod for the most dolphin tagged by a private boat, charter boat and individual, a rod and reel will also be given to the boat fishing outside Florida that tags the most fish.

This is being done because of the distinct advantage that Florida anglers enjoy. As a rule, Sunshine State anglers have a much longer season of high abundance and enjoy a much shorter ride to the fishing grounds than most other areas on the east and Gulf coasts.



Tagging small dolphin in the canyons of the Continental Shelf off the northern section of the Mid-Atlantic Bight could shed light on the routes used in the fall southerly migration.

2006 Tagging - Outstanding

Dolphin Study Tagging Progress, September 1, 2006.

Zone	Area	Southern Limit	Northern Limit	Number Tagged
1	Bahamas	22N	28N	71
2	FL Straits	23N	25N	708
3	South Florida	25N	27N	315
4	Central Florida	27N	30N	55
5	North FL & GA	30N	32N	9
6	South Carolina	32N	33N	169
7	N. SC - S. NC	33N	35N	32
8	Northern NC	35N	36.5N	6
9	Virginia	36.5N	38N	9
10	N. Mid-Atlantic	38N		11
11	Gulf of Mexico	24N	30.2N	16

Anglers fishing on 85 different boats have reported tagging 1,400 dolphin this year. This number places 2006 just 46 fish behind the second best year, 2004. The 2006 tagging has been heavily centered in the Florida Keys and South Florida areas. Anglers fishing these waters have tagged more than 1,000 dolphin this year.

A few anglers in the Mid-Atlantic Bight are seizing the late summer opportunity to contribute by tagging the small dolphin that are showing up around the lobster trap floats in the offshore canyons. If this study is to learn about the behavior and movements of domestic dolphin stocks, it will require that more Mid-Atlantic fishermen get involved in tagging dolphin in the canyons. It is up to local anglers to provide data on their dolphin fishery for inclusion in this study.

Donations to the Dolphin Study are Fully Tax-Deductible

Make checks out to:

HH Reef Foundation/Dolphin Study

CSS Dolphin Tagging Newsletter

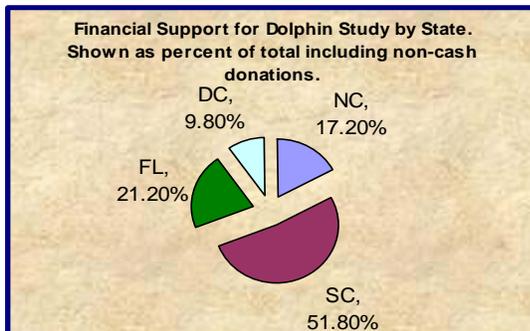
September 2006

Page 3.

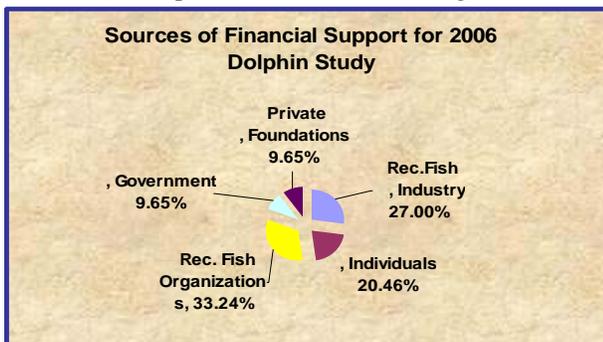
Who Supports the Dolphin Tagging Study

First and foremost, it is the offshore recreational fishermen who have solidly supported the dolphin tagging research during its five years of operation. They are the ones who willingly give up their fish to tag for science and then take the time to complete the all-important the paperwork. It is the fishermen who take the time to report tag recoveries. These anglers are the backbone of this research.

Financial support has come from three states, the District of Columbia and as far away as Australia. Individuals, organizations and sports fishing industry members from Miami, Florida, to Washington, DC have provided financial support that made continuation of the research possible. Over half of the 2006 funding came from South Carolina. Florida-based donors contributed provided 21% of the donations. Contributions from North Carolina generated 17% of the support. A private foundation based in Washington, DC, contributed 10% of the money needed to operate the program.



The largest share of financial support, 54% of funds received, came from individual fishermen and recreational fishing clubs and organizations. Business members of the sports fishing industry donated 27% of the funding to operate the research project. A private foundation, Marine Ventures Foundation, and a government agency, SC Department of Natural Resources, each provide 10% of the funding for 2006.



Donations to the Dolphin Study are fully tax-deductible. Contributions should be made out to the Hilton Head Reef Foundation/ Dolphin Study and sent to CSS at the address shown at right.

New 2006 Donors

Larry & Kathleen Hufford, Palm Bay, FL

2006 Financial Supporters

Georgetown Landing Marina, Georgetown, SC

Harry Johnson, Jr., Mt. Pleasant, SC

Anonymous, Charleston, SC

Hilton Head Reef Foundation, Hilton Head, SC

South Carolina Saltwater Sportfishing Association,
Charleston, SC

The *Rock Boat* Fishing Team, Weston, FL

Bailey Smith, Great Exuma, BA

Bill Baugh, Ramrod Key, FL

James Shannon, Isle of Palms, SC

Central Florida Offshore Anglers, Orlando, FL

Tony Gonzalez, Key Largo, FL

Greenville Saltwater Sportfishing Club, Greenville, SC

Coastal Conservation Association, South Carolina,
Columbia, SC

Hilton Head Sports Fishing Club, Hilton Head, SC

Beaufort Sport Fishing & Diving Club, Beaufort, SC

S.A.I.L. Fishing Club, Miami, FL

Thad Johnson, Merritt Island, FL

Coastal Conservation Association, North Carolina,
Raleigh, NC

Shimano Fishing Tackle / Don Coffey Co.,
Wilmington, NC

Star Rods / Sea Striker Company, Morehead City, NC

Hallprint Fish Tags., Victor Harbor, S. Australia

Ben Mitchell, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Ed Rodriguez, Sanford, FL

Summit Investment, LLC, Jupiter, FL

Ben Mitchell, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Steven Birchfield, Charlotte, NC

Bryan Osterling, Melbourne, FL

Fred Cory, Raleigh, NC

Piedmont Offshore Sport Fishing Club, Greensboro, NC

Chris Antley, Mt. Pleasant, SC

CCM Advisers, LLC, Columbia, SC

For More Information, Contact

Don Hammond

Marine Fisheries Biologist

Cooperative Science Services, LLC

961 Anchor Rd.

Charleston, SC 29412-4902

Telephone – FAX (843) 795-7524

Email CSSLLC@bellsouth.net

Web site www.Dolphintagging.com