



# TINDALE MARINE RESEARCH CHARITABLE TRUST

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## News Letter... December 2018

Hi everyone

We hope you have had a great year and have some plans to get out on the water and relax over the summer break. For those of you that have not been following us on Facebook there have been some interesting results on the tagging front. In October of this year we opened the opportunity for the public to get involved in an inshore fish tag and release programme. Since our initial pilot study back in May we have had a lot of interest from anglers and researchers across the country wanting to know more about the fishery they enjoy and are wanting to get involved. We decided to make Registration free to all participants and through word of mouth already have over 60 registered anglers from Houhora in the far north to Dunedin in the far south keen to get out there recording catch releases.

Sue and I have been busy at home making up tagging kits containing everything an angler would need to get started. Our living room looks like an assembly line with roll out measure boards, tag applicators, instructions and recording sheets along with serial numbered tags to put into packs ready to send out. These kits and accessories are available at cost and can be ordered online through our website page <https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagging-program/order-tagging-gear/>. The full kits at \$39.50 are cheaper than a standard tag pole retails for elsewhere. These kits are great value due to the kind donation of labour and some materials. The advantage of being a retired engineer has helped in keeping the price of the tag applicators down with me hand making each one in my workshop. Lindon, Rob and the team at Dominion Handel & Dowel kindly donated the dowel for the tag applicator handles. I have always been an advocate for NZ made products so Buy New Zealand Made Campaign have kindly granted the use of the brand and we will promote this on our measure boards on the next print run.

The website has been a bit of a mission and went live earlier this month. We wanted to set it up to be easy for “non-techno’s” like me to be able to use. It needed to be a helpful tool for taggers to use and the public not familiar to fishing to understand. There are so many forms of communication today so it has to be simple and without too much scientific jargon. For the old school pen and paper generation we have printable forms on line for reference and recording catches (printed forms are still sent out with the packs).

Catch location is an important part of the study of movements so we have included an easy to use interactive map on both the tag release and tag recapture pages on the website. This

is to help pinpoint your catch locations if you don't have a GPS and the pages include simple questions for submitting catch details. This has been a great tool for the recaptures so far with 3 recaptures within a stone's throw from where they were originally released.

Since starting this project 21 anglers have reported 398 tagged & released fish across 13 species. Six fish have been recaptured already, 5 Snapper and 1 hammerhead shark. All but one was recaptured by recreational anglers. Only one was re-released. These recaptures should increase as we head into the holiday season and more fish are tagged. Please spread the word to your fishing friends to keep an eye out for tagged fish. To reward the successes we have produced a 'Recapture Certificate' for both the tagger and the recapturer recording the dates and travels of the recovered fish. These have been well received and from overseas experience is something most aspire to achieve and always makes you feel like you have handled the fish right. Reports on the condition of the recaptured fish so far is that they were all in great condition and had no signs of trauma or infection from the tag being inserted. The tags were also in good condition and hard to spot due to their colour. (A few rang me to apologise for killing the fish, they had not seen the tag until it was too late and would have liked to re-release it had they known) I think this is a good indication that we made a good choice of tag colour and should prevent the tags being bitten off by other fish. As more anglers learn about the programme I think more will be inclined to release these tagged fish again. My main concern is we need to somehow get them to take note of the tag number and possibly measure the fish prior to re-release when that becomes the case. For those releasing their fish who wanted to have an estimated weight we posted a link to Christopher's "Fishweights" app on our Facebook page. Just enter species and length to have it converted to weight for your records.

For anyone out on the west coast we will be helping a Massey university student with his Masters studying the movements of Tope (school sharks) in the Kaipara harbour. We will be tagging as many of varying sizes as possible over a 2 year period so be on the lookout for these tagged fish amongst your catches. This shows the importance in collating tag and release data for future generations wanting to study fish seasonal movements, growth and survival rates.

The rest of the website compliments the citizen science approach. We have added a comprehensive fish ID guide, Thanks to MPI, covering most of the fish species off our shores so anyone that wants to identify what that mystery fish or find out more can find it listed. Each fish has a photo and summary of its biology including maximum size.

The addition of an overview of museum fish collections and their importance to marine research studies is complimented by the Volunteer work we do at the museum marine department collating specimens. What happens behind the scenes at the fish lab is something very few people outside the science fraternity know about and is an important collection of specimens from around the pacific used in many research studies. It has been fun coming across the many specimens that we had donated to these collections over the years.

As an introduction to the NZ Mako shark satellite tagging programme we have included an interactive map where you can animate the travels of the sharks that we tagged and released off New Zealand's northern coasts. I will add follow up stories on each of the sharks now that our research paper has been published in Marine Biology.

Reporting great white shark sightings and their photo ID are pet projects Clinton Duffy (a trust director) is undertaking. We have added an overview and a link for the public to report these sightings around our coasts. Many of you are keen to follow the Great white shark and Manta ray satellite tagging here in NZ so these projects will be added soon too.



As part of our involvement with many other research studies here in NZ we will be adding overviews of these as I get time. They will include conventional & satellite tagging projects of sharks and rays. If there is anything you would like to see included drop me a line.

Remember to follow us on Facebook to keep up to date with the latest action.

Lastly, we are still looking for funding to assist with these ongoing research programs. We would especially like a sponsor for replacement tags. We are a registered charity with donee status so donations are tax deductible. If you know of anyone that can help please have them contact me or visit our give a little page.

Finally from us here at Tindale Marine research Charitable Trust we wish you all a safe and enjoyable break and a happy new year.

See you out on the water...Cheers, Scott, Sue, Clinton & Rex (and Sophie)

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