Spring Report

#31

1st September to 30th November 2025

Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust quarterly report. Includes Trust member news, activities, engagements and achievements over spring 2025

Scott Tindale, Sue Tindale,
Clinton Duffy, Rex Harrison
Founding Directors

Content contributions from the members of the TMRCT inshore tagging program

TINDALE MARINE RESEARCH CHARITABLE TRUST

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Newsletter No. 27 spring update 1st September to 30th of November 2025

Spring has been 4 seasons in a day, much like last year. Again with snowstorms in the south, rain, flooding and high winds across the country. The short fine weather windows have produced mixed results out on the water. In close, silt land runoff over winter still smothers the inshore shallow waters. Silt sadly is a big issue in most developing areas around the country in a result of the need to build more housing and infrastructure. As I started writing this piece I was distracted by the countless trucks and earthmoving equipment next door filling in a pristine valley, blocking water ways and smothering native trees. For 12 months we have watched this mountain of dirt creep its way down hill towards our boundary. No catchment or runoff mitigation. Just trucked and dumped. No resource consent was required I'm told by the council as its fine when it's for "farming purposes". This BS ended when they discovered that companies had approached everyone in the area, including us, looking to dump dirt removed from subdivisions in the next town. Our creek, a place we often enjoyed watching eels, koura and native fish, is blocked has stopped running for now. It's no wonder our rivers, harbours and coastal waters are dying when this sort of loophole is happening all around us. And worse still the silt will soon be heading to a beach near you.

Meritorious catches

Trust member Paul Mills has yet another IGFA world record approved this quarter for a tagged and released fish.

On the 15th of May Paul tagged and released a 74cm trevally caught fly-fishing in the far north. Fishing with friend Johnny Gummer this fish was one of two IGFA world records the pair caught that day.

Paul's trevally now leads the IGFA all-tackle length record for trevally caught fly fishing.

Research Collaborations

Victoria University Shark Tagging, Fiordland, 5-12 October 2025

In early September Trust Director Clinton Duffy (Curator of Marine Biology, Auckland Museum) was asked to assist Dr Alice Rogers (Victoria University of Wellington) and Dr Brit Finucci (Earth Sciences NZ) with tagging broadnose sevengill (*Notorhynchus cepedianus*) and school sharks (*Galeorhinus galeus*) in Breaksea and Dusky Sounds, Fiordland.

This research is funded by Save Our Seas Foundation and contributes to two projects: *Climate change at the end of the earth: sevengill sharks in Fiordland, New Zealand* and *Are Fiordland's MPAs protecting sharks?* Both projects utilize an array of acoustic receivers placed at strategic intervals throughout the sounds and Acheron Passage which connects them. The sharks are caught using a heavy handline and by rod and line. Once trussed up at the back of the boat an acoustic tag is surgically implanted into their body cavities, and they are marked externally with standard TMRCT spaghetti tags. The TMRCT tags allow recognition of previously caught and acoustically tagged fish, as well as providing information on long distance movements outside the array.

The team worked off the 22.2 m Department of Conservation vessel MV Southern Winds for the week, departing from Doubtful Sound. The skipper was well known Fiordland personality Peter Young. The crew was Richard Kinsey and Ross Funnell. As well as Alice and Brit, the other members of the science team were Dr James Bell, Amber Kirk, Emma Novak and Dr Ashley (Ash) Rowden.

We left Doubtful Sound for Breaksea Sound around mid-day on the sixth in heavy rain and stiff nor-wester. A following sea made the trip more pleasant than it should have been. Our first stop for shark fishing was in Broughton Arm. Dropping lines to 31 m rapidly produced three sevengills between 1.4-1.7 m total length (TL), a 93 cm TL school shark and a 58 cm fork length (FL) hapuku (*Polyprion oxigenious*). All were duly tagged and released, the hapuku splashing Clinton in the face as it departed for the bottom.

Over the course of the next seven days 16 sevengills up to 220 cm TL, eight school sharks (86-142 cm TL), nine hapuku (54-73 cm FL) and one juvenile spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*) were tagged and released. One of the school sharks was a re-capture of a shark that had been tagged in the same cove in May (see later in this report). Apart from only catching one spiny dog, the biggest surprise was how many pup hapuku we tagged. All these fish were caught while targeting sharks in 25-31 m of water. Although all hapuku were caught below 20 m depth none showed signs of barotrauma, and all swam off strongly after being held by the lower jaw off the duckboard for a few minutes. The potential for learning a lot about the growth and movements of this poorly known species by tagging more of these pups seems obvious.

A brief break in the weather on the morning of the tenth provided us with a much nicer trip back to Doubtful than any of us expected and we even got a break from the wind, rain and hail the following day but only for a day. Despite the weather, it was great to be back in the Fiords after a long break away. Fiordland wouldn't be Fiordland without snow, rain and waterfalls. Thanks to Alice and Brit for the opportunity to help on this project, and to Pete and the rest of the crew for a very enjoyable and productive time on the water.

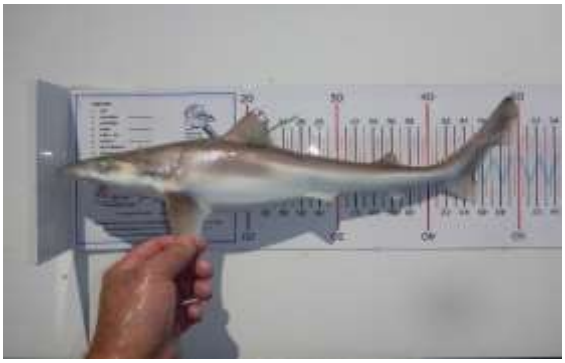
Links:

Sevengill project: https://saveourseas.com/project/climate-change-at-the-end-of-the-earth-sevengill-sharks-in-fiordland-new-zealand/

School shark project: https://saveourseas.com/project/are-fjiordlands-mpas-protecting-sharks/

Species Profile.

Species Profile: School shark

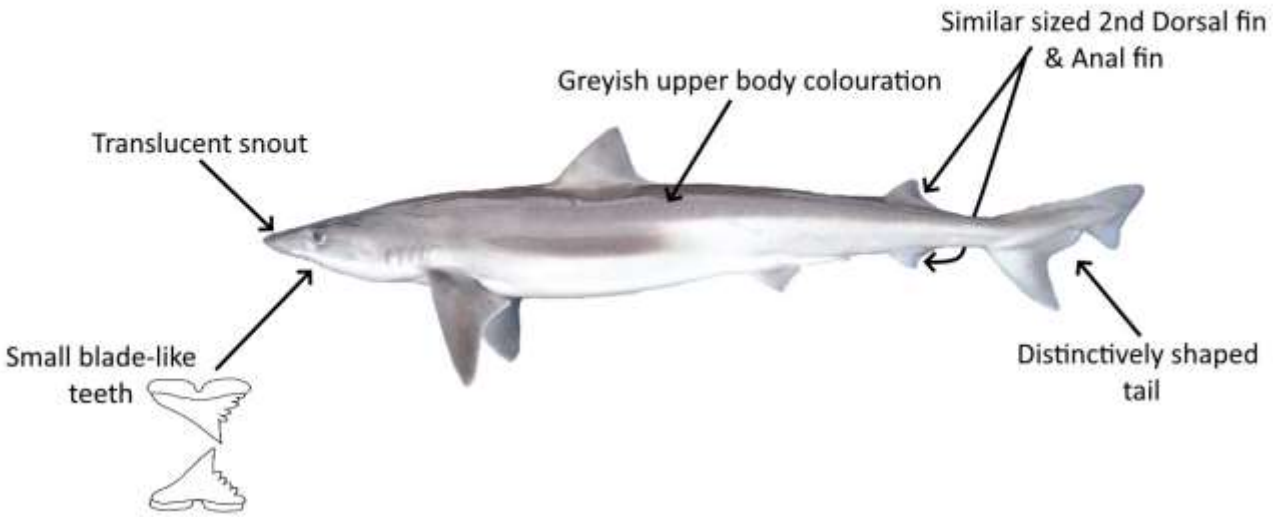


Other names: tope, soup fin shark, lemonfish, sand shark, grey boy, kapeta, tupere, makohuarau.

School sharks (*Galeorhinus galeus*) are a medium sized shark belonging to the family Triakidae (hound sharks). This is one of the largest families of shark, with most species inhabiting shallow coastal waters and continental shelves. Many species, including the school shark, are fished commercially for their meat.

School sharks have a streamlined, elongate body; a relatively long conical translucent snout; a large, erect first dorsal fin that originates just behind the inner corner of the pectoral fin; no inter-dorsal ridge; a small second dorsal fin that has its origin slightly anterior to the anal fin origin; a distinctive tail with a broad upper lobe with a large, expanded terminal lobe and strong lower caudal lobe; and distinctive blade-like teeth with an oblique triangular cusp and 3–5 cusplets on the posterior margin in each jaw. The body and fins of adults are coloured uniform grey above and white below and the snout is translucent. In contrast, small juveniles have conspicuous markings on the fins. The tips of the first and second dorsal fins are black, and the free-rear tips of those fins are white; the tip of the upper caudal lobe is dusky, the margin of the caudal fork is black, and the upper and lower post-ventral margins of the caudal fin are pale.

School shark *(Galeorhinus galeus)*



Distribution: Widespread but in temperate marine regions - Northeast and South Atlantic Ocean, Northeast Pacific, Peru, Chile, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa. Depth range from the intertidal zone to at least 1100 m. Widespread in New Zealand waters, recorded from Kermadec Islands to 54° S.

School sharks are an active coastal pelagic species, often observed swimming well above the bottom. Although primarily found over the continental shelf and upper slope, incidental bycatch in the tuna longline fishery and tagging studies show school sharks make extensive excursions into open water well beyond the shelf break, including dispersal to and from southern Australia. While tagging studies also show extensive movements around and between North and South Islands indicating there is a single well mixed population in New Zealand waters, size and sex segregation mean the fishery is managed as seven main stocks, with fishery assessments carried out for each.

School sharks move into shallow coastal waters during spring, where females give birth to live young about every three years. Litter size ranges from 6 to 54 pups. School shark's exhibit multiple paternity meaning a litter of pups may have several different fathers. The gestation period is about 12 months. Embryos are nourished via a yolk sac and are often at different stages of development. Older pups have been documented feeding on their siblings in the womb prior to birth. New-born sharks remain in shallow waters, particularly along sandy surf beaches for one to two years before progressively moving into deeper waters. It is common to catch 1st and 2nd year class school sharks together while surfcasting along our coasts. Tagging these juveniles helps with determining growth rates and seasonal movements around New Zealand.

Size at birth is about 30 cm total length (TL); males mature at 128cm TL and females at 137 cm TL. Maximum reported size is 220 cm TL for both males and females. Males mature at 13 years of age, and females at 14 years; maximum age is estimated to be c.60 years but is suspected to be older.

The diet of school sharks has not been well studied in New Zealand. They are recreationally caught on a wide variety of baits and even lures. Elsewhere their diet is reported to be primarily bony fishes and cephalopods (squid and octopus) but they can also catch fast swimming fish like tuna.

School sharks tagged in NZ have travelled distances of up to 5000km from the release locations. For example school shark T24761, tagged and released by Trust member Emilio Ayerdi while surfcasting at Frasers Beach on the lower east coast of the South Island, was recaptured 612 days later (1 year 8 months) near Perforated Islands in South Australia, a shortest distance by sea of 3132km. Conversely school sharks tagged in South Australian waters have been recovered off the coast of New Zealand including several satellite tagged sharks. One Australian school shark was recaptured after 42 years at liberty.

Historically school shark were an important food source for Maori with several large, well organised seasonal fisheries in the upper North Island. The scale of these fisheries was probably comparable to the modern commercial target fishery today, with early European accounts describing catches of hundreds to thousands of sharks at a time. These fisheries were strictly controlled with penalties for anyone fishing outside the season, and at times they were fought over by competing iwi. Modern commercial fishing for school shark begun in New Zealand in the early 1940s with reported landings rising sharply from 156 tonnes in 1956, to 3918 tonnes in 1983. This increase in reported landings reflected expansion of commercial set netting targeting school shark and rig (*Mustelus lenticulatus*). By the time the Quota Management System (QMS) was introduced in 1986 most major school shark fisheries overseas had either collapsed or were showing signs of overfishing. As a result, quota for school shark in NZ was set well below estimated catches when the QMS was introduced and has been gradually adjusted upward since. Today the school shark is assessed as Critically Endangered globally with a declining population trend by the IUCN Red List. All but the New Zealand population have collapsed due to over fishing. The species' conservation status in New Zealand is Not Threatened (Conservation Dependent, Threatened Overseas).

Recreationally school sharks are a popular catch across all of New Zealand by both boat and shore fishers. Twenty of the current 26 IGFA line class world angling records for tope sharks were caught in New Zealand including the current all tackle world record of 33kg set in 1986.

Left, Scott Tindale with a world record school shark caught on fly.

New shark scientist, Alex Burton passes PhD exam

Just over five years ago Alex Burton, Massey University, approached the Trust for assistance in undertaking a study of School sharks for his Masters degree, which later morphed into a PhD. The focus of his study was to improve knowledge of the biology of school sharks to help management and recovery efforts of this species worldwide. His thesis examined several aspects of school shark life-history, including relationships between full and partial body lengths, how length-at-birth and maturity differed among populations, whether the growth of juveniles varied throughout New Zealand, the extent of transfer of trace metals from mothers to pups, and how Kaipara Harbour was connected to other key school shark habitats in New Zealand.

Some of his earliest fieldwork was with the Trust's directors Scott and Sue Tindale, to learn how to catch, handle, and tag sharks. With the assistance from the Trust Alex was able to deploy 25 mini-PAT satellite tags on large female school sharks caught near the entrance of Kaipara Harbour. These sharks transversed the continental shelf around the country, being tracked as far north as the Three Kings Islands and as far south as Snares Island on the fringes of New Zealand's Sub Antarctic region. For 10 of these sharks Alex was able to get a detailed look at their movements and habitat use due to the effort the TMRCT and local communities put into in recovering their tags after they washed ashore.

Trust members using the TMRCT dart tags have caught, measured, tagged and released over 550 school sharks of all sizes around the country. The release and recapture data were important in helping to identify key school shark habitats around New Zealand as well as how these and other habitats are connected.

Alex recently completed his PhD. His thesis is now available for those interested in learning about the conclusions of the research at https://tinyurl.com/ytt2upm5

Alex is now preparing manuscripts to publish the findings from his PhD as well as expanding on several parts of the research. Alex is keen to continue research on sharks and their relatives in New Zealand and abroad, including ongoing work with the Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust and other citizen science initiatives.

Scott Tindale (left), **Alex Burton** (centre) **and Sue Tindale** (right).


MASSEY UNIVERSITY

Studies of the Life History of School Sharks (Galeorhinus galeus)

Handy links and resources for the online savvy

Remember to share or tag your fish tagging adventures on your Trusts' social media community page

- **Website** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz
- **Email** tindaleresearch@xtra.co.nz
- **Instagram** #tindaleresearch
- **Facebook** www.facebook.com/tindaleresearch/ @tindaleresearch
  @Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust – Community
- **Donations** https://givealittle.co.nz/org/tindale-marine-research-charitable-trust/
- **Updates and newsletters** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/newsletters/
- **Fish ID guide** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/project/fish-id-guide/
- **Inshore tagging program** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagging-program/
- **Fish Tagging explained** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagging-program/what-is-tagging/
- **Tagger Registration** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagger-registration-form/
- **Report Tag & Release** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/fish-tag-release-form/
- **Report Tag Recapture** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/fish-tag-recovery-form/
- **Tagging kits & Accessories** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagging-program/order-tagging-gear/
- **Printable forms** https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagging-program/downloadable-printable-forms

How to tag fish YouTube videos

- How to tag and release a small snapper: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbiusrEw11Y
- How to tag and release a Snapper: https://youtube.com/shorts/xTE_jd7Ibqs?feature=share
- How to tag and release an Eagle ray: https://youtu.be/diqjZkZXOuI
- How to tag and release a Rig: (spotted smooth hound): https://youtu.be/9AhR6cDnwdE
- How to tag and release a Tope Shark: (School Shark): https://youtu.be/eia0-LWzDM8
- How to tag and release a Kahawai: https://youtu.be/7xkCJCl9vBM
- How to tag and release a Gurnard: https://youtu.be/AiEGBvf0Emg
- How to tag and release a Trevally: https://youtu.be/buOdM8agfT4
- How to tag and release an Elephant fish: https://youtu.be/daf90AMYg1s

- **Q codes, scan for:**

Tag & release

Tag recaptures

Website

- **IGFA International Game fish Association & Angling World Records** www.igfa.org
- **NZ Recreational Fishing Rules** www.fisheries.govt.nz/travel-recreation/fishing/fishing-rules/

Wise Tackle selection

By Paul Mills and Sue Tindale

We always hear about destructive fishing methods in the media — and yeah, most of it's about commercial bottom trawling. But if we're being honest, we in the recreational game aren't exactly innocent either. A lot of the waste and damage we cause comes down to poor tackle choices and habits we don't really think twice about. Lead sinkers (banned in a bunch of countries), fishing line and rubbish dumped overboard, gill nets left unattended, blasting through bird feeding zones — it all adds up. Even simple things like high grading or tossing back injured fish because they're "too small" or the wrong species can do more harm than we realise.

If we want to fish responsibly and actually look after the resource, it starts with small changes that add up to make a big difference. Here are a few examples we can all easily do.

Preparation is key. Think ahead, plan for the inevitable need to release fish before you even start fishing.

- **Keep fish wet** - limit airtime and get them back fast.
- **Landing nets** - lip grippers and plyers are handy acessories. Bolt cutters and hook removers are esential for shark fishing.
- **Handle with care** - wet hands, don't lay fish on hot or dry decks or sharp rocks
- **Tagging gear** - have measure mat and tags ready to go before you land a fish.
- **Cameras** - have camera and video ready to go. If you cant hold your breath while you take photos then the fish can't either.
- **Revive** - Give tired and disorientated fish a chance to revive. Face into the current or support upright in the water until they can swim off strong
- **Release weights** - Embolised/blown or undersize demersal fish need to return to the bottom safely to recompress and avoid seabird or fish predation. Use a release weight to get them down fast.

And when it comes to tackle, we could be doing things better here too.

- **Hook size** - increase hook size to avoid catching undersize fish. Light gauge hooks do less damage to the fish's mouth
- **Circle hooks work great for bait** - they hook in the corner of the mouth, crush or remove the barbs and make for easier releases. J hooks used bait fishing have a very high chance of gut hooking fish and shouldn't be used when bait fishing.
- **J-hooks for lures** - crush or remove the barb on lures saves both you and the fish a heap of grief.
- **Treble hooks** - are banned or restricted in some places because they cause so much damage to wildlife and are almost impossible to remove without harming the fish or yourself, swapping them out for singles is a simple upgrade that really helps fish survival rates.
- **Set nets** - Don't leave set nets unattended. Don't set over or near reef habitats. Set for short periods of time to avoid overfishing. Never leave overnight as you risk entangling protected species or unnecessary predation by seabirds, sharks and rays. A lost net at sea keeps on killing.
- **Braid vs mono** - avoid using braided lines around seabirds. Wing wrapping a bird with braid is a death sentence. Dispose of unwanted line responsibly
- **Shark fishing** - use short wire traces attached to your leader. It's much kinder on the fish and safer for the wireman to hold onto monofilament. Barbless circle hooks and hook removers are a must.

Things we should avoid when releasing live fish

- **Deflation needles** - puncturing the swim bladder with a knife, sharp object or deflation needles can cause post release infection resulting in death. Tagging results confirm zero recaptures from deflation needle use and is banned in many countries overseas. **Use a release weight instead**.
- **Rock pools** - Don't put fish temporarily in rock pools situated above the water line. This water is often heated by the sun, full of harmful bacteria and stagnant. This can kill fish from lack of oxygen, temperature shock, high salinity, bacteria and stress.
- **Aviod lifting fish by the tail** - this can dislocate their vertebrae. Support the whole body with two hands and release head first as close to the water as possible.
- **Aviod touching gills or eyes** - don't put your hands in a fish's gills to hold them up for a photo etc. this can cause fatal damage to the gill fillaments, suffocating the fish post release.
- **Gob sticks** - Never use a gob stick on a fish to be released. If its gut hooked keep it unless it legally has to be dumped overboard.
- **Shark fishing** - Avoid dragging sharks backward down a beach, it fills up their gills with sand and gravel causing injury. Where possible leave large sharks in the water to tag or remove hooks. This avoids their own body weight crushing their internal organs.

Other things to consider

"Move on" if you are consistently catching undersize fish. Better to find a new spot with larger fish than harass and harm undersize fish in a nursery. Some fish species are long living or slow growing to reach maturity. Is that 25-year-old kahawai just bait? Check out some of our previous reports to find out more on some of these species. Another big one is the old-school catch-and-kill fishing comps. They might seem harmless, but they send the wrong message — especially to kids just learning about fishing. These tournaments unintentionally encourage high grading and dumping in order to land the heaviest bag limit. The focus shifts from *respect for the fish and the environment* to *killing the most or biggest thing you can find*. Local area depletion has become a huge issue with locals concerned about the influx of "out of towners" stripping their local waters hoping to win a prize.

Length measure competitions are a much more sustainable way of fishing competitions by simply measuring and photographing a fish before releasing it live. Adding the ability to release a prize-winning fish in a tournament not only reduces local area depletion by the participants, it can spread effort across the country. By simply emailing in catch photos and negating the need for a weigh station fish stocks can be left intact and unnecessary waste avoided.

The **TMRCT "inshore fish tagging program"** and the **IGFA's "Passports to Fishing"** programs are great examples of how to flip things around by teaching young anglers about ethical fishing, conservation, and proper fish handling so they can swim away strong. That's the kind of message we should be backing. Release a tagged fish again to continue supplying the next generation with a good supply of fish to catch.

Retailers should also take responsibility and stock a better selection of tackle. It's easy to buy lures fitted with treble hooks, and J-hooks of every size, but we often struggle to find a decent selection of circle hooks, especially in a range of larger sizes. Selling a better idea is future proofing your business.

At the end of the day, we all love fishing — that's why we're out there. If we can pass on better habits, teach the next generation to respect the fish and the environment, and fish with a bit more thought, everyone wins. Fewer wasted fish, healthier stocks, and more good days on the water for the future. The issue is not about how many fish we keep but how many we killed getting them.

TAGGING KITS

$50.00

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

MEASURE MAT

$20.00

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

GAME FISH MEASURE

$20.00

Features include:

- New Zealand designed & manufactured
- 3000mm x 75mm roll up PVC Measure Mat
- Easy to read digits starting from 1000mm to 3000mm at 1cm increments
- Great for Boat or Land based fishers
- Suitable for Marlin, Shark and Tuna
- Durable and Washable

TMRCT TAGS

"Save a fish with a gold coin donation."

Packs Include:

* Cartridge of either 10 or 50 individually serial numbered PDS dart Tags
* Tagging Instructions
* Code of Practice & handy hints
* Recording Sheet
* Citizen Science bumper sticker
* Free stuff from our supporters
*Online support, reports and updates.

Top up your tagging kit ready for the next fishing adventure with family or friends.

All tagging equipment including tagging packs, fish tags and accessories are available from our website orders page https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagging-program/order-tagging-gear/

Also available from Trade Me (credit card and surcharges apply).

Tagging Leader board

As of the end of November 26 members in the TMRCT inshore tagging program have tagged over 100 fish, 9 have made it to the leader board reaching the milestone of 250 or more tagged and released fish.

Scott & Sue Tindale	2865
Robert Janse	571
Graeme Johnson	513
Graham Wilson	506
Michael Jenkins	393
Hadley Dawes	264
Richard Nawisielski	254
Luke Davis	258
Liam Shadgett	274

Longest fish leader board

The following chart is the longest fish tagged and released for the most common species. There are a few ties but the first fish recorded stands. Many of these are also New Zealand angling length records.

Snapper	5/02/2023	S. Jameson	Port Jackson	88.5cm VL
Kahawai	5/03/2020	D. Adams	Tauranga	61.5cm VL
Kingfish	9/11/2023	J. Aubertin	East Cape	140cm VL
Gurnard	4/06/2022	G. Gilbert	Nape Nape	53cm VL
Trevally	15/5/2025	P. Mills	Rangaunu	74.5cm VL
Blue cod	12/07/2019	T. Dawson	Chatham Island	48.5cm VL
Blue Moki	8/04/2021	G. Wilson	Marlborough	62cm VL
Hapuku	9/10/2025	B. Finucci	Fiordland	73cm VL
Elephant fish	10/11/2022	S. Tindale	Bruce Bay	81cm VL
Tope shark	16/06/2020	M. Jenkins	Karekare Beach	174cm TL
Rig shark	10/09/2022	G. Gilbert	Rakaia	140cm TL
7 gill shark	5/11/2025	S. Mennell	Tiwai Bridge	263cm TL
Bronze whaler	31/01/2021	E. Ballantine	Rangiputa	303cm TL

A Big thank you to **Daiwa NZ** who continue to sponsor Bait Junkies to compliment the recapture certificates posted out to both of the fishers involved. It has been another busy quarter with recaptures reported most days over another very busy spring.

Bait Junkies, along with the recapture certificates have been given to the angler that originally caught and tagged the fish as well as the angler that recaptures it. It is great to see many of our members using these products tagging and releasing fish too. A high proportion of fish are lip hooked using these lures reducing the potential of gut hook mortality when releasing fish.

Monthly Recapture Draw

Daiwa New Zealand sponsor the monthly tag and release prize draws. One lucky winner will receive a Laguna LT 4000 **Daiwa spinning reel** to be drawn from tagged and released fish reported during the month. All late entries will go into the month they are received so it pays to keep your data entries up to date. *Note: tag and release forms sent in with incomplete or missing data are not eligible for prizes*.

Congratulations to all our spring tagged fish monthly prize draw winners.

The ***September*** draw winner is **Craig Nelder** who tagged and released a 65.5cm snapper (T38492) while surfcasting at Waimamaku on 20/09/2025.

The ***October*** draw winner is **Daniel Jackson** who tagged and released an 82cm TL rig (T35551) surfcasting at Pendarves Beach on 18/10/2025.

Commercial fishers Prize draw

Thanks to Seafood New Zealand who have kindly donated some quality merchandise supporting the TMRCT tagging program and the commercial fishers, MPI observers and fish receivers that report tagged fish recaptures. One person is drawn each quarter receiving a Seafood New Zealand cap and tee-towel valued at $55.00 with the remainder receiving TMRCT Fish ID posters and certificates. This quarter we have 7 commercial recaptures to choose from.

Congratulations **Jacob Drake** aboard the fishing vessel “Bona Dea 2” Who reported three recaptures of snapper during spring off the northland coast.

TMRCT Inshore Tagging Program

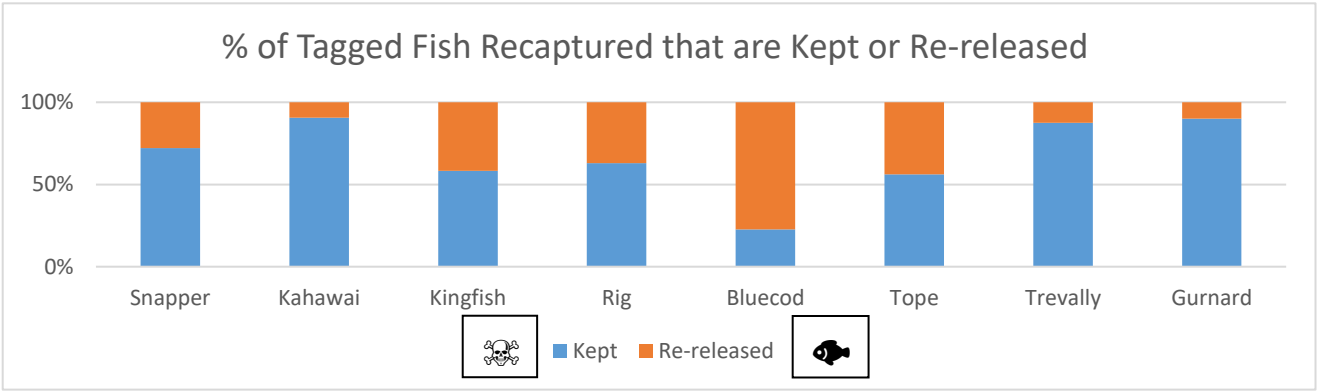
As we approach the ninth year of the Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust Inshore Tagging Program Sue has put together a few statistics to illustrate some of the results so far.

Membership in the tagging program has increased to just under 1700 and our following on social media platforms and hits on our website are not just from keen fishers here in NZ, but include people interested in the marine space from around the world.

Tagging program members had received 35,620 fish tags to the end of this quarter and have reported 13,845 tagged and released fish to the Trust. The number of species tagged and released is 73 with the bulk being the most common species found in our coastal waters.

Recapture ratios can vary considerably between anglers as it is up to them to decide where to fish and what species to tag and release. Isolated areas, seasonal fishing effort and fish density are just some of the factors influencing recapture rates. Those members that joined the tagging program early on are now seeing recaptures of fish that have been at liberty for over **5 ½ years**. A few have had tagged fish recaptured multiple times. One fish has been caught 6 times, two tagged fish have been caught five times, and five caught 4 times, and 32 have been caught 3 times.

Sadly, over **60%** of the tagged fish recaptured are killed ending their story on a plate or are used as bait. Under current legislation commercial fishers cannot release tagged fish but recreational fishers aren't subject to the same constraint. Releasing tagged fish after recording the tag number and the length of the fish helps describe seasonal and longer-term movements, growth rates and hopefully return migrations. More to the point these tagged fish have an opportunity to continue breeding, replenishing future stocks if let to carry on their life journeys. We have a long way to go for a sustainable fishery if we can't even convince everyday fishers to release these tagged fish again. We commend all those that understand the importance of tag and release and reporting data on tagged fish. It is building a substantial resource that is already helping to monitor trends and changes in the fishery under constant pressure.



The nationwide recapture rate across all species combined is still around one fish in seventeen **(1:17).** The bulk of these recaptures are still by recreational methods showing how extensive recreational fishing effort around the country truly is. This recapture ratio is also considered very high for wild, open ocean fisheries like ours and does not take into account under reporting, tag shedding, natural and fishing related mortality. If that could be quantified the recapture rate would be even higher.

TMRCT Inshore Tagging Program summary to November 2025

Tagged fish recaptured by

Recreational Land based fishing 38%

Recreational boat fishing 45% (Kayaks to super yachts)

Charter boat fishing 4%

Commercial fishing 12%

Note, these percentages have remained fairly consistent despite the huge growth of this program since it began over 8 years ago.

Area recapture rates of tagged & released fish:

One of the interesting things we see when we look at the tag and release and recapture data in this program is where the most fishing pressure is and by who. Fishing pressure is high with around three quarters of tagged fish recaptures occurring within the first year at liberty. The recapture rate for all species combined **New Zealand wide** is 1 in 17 or around 6%. A huge majority of these tagged fish (87%) are recaptured by recreational fishers. These statistics have stayed rather consistent since this project began 8 years ago. In areas like **Marlborough,** we can see the heavy fishing pressure this area receives especially within the sounds with recapture rates of 1 in 7 or just over 14% across the whole district. **Kaipara Harbour** has high tag and release numbers with 1 in 28 of these fish recaptured again. Due to fish seasonal movements only 69% of these recaptures are caught within Kaipara Harbour. Here's where it gets interesting, 78% of Kaipara Harbour tagged snapper are recaptured by recreational fishers with at least one moving as far away as Napier. The 22% of snapper from this area that have been commercially caught were all recaptured well beyond the Kaipara Harbour, including off the South Island. The much talked about **Hauraki Gulf** also needs a mention. With a tagged fish recapture rate of around 1 in 16 (6.2%) it's not far off the national average. Just under 4% of tagged fish recaptures in this park are by commercial fishers, similar to the number reported from charter boats.

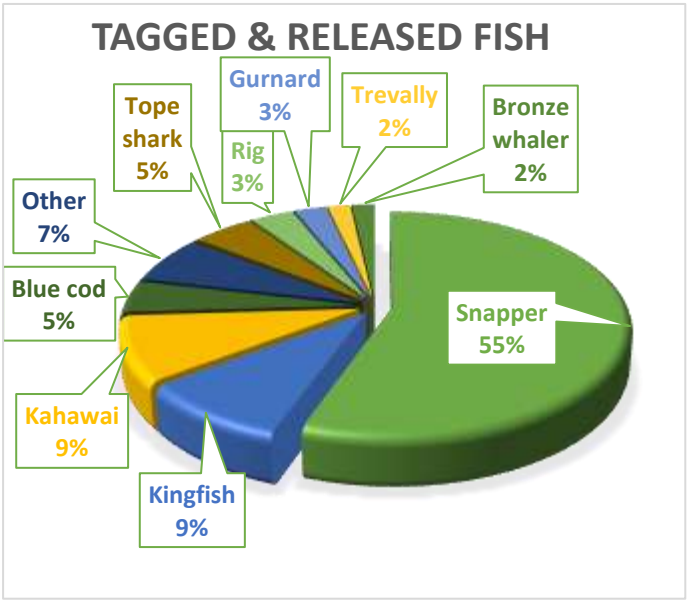
Species recapture rates of TMRCT tagged and released popular fish throughout New Zealand

Snapper 1:23 Kahawai 1:20
Blue cod 1:4 Kingfish 1:16
Gurnard 1:27 Rig 1:17
Bronze whaler shark 1:18 Tope 1:14

Right: Google map showing TMRCT tagged fish recaptures in New Zealand territorial waters and beyond the Tasman Sea.

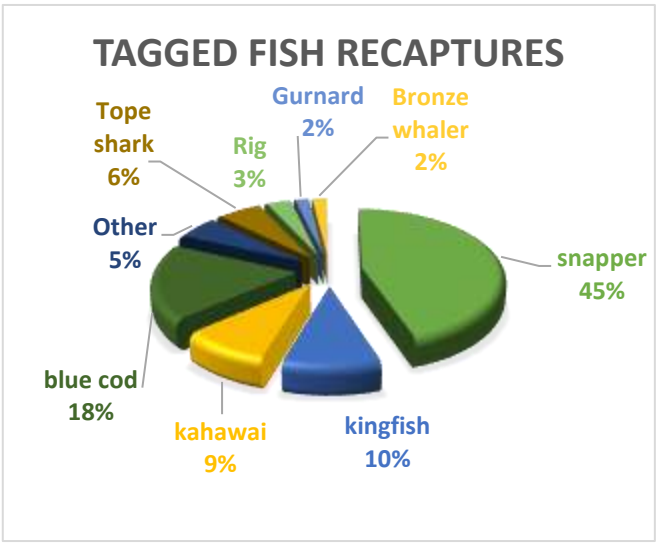
TMRCT Inshore Tagging Program

The inshore fish tagging program membership covers all New Zealand coastal waters as well as a few overseas locations. This unique program collects data on a wide range of fish species living in a diverse range of habitats at varying depths. The data provided by the members show trends in area specific growth rates, size composition and seasonal movements helping to understand the demographics of the fish we catch, their condition on release, as well as barotrauma and post release survival. It can also be used to understand fisher behaviour by analysing method of catch, the platform used and who are catching the fish. All this information can be used to support a sustainable fishery and enhance fisher experience. The most common species are those hotly contested between the commercial and recreational sectors so it is appropriate to look more closely at the results in this shared fishery. Tagging has predominately been undertaken in this program by volunteer recreational fishers, permitted commercial fishers, Department of Conservation staff, scientists and university students. Inshore species have been tagged and released around the nation so overlap in the areas fished by each sector is high.

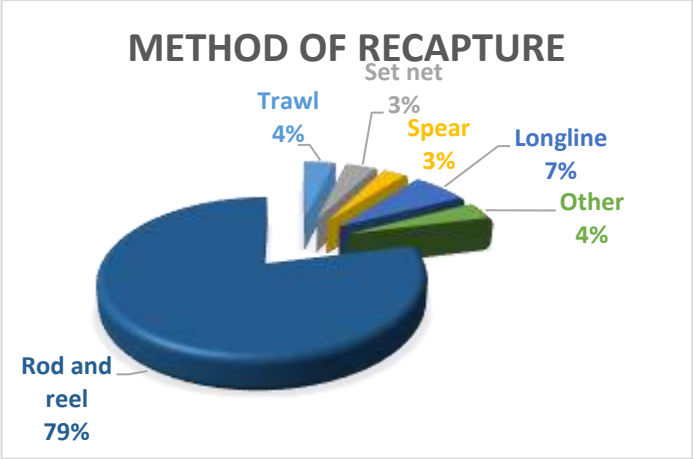


This graph shows the proportion of different species (total number of species 73) tagged and released in the Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust Inshore Fish Tagging Program. As you can see, the most frequently tagged and released species is snapper (55%). Members have tagged a great cross section of snapper sizes from juveniles to trophies. These have been caught around all of North Island and as far south as Otago. Kingfish and kahawai make up 18% of all tagged and released fish and feature high in the recaptures also. Tag and release studies have always given a good understanding of a fishery. They provide information on movements but also information that helps in understanding mortality by method, depth, handling and location.

Recaptures are not controlled by any fisher or the members of the tagging program. Fish have tails and can move at will to areas of preferred habitat or due to seasonal and breeding migrations. As recaptured fish have been reported by all sectors of the fishing community, reported recaptures can be broken down into who, when, where and how the fish was recaptured, making for interesting discussions. Remembering recapture rates are generally high in this program for a wild catch fishery that spans thousands of square kilometres of ocean habitat off our 15,000km coastline. With the ability of tagging a fish in most of our inshore waters it still amazes me how many are recaptured again, and so soon. It's not like we are fishing in a lake or river.



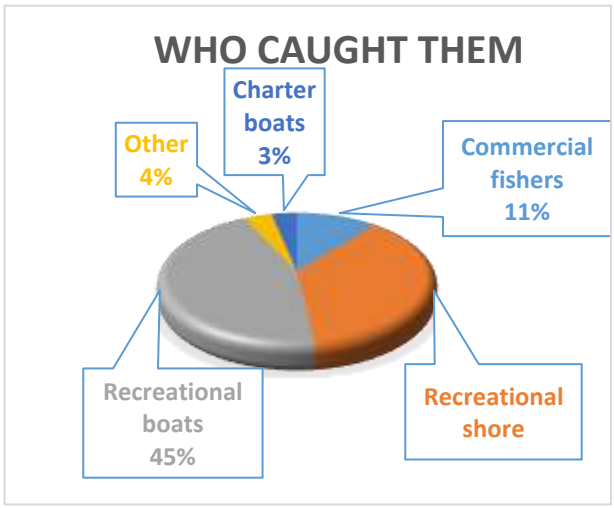
This graph shows the percentage of tagged fish recaptured in this program by species. Snapper being the most commonly recaptured.



Tagged fish have been recaptured across all types of marine habitat and by all types of methods.

The most common recapture method is recreational rod and reel, with 79% of all reported recaptures being by this method. Next is long line which includes both commercial and recreational setups. Commercial trawls make up 4% of recaptures by method. Spear fishing accounts for 3% of recaptures and equals to the combined recreational and commercial set net method.

Who recaptured them?



*Recreational boat includes: fishing from all types of watercraft, i.e.: raft, kayak, Jet Ski, runabout, launch, yacht, houseboat, super yacht, etc.

*Recreational shore includes: land-based fishing from the shore ie, a beach, rocks, wharf or jetty. Also includes kontiki, torpedo and drones fished from the shore and heli-fishing trips.

*Commercial fishers includes: long liner, trawler, Danish seine, set netter, cray pot and reported by fish receivers and MPI observers etc.

This volunteer program was not created or intended for fisheries management purposes but it has quickly become an important source of independent data on our inshore fishery. We are focused on providing open, up to date independent research and providing opportunities to those willing to participate in this citizen science to monitor fish in their own area. In addition, we have supported students studying for marine science degrees and collaborated with research organisations and institutions with fish tagging projects, fish data collecting as well as advising on best handling and mitigation methods for a variety of fish species.

Empirical evidence, that is evidence obtained through measurement or experimentation, on our recreational fishery is needed more than ever as New Zealand's resident population continues to grow past 5 million. Unfortunately, the informal nature of recreational fishing makes it difficult and therefore expensive to study. With no recreational licencing or catch reporting in NZ how it is even possible to quantify how many fishers there are or how many fish are harvested each year. Especially when there are over 3 million visitors and seasonal workers that enjoy fish too, what % of them go fishing while they are here?

The significance of recreational fishing has become increasingly evident with the recent protests aimed at influencing fisheries policy and management. Scary stuff, as many of us believe data derived from fish landed by recreational fishers is needed if we are ever to avoid opinion-based advocacy in decision-making. These reports are updated every quarter and help document and highlight current trends in the fishery, continue to provide robust information on what the fish are doing and what the fishery currently looks like.

Fisheries NZ consultations

Recreational fishers have campaigned hard for decades demanding an end on what some call commercial 'high grading and dumping'. Now with the 2022 Fisheries Amendment Act in the final stages of being implemented several amendments are proposed seeking further public consultation. This new Act put into legislation in October 2022 in effect requires all commercially caught fish to be landed and utilised, no discards or undersize provisions remain. Therefore all fish species would need to be added into the quota system and accounted for. With only a provision within the Act for live fish discards for a stock or species, it now raises several questions around former compulsory discards of marlin and the 19 reef fish that were included in earlier legislation. These fish will still get caught either way so this is your chance to find out more and have a say.

As usual anyone can submit a response on this or any other matters up for review. You just need to take the time to read up on the subject and reply to FMsubmissions@mpi.govt.nz

The Trust has had several calls from fishers wanting us to take a stand on a number of issues lately, but we are adamant the Trust will not get dragged into political advocacy. We instead stand by our commitment to remain impartial and research focused. We are happy to provide factual background data on any fish species in question, biodiversity including species lifecycle, habitat use, and seasonal movements. Harvest records are available from Fisheries NZ.

TMRCT Inshore Tagging Program Recaptures

As per usual there was a constant flow of tagged fish recaptures over spring, many with interesting stories attached. Here are some of the highlights.

We apologise if your fish is not included but we give preference to the ones that have photos and interesting stories attached.

Spring 2025 tag and recapture summary- (1/09/2025 to 30/11/2025)

- **282 additional fish tagged and released this quarter**
- **27 fish were recaptured during this quarter**
- **10 recaptured from recreational boats**
- **9 recaptured from recreational shore fishers**
- **7 recaptured by commercial fishers**
- **10 recaptured fish were released again this quarter (37%)**
- **Longest time at large before recapture this quarter is 1113 days**
- **Longest time at large before recapture to date is 2054 days**
- **Furthest displacement via sea of a TMRCT tagged fish, 3132km**

T27478 Kahawai

On the 17th of November 2024 Lee Deeprose was straylining from the Houhora Wharf in the Far North and caught a 44cm kahawai which he quickly tagged before releasing it back into the water again. Lee tagged two fish that day and both of these fish have now been recaptured.

289 days later on the 1st of September 2025 the Trust received a call from Heather Sorenson who reported the recapture of this kahawai. Heather said that the kahawai had been recaptured by her husband Erick while surfcasting from shore in the Houhora Channel. Erick estimated the size at about 40cm and quickly re-released the fish back into the water to carry on with its travels.

This fish was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of only 2.13km away from its original tag and release location. It is a welcome change to have this species of tagged fish released again. This is Lee's 6th recapture from the 47 fish that he has tagged since joining the tagging program.

T36041 Kahawai

On the 8th of September 2025 the Trust was contacted by Cody Coyle who reported the recapture of a 54cm Kahawai that he caught while surfcasting from shore at the Clifton Motor Camp. Cody reported that it was slow fishing for the start of spring, but it was a nice evening. He said that it was the first time that he had ever seen a tagged fish and the tag was covered in weed. Cody said he never noticed the tag till later on when he was cleaning the fish and on finding out more was keen to get involved in tagging.

This fish had been tagged and released by Quinn Higginson **137 days** earlier while bait fishing in 14m of water at Cape Kidnappers on the 25th of April 2025. Quinn said that it was the last fish of the day and unfortunately, he forgot to write down the length of the fish. This fish is 1 of the 8 fish that Quinn tagged and released that day. This kahawai was recaptured a straight- line distance by sea of 6.92km away from its original tag and release location 137 days earlier. This is Quinn's 1st recapture since joining the tagging program.

T2836 Rig

This is Greg Gilbert's 10th recapture from the 196 fish that he has tagged since joining the tagging program. (All tagged from the shore.)

Greg was surfcasting at Pendarves Beach in Canterbury on the 28th of December 2024, tagging and releasing 11 fish for the day including this 89cm Rig which he caught on a bait.

278 days later on the 1st of October 2025 the Trust received a call from Jamin Waller the skipper off the commercial trawler F.V. Frontier who reported the recapture of this rig in 86m of water, a distance of 36km out from Banks Peninsula in Canterbury.

This fish was recaptured just over 9 months later 121km straight line distance by sea away from its tag and release location.

T27410 Snapper

Tom Lusk went out for a day's surfcasting at Waikawau in the Hauraki Gulf on the 21st of June 2025. One of the 7 fish that he tagged and released while fishing from shore was a 28cm snapper he caught on a bait.

This snapper was recaptured **104 days** later on the 2nd of October 2025 by Kurt Medland who was straylining a fresh Kahawai bait from shore at the same general location. As Kurt had already recaptured another snapper in 2019, he knew what to do when he recaptured this tagged fish. Kurt estimated the size at 27cm and took a quick photo of the fish before releasing it again.

This is Tom Lusk's 10th recapture from the 100 fish that he has tagged and released since joining the tagging program in 2020.

T30567 Rig

Glynn Anderson was fishing on the Manukau Harbour on the 8th of June 2025 where he caught an 80cm TL rig on a bait in 8m of water. Glynn tagged the fish and took this photo before releasing it back into the water. This fish was one of the 10 fish that Glynn tagged and released that day.

130 days later on the 15th of October 2025 the Trust was contacted by Tony Walker skipper of the commercial gill netter F.V. Ellisnore reporting the recapture of this fish from 5m of water in the Manukau Harbour. Tony said, *'I have been fishing the harbour for over 30 years, and it has been the best fishing ever over the past few years.' Rig were scarce during winter with the southwest winds and clear water but arrived overnight in early spring with dirty water. Best season yet.* This fish was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 7.14km away from its original tag and release location.

T28404 Kingfish

Kingi Ranui has been a keen supporter of the tagging program since joining in 2019. Over the years Kingi has tagged and released 124 fish and this is his 11th recapture. On the 15th of January 2025 Kingi was straylining a livebait from shore in Tauranga Harbour and caught a 64cm kingfish which he documented, tagged and released.

277 days later on the 18th of October 2025 Chrissy Clayton went out fishing on her jet ski in the Tauranga Harbour. Chrissy recaptured Kingi's tagged fish using a slider lure on the fishing rod that she received as a gift for her new job. Chrissy estimated the size at 70cm and posed for a quick photo before re-releasing the fish back into the water again. This fish was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 12.6km away from its original tag and release location.

T20523 Snapper

Andrew Tohu was fishing in Bream Bay in 10m of water on the 23rd of April 2023 he tagged and released several fish including a 55.5cm snapper that he caught on a bait.

Two and a half years later on the 19th of October 2025 the Trust was contacted by Jake from Leigh Fisheries to report the recapture of a 3.5kg snapper by the commercial long liner F.V. Bona Dea 2. It had been caught off Ruakaka Beach in 18m of water and around 2.54km from where it was tagged and released **911 days** earlier. This is Andrew Tohu's 8th recapture from the 114 fish that he has tagged since joining the program in March 2019.

T26961 Blue Cod

This is Russell Wilson's 46th recapture from the 207 fish that he has tagged since joining the tagging program. On the 23rd of November 2024 Russell was surfcasting from shore at Karaka Bay where he tagged and released a 43cm blue cod.

Eight and a half months later Nino Spindler was softbaiting from shore at Titoki Bay when he recaptured this blue cod measuring 43.5cm. Nino took a quick photo before re-releasing the fish again.

This fish was recaptured in the same general area that it was tagged and released **260 days** earlier.

T29155 Tope Shark

In May last year Eva Ramey travelled down to Fiordland as part of the Victoria University of Wellington's shark tagging trip. The team of volunteers tagged and released a number of sharks including a 135cm male tope shark which was caught on the 9th of May 2025. This shark was tagged with a Trust dart tag as well as surgically fitted with an internal acoustic tag.

Victoria University carried out a second shark tagging trip to Fiordland in October 2025. During this 2nd trip Dr Brit Finucci from NIWA recaptured this tope shark on the 7th of October 2025 while fishing on a handline with cut bait. Brit reported that '*this shark was recaptured in the same location that it was tagged at in May. It had grown 3cm and the scar from the internal acoustic tag has completely healed. The shark is in a good condition'.*

This is a good example illustrating why it is a good idea to have a visible marker tag on these sharks in case the fish is recaptured outside the field range of the acoustic tag receiver array or well after the project ends.

T28986 Kahawai

Trust director's Scott & Sue went out for an afternoon fish tagging trip on Kaipara Harbour on the 10th of July 2024. They fished the edge of the channel in 4.22m of water, tagging and releasing 7 kahawai. It was a cold winter day. The water temperature was 15.5°c and the fishing was slow.

One of the 7 kahawai that Sue tagged and released was this 47cm kahawai that they caught on a bait.

480 days later on the 1st of November 2025 Hugh Kettlewell contacted the Trust to report the recapture of this kahawai in Kaipara Harbour. Hugh was bait fishing in 6m of water when he caught the kahawai, he said' *the kahawai's condition was fair, it wasn't underweight or fatty. I did not notice the tag until it was filleted'.* Hugh measured the fish at 51cm. This fish has grown 4cm in 480 days and was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 8.5km away from where Sue tagged and released it.

T26965C Blue Cod

Russell Wilson was surfcasting at Karaka Bay on the 17th of November 2024 and one of the fish that he tagged and released was a 33cm blue cod. Russell returned to Karaka Bay for a fish on the 15th of December 2024 and recaptured this blue cod while surfcasting from shore. He measured the fish at 33cm, took a quick photo and re-released it back into the water again. Russell recaptured this fish again on the 23rd of February 2025 while surfcasting at Karaka Bay. The fish now measured 35cm.

Russell recaptured this blue cod on the 1st of November 2025 while he was surfcasting at Karaka Bay. This time he measured the fish at 40cm and took a quick photo before re-releasing the fish again.

Since its initial tag and release on the 17th of November 2024 this fish has spawned, grown 7cm and has been caught 4 times in the same general area.

T33686 Blue Cod

Quite often taggers end up recapturing their own tagged fish and this is one of those times. Russell Wilson was surfcasting from shore at Karaka Bay in Marlborough on the 10th of May 2025 where he tagged and released a 36cm blue cod.

204 days (6 months, 20 days) later on the 29th of November 2025 Russell was back fishing at Karaka Bay, and he recaptured this fish in the same general area. He measured the fish at 38cm and took a quick photo before re-releasing it again. Since its original tag and release this fish has grown 2cm.

T25949 Snapper

Doug Lambert is a keen fisherman and member of the Trust tagging program. Doug was fishing in 25m of water in Bream Bay on the 23rd of May 2025 and 1 of the 5 fish that he tagged and released that day was this 30.5cm snapper.

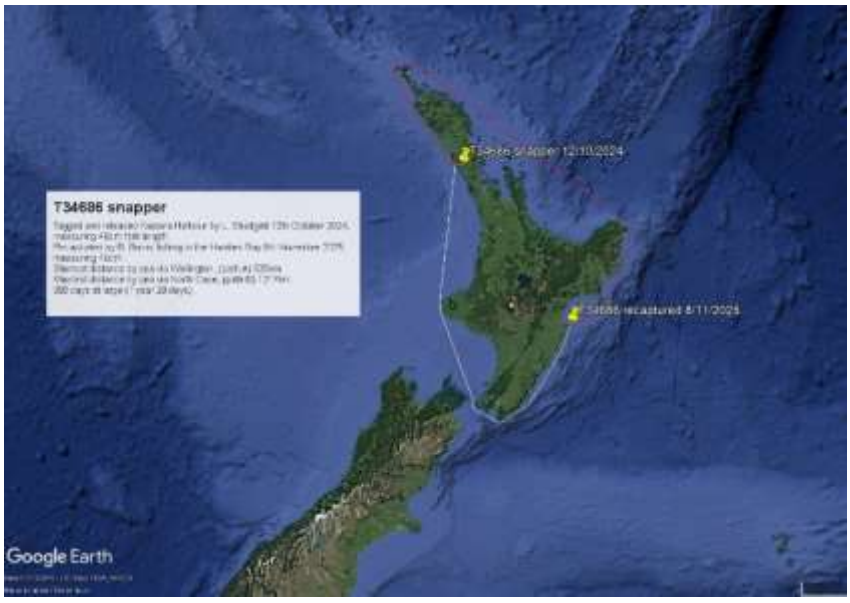
172 days later on the 10th of November 2025 the Trust was contacted by Jake from Leigh Fisheries who reported the recapture of this fish by the commercial longliner FV Bona Dea 2 in 15m of water off Ruakaka Beach. They weighed the fish at 0.6kg.This fish was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 3.97km away from its tag and release location. This is Doug's 7th recapture from the 147 fish that he has tagged and released since joining the tagging program.

T34686 Snapper

It has always been said that Kaipara Harbour is an important fish habitat with regular fish migrating out of it along the entire west coast of the North Island. The TMRCT is now in its 8th year of tag and release research and has accumulated many examples of these Kaipara Harbour fish, including snapper, heading as far south as Greymouth in the South Island.

On the 12th of October 2024 Lemmy Shadgett was fishing in the Kaipara Harbour where he tagged and released this nice 48cm snapper caught on a baited soft bait.
393 days later on the 8th of November 2025 this fish was recaptured by Brian Burns fishing a flasher rig with pilchard and squid combo in 50m of water off White Cliffs in Hawke Bay. Brian did not notice the tag until he was back home filleting it. The snapper measured 49cm V-length and was a very healthy-looking fish with no signs of mushy flesh.

This fish could have travelled to Napier in its year at large either via the Cook Strait, a shortest distance by sea of 920km or via North Cape, a shortest distance by sea of 1217km. Either way it's a huge journey and a great result for all involved.



This West to East migration is a great example of tag and release studies producing unexpected and sometimes ground-breaking science and opens up the debate on seasonal movements of many of our inshore fish species.

T5071 Kingfish

On the 1st of September 2025 Mike Fleming was surfcasting at Port Jackson in the Hauraki Gulf and caught a 113cm Kingfish which he tagged, weighed at 17kg, and took a quick photo of before re-releasing the fish back into the water again.

65 days later on the 4th of November 2025 this fish was recaptured by Duncan Fleming who was live baiting from shore in the same general area. Duncan measured the fish at 114cm before releasing it again.

This fish has grown 1cm since its initial tag and release a few months earlier and was recaptured in the same general area.

T25927 Snapper

On the 10th of November 2025 the Trust was contacted by Jake from Leigh Fisheries who reported the recapture of a 33cm tagged snapper that was caught by the commercial longliner FV Bona Dea 2 in 15m of water off Ruakaka Beach, the fish weighed 0.8kg.

This fish was tagged and released by Doug Lambert **514 days** earlier on the 15th of June 2024 while fishing at Bream Bay in 10m of water. It was one of the 5 fish that Doug tagged and released on that day and is also his 2nd recapture this quarter.

This fish was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 7.68km away from its tag and release location.

T17837 Snapper

Luke Davis was fishing in the Hauraki Gulf in 13m of water on the 24th of October 2024 and 1 of the 3 fish that he tagged and released that day was this 80cm snapper that he caught on a bait.

393 days later on the 20th of November 2025 Luke recaptured this 80cm fish in 20m of water in the Hauraki Gulf. Luke said, '*this time I weighed the fish, and it was 20LB 10oz, it swam off strong with the original tag'.*

Luke recaptured this fish a straight-line distance by sea of 1.62km away from where he tagged and released it just over a year earlier.

T16038 Snapper

Simon Smith contacted the Trust to report the recapture of a 50.5cm tagged snapper that he caught while lure fishing from his boat in 42.7m of water in the middle of the Hauraki Gulf on the 23rd of November 2025. He reported that the water temperature that day was a warm 21.5°c and he kept the fish.

This snapper was tagged and released **24 days** earlier on the 30th of October 2025 by Mal Williams while lure fishing in 50.8m of water in the Hauraki Gulf. The water temperature that day was 17°c. This is Mal's 2nd recapture from the 5 fish that he has tagged in the Hauraki Gulf since joining the program.

This fish was recaptured a straight- line distance by sea of 15.4km away from its tag and release location 24 days earlier.

T19732 Snapper

Jake from Leigh Fisheries contacted the Trust to report the recapture of a tagged snapper on the 26th of November 2025 at Great Exhibition Bay in the Far North by the commercial longliner FV Kaipara. It was recaptured in 25m of water and weighed 3.2kg.

This 55cm snapper was tagged and released **900 days** earlier on the 11th of June 2023 by keen fly-fisher and avid tagger Paul Mills. It was caught in 0.3m of water in Rangaunu Harbour in the Far North. It was 1 of 3 fish that Paul tagged that day and is his 6th recapture from the 111 fish that he has tagged since joining the program.

This fish was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 16.6km away from its tag and release location.

T17833 Snapper

Since joining the tagging program in 2019 Luke Davis has had 28 recaptures from the 258 fish that he has tagged and released.

On the 19th of November 2024 Luke was fishing in 7m of water at Kawau Island in Hauraki Gulf and caught a number of fish, 4 of which he decided to tag and release. One of these fish was a 71cm snapper that he caught on a bait.

376 days (1 year, 11 days) later on the 29th of November 2025 Sam Garlick was bait fishing at Nelson Rock in Hauraki Gulf and recaptured this fish which he measured at 75cm and weighed at 6.3kg.

Since its tag and release a year earlier this fish was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of only 1.43km away from its original tag and release location and has grown 4cm.

T19225 Blue Cod

This blue cod has been caught three times by members of the same family; its story starts here. In early November 2022 Trust directors Scott and Sue were travelling around the South Island tagging fish and handing out fish posters and stickers to the public at every beach, bay or wharf that they stopped at. Their goal was to have tagged fish at every location in New Zealand. On one of their stopovers Scott gave a talk on the tagging program at the Tautuku Fishing Club. Afterwards one of the members Ian Gunian invited both Scott and Sue out for an afternoon fish off Taieri River the following day. They hatched a plan and headed out on the 7th of November 2022. During the afternoon they tagged and released 43 fish over a range of different species fishing in 10m of water. One of the fish that they tagged was a 32.5cm blue cod that Ian caught on a bait.

60 days later on the 6th of January 2023 this blue cod was recaptured by Ruben Shaw, Ian's 9-year-old grandson while fishing in the same area. Ian recorded the tag number and released it again.

1053 days later on the 23rd of November 2025 Ian took his other grandson 15-year-old Lachie Shaw fishing in the same area where Lachie recaptured this fish again. Lachie measured the fish at 40.5cm. Unfortunately, this time it could not be released. Ian commented that he quite often sees these tagged fish when he dives along this coast.

Since its initial tag and release 3 years earlier this blue cod has grown 8cm in the 1113 days at large. As blue cod reach maturity at around 2 years of age the offspring from this fish when first tagged and released would now be close to legal size and spawning themselves. Food for thought when it comes to deciding to keep or tag and release a fish.

T27400 Snapper

As the years go by the Trust is now getting a lot more long-term recaptures. On the 9th of November 2023 Jared Fisher was softbaiting in 12m of water at Waihau Bay where he tagged and released a 52cm snapper.

751 days (2 years, 20 days) later on the 28th of November 2025 Donavan Mutlow pulled up his cray pot which he had put down in 22m of water at Cape Runaway. To his surprise there was a snapper in the pot when he retrieved it. Donavan went to scale the fish when he got home and realised that this fish had been tagged, he measured it at 54cm and contacted the Trust to report the recapture. Donavan said, 'I *would have released the fish, but unfortunately I didn't see the tag until I started scaling it".*

Since its tag and released just over 2 years earlier this fish has grown 2cm in length and was recaptured in the same general area.

T28419 Kingfish

This is Kingi Ranui's 2nd recapture for this quarter and his 12th recapture from the 124 fish that he has tagged and released since joining the tagging program.

Portia Clayton was saltwater fly fishing from a boat in 0.5m of water in Tauranga Harbour on the 30th of November 2025 when she recaptured a tagged kingfish. Portia said '*the kingfish was a ray rider, one of three in a group, all roughly the same size. There was a small bit of inflammation around the tag, but otherwise the fish was healthy'.* She measured the fish at 66cm and took a quick photo before releasing it back into the water again.

This kingfish measured 57cm when tagged and released by Kingi Ranui **173 days** earlier on the 11th of June 2025 while live baiting from shore in Tauranga Harbour.

Since its tag and release this fish has grown 9cm and was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 5.39km away from its original tag and release location.

Donations

All Donations received by the Trust go back into the tagging program to supply tagging equipment and informative educational material.

Helping everyone to expand the knowledge of the marine environment through citizen science.

We would like to thank those of you that have donated goods, services or funds to the Trust. Your generous support is greatly appreciated and it all goes back into supporting these programs. Many of the volunteer taggers have received a top up of tags from these donations ensuring a continuation of this citizen science project around the country.

TINDALE MARINE RESEARCH CHARITABLE TRUST

Charities Registration No. CC55555

IRD no. 126-648-057

End of year tax refunds

For many of you out there the end of March is the end of the Tax year. This is important information for those that have or intend making a donation to this trust.

The Tindale Marine research Charitable Trust is a New Zealand registered charity with full donee status. This means that for individuals and corporates (companies), for any donations made to the Trust, you are entitled to a full tax credit as described below.

Individual's donations.

Individuals can claim a 33.33% tax credit for all donations over $5.00 they make to an approved donee. A tax credit reduces the amount of tax you have to pay. The total tax credits an individual can claim is capped at one third of their total taxable income. Remember to keep your valid donation receipts so you or your accountant can complete an IR526 Tax credit claim form and forward to IRD.

Corporate giving.

Companies can claim tax deductions for all donations made to an approved donee providing their claim does not exceed their total annual income. A tax deduction is a reduction in the amount of taxable income. Companies can claim this deduction using the IR4 form.

You can only claim donation tax credits within a period of four years following the year in which the gift was made.

Inland Revenue
Te Tari Taake

For more information go to www.ird.govt.nz

Thousands of Fish ID posters and stickers have been distributed to government departments, institutions, fishing clubs, tackle stores and fishers around the country to help anglers identify many of our inshore fish species and participate in sustainable fishing practices.

If you, or a business or organisation would like to support helping the community with this or any other aspects of the **Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust** we would love to hear from you.

The Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust is a registered charity and all donations are tax deductable. We have attached a handy IRD guide for those wishing to support the trust financially.

You can contact us directly by emailing tindaleresearch@xtra.co.nz by phone 0274760687

Or by donating to our give a little page,

https://givealittle.co.nz/org/tindale-marine-research-charitable-trust

We would also like to thank our sponsors and individuals for their kind donations and support….

So that is it for another seasonal report. Remember to keep sending in your tagging data regularly so we can keep you all up to date in the next issue. Sorry to those whose recaptures were not mentioned, we will endeavour to include these on the Trust social media pages.

Catch you on the next issue….Have a great fishmas, tight lines from the team at

Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust

"To Promote and encourage environmental education, conservation and research for a sustainable future"