



**TINDALE
MARINE RESEARCH
CHARITABLE TRUST**

Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust
quarterly report. Includes Trust member news,
activities, engagements and achievements over
Autumn of 2020

Scott Tindale
Founding Director

AUTUMN REPORT

#9

Mid-Year 2020

TINDALE MARINE RESEARCH CHARITABLE TRUST

Charities Registration No. CC55555

#9 Autumn Report 2020

Well what a year so far... the best weather in ages and then Covid-19 strikes! The mad scramble to get our lives in order before lockdown, rearranging our daily activities to sanitise and social distance, increased restrictions and border controls, who would have thought our isolated island nation could be changed so much in such a short period. The lockdown did however give the wild life a rest from human interaction for a short while. Reports during level 3 had fish chasing bait amongst the mangroves in the shallows. Even the water edges along the deserted Auckland motorway had large snapper foraging in the shallows. A snapshot of what it must have been like before urban development.



Level 3 for the recreational hunter gatherer was frustrating, not being allowed access to the hills during the “roar “and no motorised vessels on the water for sustenance fishing.

For the Trust level 4 lock down hit just as we were about to organise a Manta Ray satellite tagging mission out wide. Bubble size and quarantine restrictions were delaying us from continuing this project before these migratory species would leave our shores. We contacted the local MP to see if we could carry out any of our research projects under level 3. It was great to receive several emails from both our local MP office and the MBIE in Wellington that our seasonally sensitive research projects could continue even with the use of powered vessels and providing we followed the same guidelines as the commercial

fleet. This confirmation included the inshore fish tagging program. With paperwork in hand, safety equipment and social distancing protocols sorted we managed 2 outings out on the water, tagging and releasing several hundred fish, documenting them just as the seasonal change was about to happen. By level 2 it was all over with these shallow water fish migrating to other pastures. With the change of seasons most taggers have seen a change in species that they are catching. Gurnard making up a major part of their shallow water catch during these autumn months. Out wide the kingfish have turned up and in the deeper middle grounds snapper are frequently encountered.

More on the tagging results later in this issue.



Yes the timing couldn't have been worse. 'Covid-19's impact put many events both local and around the world on hold while countries wrestled with dealing with the pandemic.

Here in NZ it forced the cancellation of the 2020 **Seafood Sustainability Awards** in which we were finalists in the Kaitiakitanga Award.

For Sue and myself the cancellation of this event was a great disappointment but thankfully things have settled down a bit now so it is intended to hold the event next month instead. It will be a formal event in the grand hall of Parliament so hopefully my suit will still fit. More on the results in the next issue. Meanwhile wish us luck.

Fishing Competitions

The Trust is always grateful for receiving sponsorship & merchandising from local businesses to promote the tagging program and sustainable fishing practices. This assists us in supporting fishing clubs and events with including tag and release sections in fishing competitions. If your club or organisation would like to get involved or you would like to sponsor an event we would love to hear from you.

Lucky Draw

Each report we will be drawing a tag number recorded in the TMRCT data base using random.org. You will have to send in all your catch data to be included in these draws as vacant tag data will be redrawn. The lucky winner of each draw will receive a \$100 gift voucher thanks to the team at Bunnings Silverdale.



This month's random number is.... **Tag Number T5714**

Congratulations to **Robert Janse** who reported a 47cm snapper he tagged and released on the 8th of February 2020 while fishing in the Hauraki Gulf.



There will be a **tag and release section** in the upcoming **NZ Lure Masters** competition to be held on the 2nd and 3rd of October. This is a measure only lure only fishing competition with prizes for longest fish for 3 species, Snapper, Kingfish & Kahawai. Last year the top 8 anglers in this event tagged and released fish so this year there is an 18v Drill Driver kit valued at \$200 up for grabs for the angler that tags and releases the most fish.



Documentation and a suitable photo of the tag in the fish will be require to qualify so make sure you remember to take your tagging kit, smart phone or camera if fishing in this event.

A banner for 'The DB Export NZ Fishing Competition'. The banner is white with a blue border. On the left, there is a blue fish icon. The text 'THE DB EXPORT NZ FISHING COMPETITION' is written in blue, with 'THE' in a smaller font above 'DB'.

THE DB EXPORT NZ FISHING COMPETITION

To help reduce the need for double handling of tagged fish and reduce the time needed when they are out of water to process, the **NZ Fishing competition** organisers have added the Trust measure mat to the approved measures in their online fishing competition. This is a measure only competition that runs over a year where fishers submit photos of their catch competing for prizes for the longest fish. There are 8 common inshore fish species anglers can target to be entered in the leader board. Fish are not required to be released live so it made sense for our tag and release members to be able to submit photos of released fish on the **Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust** measure board and still qualify for this event.

MEASURE MAT



Features include:

- New Zealand designed & manufactured
- 1500mm roll up PVC Measure mat with PVC head board.
- Easy to read digits to 0.5cm increments
- Suits left or right handed measuring
- Durable and washable



These NZ made roll out measure mats are great for any measure only fishing tournaments.

TAGGING KITS



Includes:

- * Free Registration & Membership
- * 1500mm roll up PVC Measure mat
- * Tag Applicator with floating handle
- * Cartridge of 10 serial numbered dart Tags
- * Tagging Instructions
- * Code of Practice & handy hints
- * Recording Sheet
- * Citizen Science bumper sticker
- * Handy zip up carry bag
- * Free stuff from our supporters
- * Online support, reports and updates

All available online at <https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagging-program/order-tagging-gear/>

Fishing Report, NZ Records

There have been 4 additional New Zealand length records submitted to New Zealand Angling and Casting Association from tagged and released fish since the last report. This is a great way to support angling achievements without the need to kill and weigh fish. To qualify for a NZ length record all fish must be released live and recorded on an approved measure mat with a photo. **Congratulations** to all involved. It's encouraging to see more catch & release NZ records coming through.

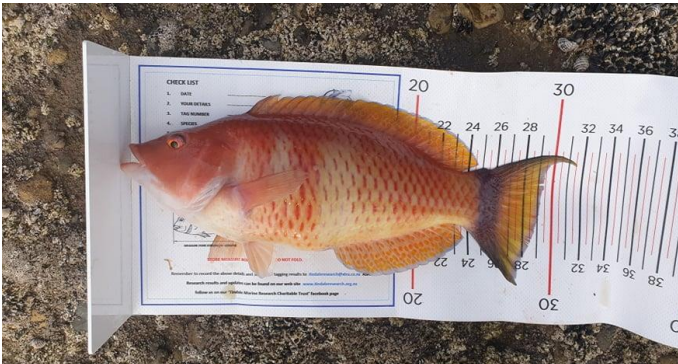


Bastian Buchmann received a New Zealand length record for a Sea Perch *Helicolenus percoides* he tagged and released while on a fishing trip to Mayor Island in March

Michael Jenkins while surfcasting off the west coast tagged and released two Tope (school sharks) one measuring 173.5cm for a potential new length record from the shore.



Christopher Caine recently submitted a tagged and released a Scarlet wrasse *Pseudolabrus miles* he caught while fishing from the entrance to the Hokianga harbour



Dixon Adams was fishing with Kingi Ranui in the Tauranga Sport Fish Club level 3 lockdown tournament in Tauranga harbour where they tagged and released a 61.5cm Kahawai for this now approved land based length record.



All fish were released live with **Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust** serial numbered research tags.

Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust Inshore tagging Program

As at June 2020, 9000 tags have been distributed throughout New Zealand. 2464 tagged and released fish have been recorded with 61 of these tagged fish recaptured so far.

Top 10 Tag and Release anglers

Ranking T&R	Anglers Name	No. Fish tagged and released
1	S. Tindale	694
2	M. Jenkins	228
3	R. Nawisielski	192
4	R. Janse	117
5	G. Johnson	103
6	L. Davis	70
7	A. Di Bartolo	57
8	W. Downer	56
9	C. Duffy	43
10	G. Watson	42

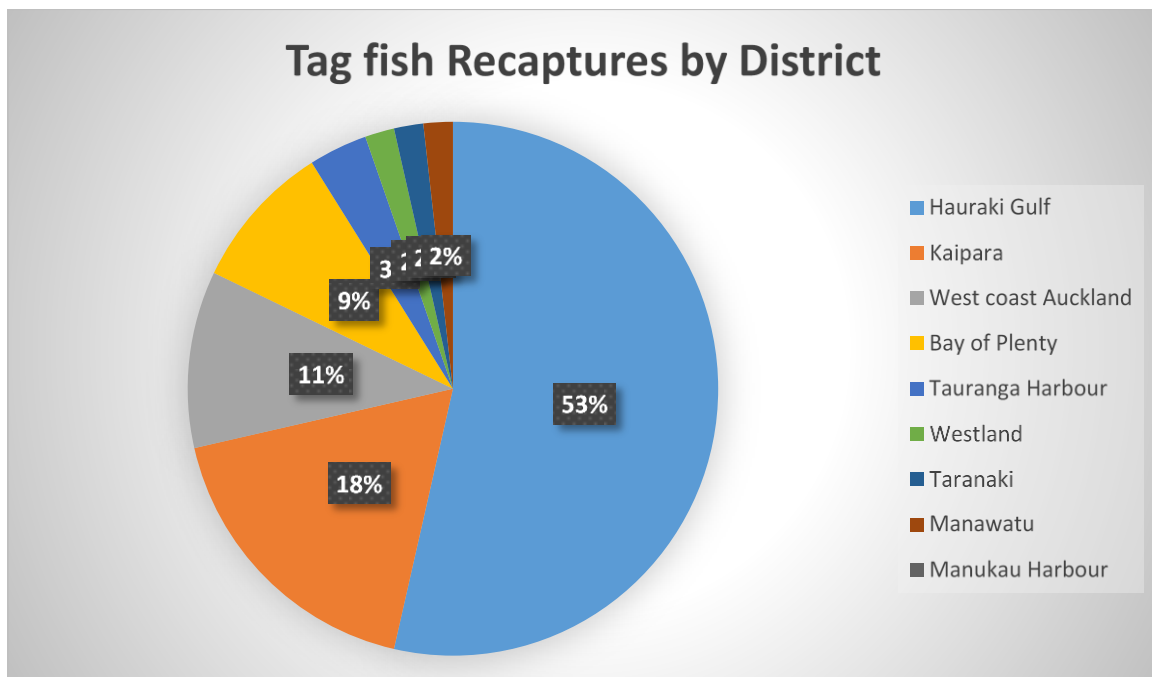
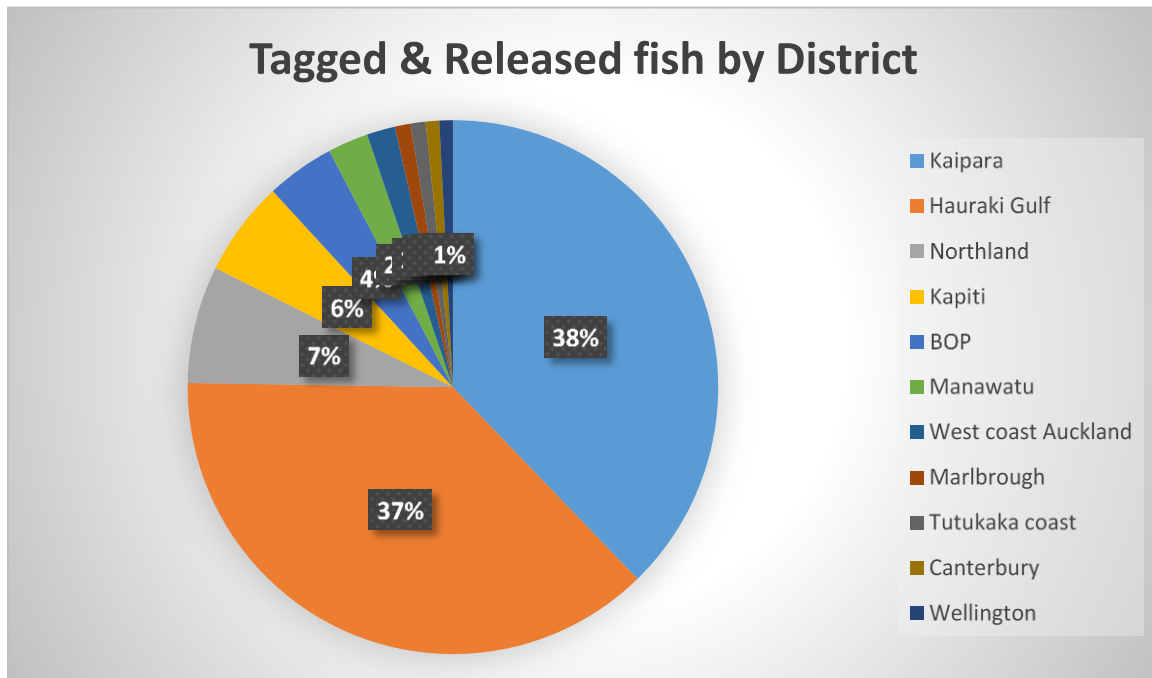
Anglers that have had tagged fish recaptured

No.	Name	Tagged	Recaptured	% rate
1	S. Tindale	694	15	2.2
2	M. Jenkins	228	8	3.5
3	R. Nawisielski	192	7	3.6
4	R. Janse	117	5	4.2
5	S. Wilkinson	3	3	100
6	G. Young	30	3	10
7	A. Di Bartolo	57	2	3.5
8	G. Johnson	103	2	2
9	L. Davis	70	2	2.8
10	T. Lusk	35	2	5.7
11	C. Duffy	43	1	2.4
12	G. Watson	42	1	2.4
13	G. Gates	33	1	3
14	C. Caine	33	1	3
15	M. Bawden	30	1	3.2
16	B. Riddiford	9	1	11.1
17	N. Hannam	8	1	12.5
18	G. Gilbert	7	1	14.2
19	S. Windsor	7	1	14.2
20	B. Hall	1	1	100
21	M. Stevenson	1	1	100
22	M. Stott	1	1	100

There are 373 registered members of the inshore tagging program from around the country including those that have recaptured tagged fish. A few of you have requested a leader board to show everyone how things are progressing. Please make sure you send in your tagging data ASAP to assist in keeping the records up to date. Tagged fish recaptures can vary greatly depending on fishing effort and the public in reporting recaptures. Sadly we know of a dozen or so recaptures that the information was lost or unrecorded. Every angler that Tags and releases a healthy fish can be commended in supporting ethical angling practices, contributing to citizen science and helping to restore our oceans to a more sustainable level.

Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust Inshore Tagging Program

Stats to June 2020



An insight to the tag and release fish verses fish recaptures by district. The latest phone NPS survey estimate 33% of recreational fisher's (approximately 200,000 anglers) fish in the Hauraki Gulf area. Understandably this shows up in the high TMRCT tagged fish recapture rate for the Hauraki Gulf.

Conservation News

Recreational bycatch of protected species has become a major talking point of late. Last report I covered the issue of the high bycatch and mortality of recreationally caught great white sharks as well as the issue of entanglement of seabirds and a dead juvenile dolphin drowned in discarded fishing line. In an effort to address the need for better communication and education in prevention of incidents with protected species the Department of Conservation is currently asking fishers to conduct a 10 minute survey to understand the views and experiences of recreational fishers. This survey is conducted by independent research company The Navigator (www.the-navigators.co.nz) and is looking at ways to better engage with fishers. There are quite a few marine protected species in NZ that many of you may not be aware of. These include several shark species, all seabirds except black back gulls, all marine mammals such as seals, dolphins and whales, all sea turtles, manta and devil rays, two gropers and all hard and soft corals. Details on how to get involved in the survey has been circulated by Fisheries NZ, via social media and fishing club networks.

Since the last report there have been several sightings of great white sharks around our coasts with at least eight additional captures including four entangled in commercial set-nets (three of which were able to be released alive). Under Section 63B of the **Wildlife Act 1953** (1) all commercial fishing operators *must report any accidental or incidental death or injury of marine wildlife to authorities within 48 hours of reaching port.* (2) *All other persons (including recreational fishers) who by any means whatever, accidentally or incidentally kills or injures any marine wildlife, shall, as soon as practicable, report the event to a ranger or fisheries officer. Every report is to include location, species or a general description, and a description of the conditions and the circumstances of the event.*

Here are two examples of the correct procedure to follow if you encounter one yourself.

Much of the information provided in these encounters assists scientists in the studies of this species.

On the 16th of May a 159cm juvenile Gt White shark was caught and successfully released by experienced land based fishers W. Thompson assisted by R. Janse fishing in the Manukau harbour. They did everything right in minimising the fish's stress by not removing the fish from the water, carefully removing the line before releasing it again and reporting the details to the Department of Conservation soon after release. Photos taken of the shark for ID will assist scientist with its movements when seen elsewhere around the country



Robert removing fishing tackle prior to releasing this juvenile great white shark

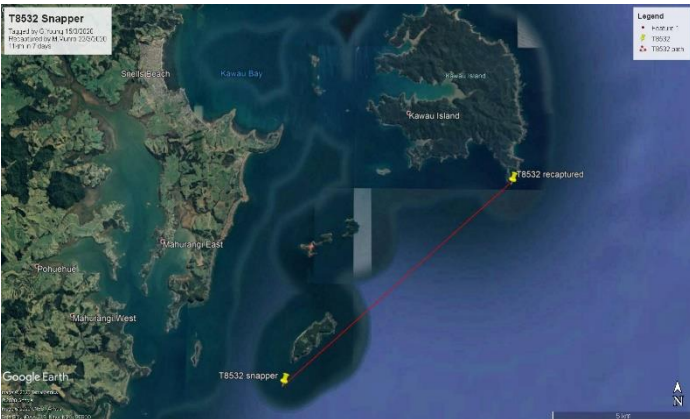


Photo from social media

Earlier this month a New Plymouth based commercial set netter targeting blue Warehou about 6 nautical miles off the Taranaki coast contacted the authorities to report that a great white shark had come up dead tangled in their set net. They were asked if they could land the fish and store it for Department of conservation staff to examine. Shark specialist Clinton Duffy was able to determine the shark was a 2.8m male weighing 190kg. Measurements were taken along with a tissue sample for DNA analysis to help with population density. A vertebral sample was also taken for aging.

Notable recaptures and releases

Graeme Young, a qualified conservation officer originally from South Africa, had participated in the Oceanographic Research Institute Durban based tagging program for many years and on emigrating to NZ 13 years ago started investigating if something similar was available here. He was very surprised there was none especially for recreational inshore fishers. *"For years I'd check and check and then I did again today and with great surprise and a lot of joy to say the least I discovered that the TMRCT had been established!!"* As soon as he received his tagging kit in early March Graeme was keen to get out and start tagging, using up all 20 tags on the first day. Since then three of his tagged fish have been recaptured this autumn.



T8532

On the 15th of March 2020 Graeme and son Neale headed out on their boat Redfish to Motuora Island in the Hauraki Gulf. Fishing in 18m of water Graeme noted the fish were feeding strong but was concerned that many were coming up bloated so stopped tagging after 10 fish. T8532 was a 30cm Snapper that had signs of barotrauma with its swim bladder inflated but swam off fine.

Seven days later this fish was recaptured at Challenger Island by George Munro fishing in 16m of water. George said that the fish was in great condition and only found the tag when he was filleting it at home.

T1897

On the 2nd of March 2019 Michael Jenkins tagged and released this 36cm snapper while fishing off the rocks on Moturekarekare Island in the Hauraki Gulf.

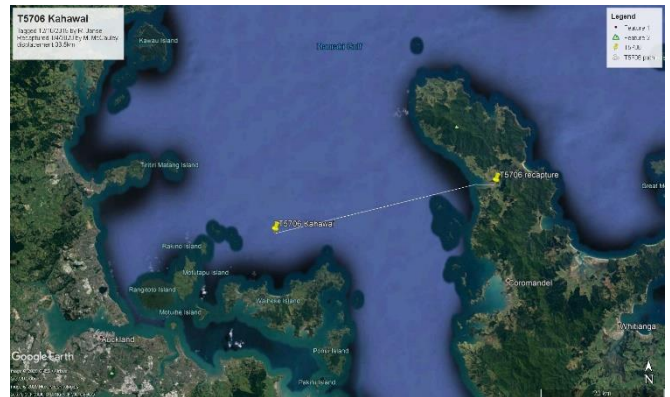
Just over a year later on the 22nd of March 2020 Ross McNaughton recaptured this fish from the same location and it measured the same length. The fish had a large notch in its head from some sort of trauma during its travels. This injury although healed up quite well could explain why no growth over the last year.



T5706

In early October 2019 Robert Janse was fishing off Waiheke Island in the Hauraki Gulf where he tagged and released a Kahawai measuring 55cm.

172 days later Mischa McCauley recaptured this fish on a live bait fishing off the shore at Colville Bay in the Hauraki Gulf, 36.5km from the release point. Mischa estimated the fish at 3kg and was a fat fish in excellent condition. The tag had a light coating of algae on it but easily wiped off to read the tag details. The fish was kept as it was deeply hooked but was not measured.



T6051

Covid -19 restrictions in NZ at Level 3 saw a surge of shore based anglers trying their luck fishing locally. On the 28th of April 2020 Geoff Lonsdale was keen for a feed of fresh fish and being the first day at level 3 headed off to try his hand at spin casting from the shore in Tauranga Harbour. He soon hooked up onto a harbour Kingfish and after a ¾ hour battle on 4kg line landed the fish. As a boatie he rarely kept kingfish but decided to keep this fish for the smoker. It measured 84.5cm.

This fish was originally tagged and released 73 days earlier on the 15th of February by Shane Windsor fishing from the shore with Kingi Ranui in the Tauranga harbour 2.28 km away where they measured it at 83cm.



T0871

Richard Nawisielski (Ski) has now had seven of his tagged fish recaptured. This time a kingfish measuring 53cm he caught in 40m of water in the middle of the Hauraki Gulf on the 23rd of February 2019 during a fishing tournament.



Roll forward just over a year to the 29th of February 2020 where Wayne Lindsay from Dunedin was aboard Hauraki Express charters fishing the eastern side of Great Barrier Island where he recaptured this kingfish in 38m of water. It was measured by skipper Finn Henderson at 63cm and was re-released again.

This kingfish had relocated a straight line distance of 29km in 371 days with a measured growth of 10cm in length.

T6353

Covid-19 may have slowed the human activity on land but no one told the fish. As soon as anglers were back on the water we had a run of recaptures of tagged fish including this 28cm snapper tagged and released on the 7th of March 2020 by keen Kayaker Tom Lusk fishing around Okahu Bay Auckland City.

It was recaptured by another kayak fisher, Michael Alora in the same area on the 3rd of May 2020. Michael recaptured this fish 177m from the original release point and was measured at 29cm before re-releasing again. Michael noted it was a healthy and strong fish for its size which is a good sign being caught so close to the city.



T2058

Whangamumu is the site of an old whaling station in the far north. A pleasant place to visit just south of cape Brett and sheltered in most winds. On the 23rd of March 2019 we stopped off for the night and decided to tag and release a few fish while we waited for tea to cook. This snapper was tagged by Sue Tindale fishing in 6.4m of water.

Just over a year later on the 25th of April 2020 Garry Somers anchored up in the same cove and decided to catch a few fish just on evening. He noticed one of the fish he had just caught had a tag in it so quickly recorded the tags details before re-releasing it again. Garry was by himself so was unable to get an accurate measurement but estimated it at 30-31cm. Garry noted it was a healthy fish but the tag had a bit of algae on it that he wiped off prior to release. At 400 days between captures in the same spot it will be interesting to see if it returns to the same area again next year.



T8216

The first day of tagging fish in NZ on the 1st of March 2020 for Graeme Young saw him release a snapper measuring 27cm off Motuora Island in the Hauraki Gulf. This fish was recaptured 77 days later on the 16th of May by Dave Down stray lining in 8m of water 281m from the original tag and release location. Dave measured the fish at 28cm before re-releasing it again.

T8217

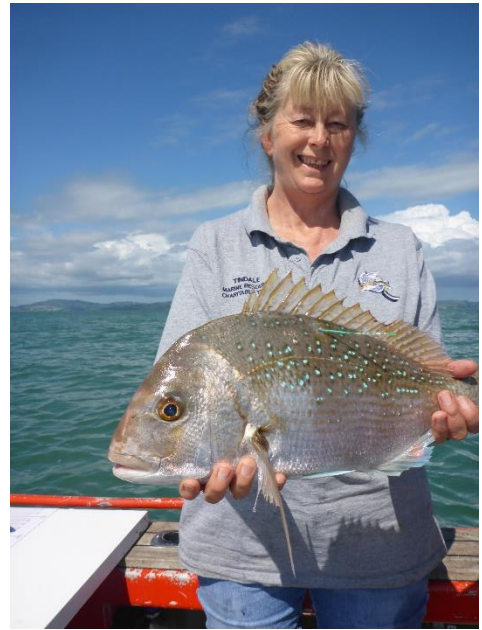
Another tagged and released snapper by Graeme Young on the 1st of March 2020 at Motuora Island measured 39cm and was recaptured 85 days later by Brett Dellow bait fishing in 4m of water. Brett said unfortunately the fish was bleeding from a swallowed hook so was kept. It measured 39.5cm, weighing 1.22kg and was exceptionally fat. It had been feeding on limpets and periwinkles. Both fish were recaptured within 300m of the tagging location aggressively feeding up pre winter. This is also Graeme's third tagged fish recaptured from his first two trips.

T0636

On the 12th of December 2018 Sue Tindale tagged and released several snapper in the shallows on the Kaipara Harbour including this snapper measuring 41.5cm from 2.5m of water.

532 days later this fish was recaptured 1.55km away by Lucas Webb fishing with a running rig in 2m of water. Lucas kept the fish and reported it measured 46cm, a growth of 4.5cm

Snapper are the dominant species during the warmer months November to May in these shallows but migrate great distances during winter. These recaptures during seasonal movements tell us a lot about our inshore fishery in relation to water quality and temperature changes.



T7451

On the 21st of May Sam Wilkinson tagged and released a 114cm Kingfish while fishing in 45m of water off Mayor Island in the Bay of Plenty. Eight days later from the same charter boat "fins and tails" Mark Stephenson recaptured this fish in the same area approximately 150m from the original release point. They did not notice that the fish had already been tagged until this photo was taken so the second tag was quickly removed prior to releasing the fish again.

Well that is it for this report. We have had quite a few recaptures already this winter but more on that in the next issue. If you enjoyed this issue and would like to know more please check out previous reports and other marine research activities on our website www.tindaleresearch.org.nz

For the members of the Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust inshore tagging program please make sure you send in any tag and release details you have outstanding ASAP. It makes things a bit difficult in chasing you for this information well after the event when a fish is recaptured. Remember all tagged fish enter the draw each report update.

From the executive, tight lines until next time, see you out there.

