



Autumn Report

#33

1st March to 31st May 2026



Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust quarterly report. Includes Trust member news, activities, engagements and achievements over autumn 2026

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

Charities Registration No. CC55555

IRD no. 126-648-057

Newsletter No. 33 autumn update 1st of March to 31st of May 2026

Well I think most of us missed out on a traditional summer. There was rain, wind and flooding which then continued into most of autumn. Finally, we had a few nice days, good enough to enjoy the outdoors but were faced with massive fuel price hikes. The current conflict in the Middle East hit the fuel pumps and has definitely limited the number of outings. It's taken several months for the initial impact to ease but with diesel getting over \$4 per litre before settling around \$3.30 we've all been hit very hard. With the weather looking great I was surprised to see the local marina carpark empty during King's Birthday weekend. On any fine weekend it would normally be full, especially on holidays. Let's hope things get back to normal soon, especially since dusting off the surfcaster and the thought of walking to the beach has little appeal.

News

Seaweed 2026



To celebrate Seaweed 2026 the Sir Peter Blake Marine Education & Recreation Centre, (MERC) held a special event and Q & A session on the 16th of April at the Long Bay facility. Organised by Education & Outreach manager Laura Jordan-Smith, PhD, the event had speakers from the fishing industry conservation, research and scientists to answer questions about sustainability, best choices and how we can all help the sustainability of sea life and the environment they depend on.

Starting just after 4:30 so guests had time to call in after work, the format included tables set up for people to visit on different topics related to sustainable seafood. This included sampling some of the shellfish species including kina, mussel's (kūtai) and oyster's (tio) and included information around their biology, ecology, harvesting/farming and preparing. Other tables displayed info and activities on topics including commercial fisheries, fisheries science, MPAs, bycatch reduction, citizen science, and sustainability certification criteria/process. The TMRCT had a table set up to show off the inshore fish tagging program with free fish posters and stickers for those interested in the research program.

The event closed with a panel discussion with presenters including Trust directors Scott Tindale and Clinton Duffy. The panel discussion focused around empowering people to make sustainable choices and any actions they can take to help promote sustainability.



Snapper tagging in the south

At the beginning of the year the **Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust** was approached by Fisheries New Zealand looking to support the tagging of snapper in the top of the South Island. As you will be aware, snapper numbers around the upper South Island have increased significantly over the last decade, and fishers and fishery managers want to know more about the movement and mixing of snapper between areas, such as the top of the South and lower North Island west coast.

The aim is to monitor snapper movements and connectivity between what are currently considered separate stocks. With the Tasman and Marlborough Sounds fisheries seemingly recovering, now is a good time to learn how they are likely to be affected by fishing occurring locally and elsewhere. The recreational daily bag limit of 3 snapper per person in the Marlborough Sounds is based on research carried out last century. That early study suggested the Tasman Bay / Sounds populations were isolated from each other and dependent upon recruitment from local nursery areas. Since the introduction of the **TMRCT inshore fish tagging program** in 2018 the Trust has recorded movements of snapper from Kaipara Harbour to the upper South Island, and snapper tagged in Picton have been recaptured off the Kapiti coast. This challenges the current understanding of snapper stock structure and migrations. More information on movements of South Island snapper is needed to understand if the increase in snapper numbers seen is being driven by recovery of local stock (i.e. the Tasman Bay-Sounds populations) or by fish migrating from the west coast of the North Island.



This should be another exciting and informative citizen led project within the existing TMRCT program. Fisheries NZ have indicated they will fund replacement tags used on snapper in this area but we are also looking for prizes and bait sponsorship to help out members wishing to get involved around the top of the South. The budget is not large but we will have a few free tagging kits available for fishing club prizes at events, for dedicated avid fishers, and keen charter boat operators etc. For the casual fisher we will have the usual subsidised kits and accessories available through our website and from Trade Me.

The project is looking to encourage tagging of snapper as far south as possible, not just across the top of the South (Marlborough Sounds and Golden/ Tasman Bays). We also need fish tagged across as wide a size range as possible. Large fish are capable of moving further and are more likely to migrate for spawning. There will also be free replacement tags for any snapper tagged and reported to the Trust website. If this is something you or your friends would like to get involved in please contact the Trust. We already have a few local ambassadors to help out and hopefully plenty of additional keen fishers will get involved.

To register go to <https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagging-program/tagger-registration-form/> Add the area you wish to fish in the comments section and any other suggestion to help others in your area.

If you catch a tagged fish please consider releasing it again to continue its life journey but not before you've recorded the tag serial number, fish length and catch details first. Then report this information to the Trust ASAP.

Global Fishtag Network

After several delays and a change of host for the Global Fishtag Network summit, it was finally held midnight to 7am NZ time on the 18th May 2026. As the organisers had jostled dates, times with multiple online surveys and emails, confusion caused many of us to miss it thinking it was cancelled. The TMRCT was to be on the discussion panels but by the time we realised it was going ahead it was too late.



Topics to be discussed included the value of volunteer tagging programs to fisheries management worldwide through to discussions on collaborations and a central data base. IGFA hosted the event and have included a link on their website with an interactive map to find fish tagging programs around the world. This is handy for travellers wanting to find out more about tagging programs in the countries they visit. Go to www.igfa.org for more on this. Like the last time a recording of the summit was to be made available to members and the public but so far we have not heard anything further on this.

IGFA Master Angler

The International Game Fish Association is committed to the conservation of gamefish and the promotion of responsible, ethical angling practices through science, education, rule making and record keeping. The IGFA Master Angler Program, launched in May, introduces a tiered recognition framework spanning seven categories:

World Records			
All-Tackle	Line Class	Tippet Class	All-Tackle Length
All-Tackle Records Gold Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 9 IGFA All-Tackle World Records	Line Class Records Gold Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 9 IGFA Line Class World Records	Tippet Class Records Gold Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 9 IGFA Tippet Class World Records	All-Tackle Length Records Gold Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 9 IGFA All-Tackle Length World Records
All-Tackle Records Silver Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 6 IGFA All-Tackle World Records	Line Class Records Silver Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 6 IGFA Line Class World Records	Tippet Class Records Silver Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 6 IGFA Tippet Class World Records	All-Tackle Length Records Silver Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 6 IGFA All-Tackle Length World Records
All-Tackle Records Bronze Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 3 IGFA All-Tackle World Records	Line Class Records Bronze Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 3 IGFA Line Class World Records	Tippet Class Records Bronze Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 3 IGFA Tippet Class World Records	All-Tackle Length Records Bronze Tier Angler  • Anglers who have set 3 IGFA All-Tackle Length World Records

All-Tackle World Records, Line Class World Records, Tippet Class World Records, All-Tackle Length World Records, Slams, and Trophy Fish Clubs with Bronze, Silver, and Gold tiers within each. All prior eligible achievements count toward program standing. The IGFA Master Angler Award is reserved for anglers who achieve Gold Tier status in five or more of the program's seven categories, spanning IGFA World Records, Slams, and Trophy Fish Clubs. Three have been announced so far worldwide. Trust directors Scott and Sue Tindale are almost there with both being gold tier anglers in 4 world record categories. They just need to finish a few steps in the slam and trophy fish clubs to achieve IGFA Master Angler status. Not bad for a couple of Kiwi's sitting on a rock way down in the South Pacific.

Species Profile.

Sea perch *Helicolenus* species

FAMILY SEBASTIDAE– Rockfishes, Sea perches and deepsea scorpion fishes.

Other common names include: Jock Stewart, scarpie, bouraka, bucketmouth, Pohuiakaroa, and red gurnard perch (Au, IGFA).



Although seldom targeted by recreational fishers, sea perch are a common bycatch when fishing for other demersal species such as blue cod, tarakihi and hapuku.

Two types of sea perch, *Helicolenus barathri* and *H. percoides*, are widely distributed around New Zealand, occurring at depths from 0-1271 m (most common 50-70 m) from the Kermadec Islands to about 49°S, including the Snares and Antipodes Islands. Both species also occur off Tasmania, Victoria and in the Tasman Sea (Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Ridge).



H. barathri, also known as bigeye sea perch, generally occur below 150 m depth and can be distinguished from *H. percoides* by its slightly larger eye (i.e. 2.5-2.9 times in head length compared to 3.0-3.5 times in head length). Eye diameter expressed as a percentage of standard length decreases as the fish grows but is always larger than *H. percoides* of the same size. However, as most physical characteristics, including colour, either overlap with or are identical to those of *H. percoides*, genetics is the most reliable way of positively identifying these species. Genetic research has shown that the sea perch or Jock Stewart (*H. percoides*) is likely to be the only species found in coastal waters around New Zealand,

whereas both species can occur together off Tasmania and Victoria and presumably in deep water around New Zealand (*H. barathri* was described from specimens collected off Cape Farewell). This research also identified a third genetic lineage occurring north of New Zealand and in deep water on the Chatham Rise, and a fourth on the Louisville Ridge and Foundation Seamount, east of New Zealand. A closely related species, *H. lengerichi*, occurs in Chile.

The colour of sea perch (*H. percoides*) is highly variable, even between individuals caught at the same depth and location. The basic coloration is pink, light orange to almost white over the head, body and fins, overlain with five distinct dark vertical bars. The first bar (often missing in Australian specimens) is located below the first two dorsal fin spines and extends only as far as the lateral line. There is often a paler, less defined vertical bar on the caudal fin. The lateral line has a row of pale dots along it. Some specimens have a green tinge over the head and gill plates, and some large specimens from shallow water are darkly coloured, almost obscuring the vertical bands. Sea perch caught in Fiordland sometime have black and yellow growths on the skin.



Because of the ongoing confusion between *H. percoides* and *H. barathri*, there is limited information on sea perch biology. Unlike many bony fishes sea perch are viviparous, meaning they give birth to live young.

Small larvae are extruded by the female in floating buoyant jelly-masses during an extended spawning season. Sea perch are opportunistic feeders and prey on a variety of animals living on or close to the sea floor, including fishes (sprats, pipefish, sea horses, opal fish, and southern pigfish), crabs, shrimps, mantis shrimps, squat lobsters and polychaete worms.

Sea perch are a long-lived slow growing species. Males mature at 19 to 25 cm, about 5-7 years old, whereas females mature at between 15 and 20 cm, around 5 years old. Maximum estimated ages of sea perch from east coast South Island and Chatham Rise are 35 and 59 years respectively. Maximum size is around 56 cm.

Sea perch have been caught commercially since the 1960's and were introduced into the quota management system in 1998. About 75% of sea perch landed in New Zealand is taken as a bycatch in trawl fisheries off the east coast of the South Island, including Chatham Rise. A small catch is made in some central and southern line fisheries, such as those for groper/hapuka. The remainder is taken as a bycatch in barracouta, flatfish, ling, squid, red cod and tarakihi fisheries. Sea perch are caught in large numbers by recreational fishers, particularly in the South Island. Some are taken for bait or eaten but most are probably discarded. Sea perch form part of the daily bag limit of 20 fish per person. There is no minimum size except off Kaikoura where fish less than 26cm may not be retained. Recreational fishing surveys by the Ministry of Fisheries found identification problems and incomplete records when it came to sea perch. As a consequence these surveys probably do not provide good estimates of the recreational catch.



There are a number of similar looking species that can be confused with sea perch. These include the red banded perch and eyebrow perch (not related) as well as the spiky looking red scorpionfish and northern scorpionfish/red rock cod (better known as granddaddy hapuka).



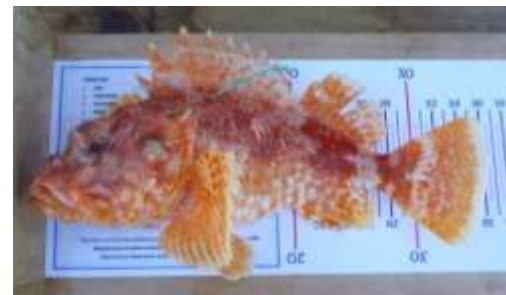
Half-banded perch (*Hypoplectrodes sp.*)



Eyebrow perch (*Hypoplectrodes sp.*)



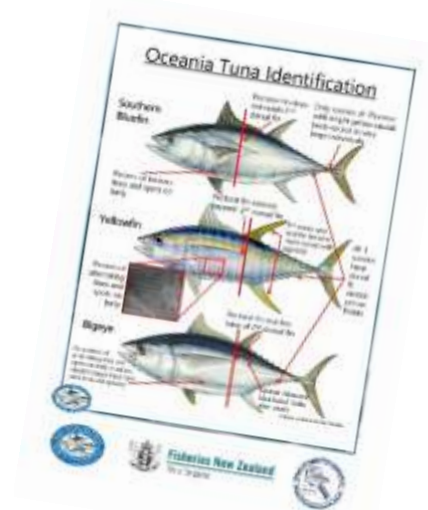
Red/dwarf scorpionfish (*Scorpaena papillosa*)



Granddaddy hapuka (*Scorpaena cardinalis*)

Questions & Answers

The Trust is often contacted for guidance or answers to questions on all manner of subjects, most are difficult to find online or by other means. Some are angling record related, many are on species ID or biology and others are in support of sustainable practices. We try to avoid opinions and instead look to research results for the answers. With so much misinformation circulating within the fishing community, it's great to see that the tagging program is helping to make informed decisions. Too often we hear "why didn't they explain that to us before". Here is another common question we get asked...



Q. "How many recreational fishers are there? How many fish do we catch and how is it calculated?"

A. With no requirement for a fishing licence or any formal recreational catch reporting its impossible to know how many people fish in New Zealand, let alone where or what is harvested by our sector.

Statistics New Zealand estimate the population of residence living in NZ at around 5.3 million with an additional 3.3 million tourists yearly, mainly from Australia and the Pacific Islands, with a majority visiting family or friends. Then there are international students, seasonal (RSE) and working holiday visa holders plus around 235,000 temporary work visa holders here each year. That's almost 9 million and all are entitled to recreational fish or harvest seafood from our shores. With no formal way of accounting for who, how, what or where fishers are likely to harvest seafood, estimates of participation vary wildly from around 200,000 sea fishers to a third of the population. The figure of twenty percent of the population is the most often seen estimate, although Fisheries NZ have gone with the figure of 600,000 for decades. Freshwater fishers we know exceed 100,000 as this number is taken from the number of fishing licences issued annually by Fish & Game.

Some global estimates put land based fishers at around 61% of fishers. Here in NZ with over 15,000km of coastline and easy access to most, it's not surprising land based fishing is very popular here too. One report suggests 38% of fishers in NZ are land based. So when nearly half of the population, 40-45% of New Zealand adults, are considered active boaties (1.7-1.9 million people annually, 2022-2025 data), and the country has one of the highest boat-to-person ratios in the world with roughly 1.5 million to 3.6 million recreational vessels in the country, how do we calculate fishing effort?

1. Recreational Surveys. AKA, the science of guesswork.

The Panel survey. This \$5 million project is carried out every 5 to 6 years. Three have been carried out so far. This project geographically divides New Zealand into 100 mesh blocks. A random selection of households from these mesh blocks are phoned to see if anyone participates in sea fishing. This gives them their estimated percentage of recreational fishers within NZ. This is currently thought to be around 17 to 20% of the population. From those that say they fish, around 3000 (around 0.03% of the population that are entitled to fish) are recruited to carry out a survey of catches they make over the following year. Although most drop out or don't get around to go fishing the data collected is collated and extrapolated to arrive at an estimate of recreational harvest across the country. In the absence of anything better this is called "best science".

Ramp surveys. If you have a trailer boat and launch at one of the 15 boat ramps chosen around NZ you might have seen or been interviewed by a ramp survey contractor. There are two sites in the Hauraki Gulf to sample Auckland's east coast and one in Kaipara harbour and recently one in Manukau harbour to cover the whole west coast of the north island. On average 60 random days are chosen for a 4hr watch hoping to interview trailer boaties about their catch. Each interview averages around 20 minutes each so can be quite frustrating if the ramp is busy. It is not compulsory and often fishers are too busy to chat and leave before the interviewer can get to them. If a candidate agrees to be interviewed their catch is unloaded, each species is itemised and measured, and any used as bait noted. Back in the office this information is collated and extrapolated to estimate a total recreational harvest. With so many boat launching sites around the country it begs the question how accurate could this approach possibly be given it's such a small sample from each site and from only one type of fishing vessel?

Aerial surveys. Uses a small plane flying a pre-set course along the coast for a set period to count the number of runabouts that appear to be engaged in fishing. Kayaks, jet skis, launches and yachts are not counted. These surveys are used to corroborate the figures used in other surveys but are not carried out very often.

2. Tag and release AKA, the science of field research

Volunteer fish tagging programs. Tagging has been a tried and tested method of studying marine and freshwater fishes worldwide for well over a century. Tagging programs are routinely used to individually identify fish in order to acquire information on growth, movements and to provide estimates of population size and natural mortality.

In addition, recapture data can also provide information of what proportion of the total catch is taken by different sectors or fishing methods. All this information can and has been used to inform stock assessments and other management decisions in fisheries in ecosystems as diverse as lakes and the open ocean. One problem that has often led to the discontinuation of tagging programmes or limited their scope (geographic and temporal) is the cost. This is where volunteer tagging programmes have come into their own. Good examples of the value of such programmes elsewhere are those operating in South Africa and Australia. Volunteer programmes minimise operational costs, directly engage anglers in the management of their fisheries, and encourage fishers to release fish in a way likely to maximise post-release survival. The latter leads to the adoption of better fishing practices, including the use of terminal tackle that is likely to reduce deep hooking fish, and careful handling while landing fish.

It's a big ocean and hard to see what's in it. While all methods of estimating who is recreationally catching what and how much have their limitations (e.g. cost; self-selection bias; misreporting/'gaming' the system; non-participation; small sample size), all approaches are needed to improve the sustainability of our shared marine fishery. Some of the shortcomings of the methods used at present (e.g. the heavy reliance of expensive panel surveys that produce questionable data) are due to decades of chronic underfunding of recreational fishing research in New Zealand.

In contrast all commercial catch in NZ must be reported whether the species is part of the Quota Management System (QMS) or not. Monitoring includes electronic reporting, on board cameras and the use of fisheries observers. There are rules around what must be brought ashore to fish receivers and any live or dead fish returned to the sea must be reported.

Guessing what's there and how much can be taken is a huge task requiring not only what is harvested but quantifying all who impact the fish and the ecosystems that support them. This includes land based developments and pollution as well as biological and climate impacts.

End of year 8 overview

TMRCT Inshore Tagging Program

In 2018 Scott and Sue Tindale, Clinton Duffy and Rex Harrison established a voluntary inshore fin fish tagging program adapting the best attributes of similar programs around the world to suit the way we fish in New Zealand. The original intent of the program was to fill gaps in the knowledge of recreationally caught fishes and to encourage sustainable fishing practices. As the very first reported recapture was by a commercial fisher it quickly evolved into looking at a shared fishery. Our goal is to provide facts and sound data, not opinions, to all fishers and stakeholders including those responsible for managing the fishery. The last eight years have been interesting. As the number of anglers and tagged fish in the program have grown we have seen interesting patterns of seasonal movement, particularly as the time at liberty of tagged fish has increased. Our independent, non-political stance has resulted in high levels of reporting by all sectors, which is reflected by the high recapture rates reported in these newsletters and provides a consistent picture of who are catching and reporting tagged fish. This program has been officially endorsed by Fisheries NZ and has been included in a number of community lead and government projects. To date we have received 5 sustainability awards including the **“Ocean Guardian”** and **“Supreme Sustainability”** Awards presented during the Seafood Sustainability Awards held at Parliament.

Generally tagging programs target specific species of fish. We felt it better to let fishers decide what to tag and where to fish, enabling a better understanding of what we as fishers see every day. Our coverage is nationwide and includes over 73 fish species tagged by anglers participating in the program. Since the program’s inception we have been asked questions about past and emerging issues that our tag and release data may be able to shed light on. Public consultations on shared fisheries have really highlighted the lack of research undertaken on many of these species in New Zealand. Tagging and documenting the condition of fish upon release also allows post-release survival to be studied and can provide information on the spread of diseases and conditions such as white/mushy flesh. These are the types of questions that can be answered with ongoing multi-sector involvement over many years. This is hard to do and costly without the assistance of volunteer tag and release programs.

The Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust is an independent, entirely voluntary, not for profit organisation. While this can make funding the tagging program challenging, the independence of the program means its scope is not limited by the objectives or interests of other groups. As time has gone on we have also had tags from other long defunct tagging programs reported to us, some of these fish have been at liberty for more than 20 years. This highlights the value of continuing long term projects like ours and collaborations between projects.

Recapture rates in this program have always been high by international standards, especially since this program is still relatively new. Recapture rates are currently sitting around 1 fish recaptured for every 17 released nationally. This recapture rate has slowly crept up from 1 in 25 when the project began, now accounting for longer term recaptures. Of all tagged fish recaptured 60% were retained and 40% returned live to the sea. Overall, 12% of reported fish recaptures have been by commercial operators and 85% by recreational fishers. This ratio too has been more or less constant across the years. Should non-reporting be prevalent the recapture rate which is already high would be even higher. In a shared fishery it is also important to remember that the proportional share in a TAC is based on the best science available. In New Zealand the Total Allowable Commercial Catch is only set after allowance has been made for customary and recreational fishing. Under reporting by your sector may influence future allocations by fisheries management.



Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust “Celebrating 8 years”

Congratulations to all of our Trust members as we celebrate 8 years of the inshore citizen science tagging program. Here are some highlights the Trust directors have picked out on the anniversary of each year to date.

Autumn 2018

- 2/4/2018 Pilot study and 1st day of tagging at Omokoiti Flats in the Kaipara Harbour. Scott and Sue tag and release 50 snapper fishing in 2.8m of water.
- 15/8/2018 1st recapture reported by Curley Brown from B & H Fisheries. T0047 a 38cm snapper caught by the commercial trawler “FV Receiver” in 81m of water at the Taranaki Bight. This snapper had travelled a straight line distance by sea of 305km and had grown 2cm in 41 days.
- Tagging kits designed and manufactured by Scott and Sue are ready for distribution at below cost.
- December 2018: The Trust has 60 registered members from around the country from word of mouth only. Website launched. 21 anglers have tagged 398 fish across 13 species with 6 recaptures already.
- Collaboration with Air NZ Sentinell Program and DOC undertaken to tag fish adjacent to the Kapiti Island Marine Reserve to better understand the population dynamics and movements of fish.



Autumn 2019 1st anniversary

- 5000 tags distributed, 1300 deployed on 22 species, 17 recaptures across 5 species.
- Southern Seabird Solutions print poster on best way to safely release seabirds with tips and advice from our Trust directors.
- Trust is donated a stand at the October 2019 Tauranga Boatshow to promote the Trust work and introduce the inshore fish tagging program.
- Trust directors and Mark Erdmann (Conservation International) deploy first satellite tags on oceanic manta rays in New Zealand.
- Scott and Sue are awarded the Southern Seabird Solutions Trust **Seabird Smart Award**.
- Multiple NZ length records from tagged and released fish awarded to Scott and Sue.



Autumn 2020 2nd anniversary

- TMRCT are finalists for the “**Kaitiakitanga Award**” and “**Minister of Fisheries Award**” at the Seafood Sustainability Awards.
- 15 NZ length records awarded to Trust members for tagged and released fish.
- 8000 tags distributed 2080 tags deployed on 34 species, and 373 registered members.
- T1406 rig travels migrates over 1000km from east to west coast of the South Island.



Autumn 2021 3rd anniversary

- The Trust is donated a stand at Hutchwilco Auckland Boatshow, 5000 fish posters 3000 stickers, 300 seabird buckets given away to members of the public at the 4 day event. Tagging kits on sale for new members. Visited by Fisheries minister and officials.



- 13,000 tags in circulation, 1/3 deployed, 560 registered members. Recapture rate 1 in 23. North Island west coast accounts for 28% of recaptures.
- Meeting with Minister of Fisheries, David Parker to discuss TMRCT tagging program support.
- Trust members Satellite tag tope sharks and oceanic manta rays.
- 6 x IGFA world length records and 18 NZ length records by members tagging and releasing fish.
- Scott appointed to Conservation, Public Policy and Research Committee for IGFA Oceania Regional Council.



Autumn 2022 4th anniversary

- Auckland boat show 4 day event giving away 6000 posters, 6000 stickers.
- 21,500 tags distributed, 7048 tags deployed on 53 species, 1 in 19 recapture rate
- DOC joins program to assist monitoring the Marine Protected Area at Mayor Island.
- 30 NZ length records by members with tagged and released fish.
- Poster fish recaptured by NIWA after 4 years at large.
- Tagging kit registration number helps to contact boat owner with police and coastguard during rescue operation.
- Fish tagged in Fiji to help setup sustainable fishing charters.



Autumn 2023 5th anniversary

- The Trust presents at the 1st World Volunteer fish tagging summit. The Trust is the first significant volunteer tagging program to be setup since 1995.
- 1250 registered members, 26,630 tags distributed, 8965 fish tagged and released on 63 species, 1 in 18 recapture rate.
- The Trust wins the “**Ocean Guardian**” and the “**Supreme Sustainability Award**” at the 2023 Seafood Sustainability Awards.
- Scott is the guest speaker at the NZ Federation of Commercial Fishers Conference 2023 held in Blenheim



Autumn 2024 6th anniversary

- 1429 registered members across New Zealand. 31,820 tags distributed, 11164 tagged and released fish across 67 species, 635 recaptures reported. Recapture rate 1 in 17.
- 4 fish caught four times, 24 fish caught three times.
- Sealord join the TMRCT tagging program releasing trevally and snapper.
- Trust Joins the Global Fishtag Network.
- Trust director Clinton Duffy appointed Curator of Marine Biology at Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Autumn 2025 7th anniversary

- 1625 registered members. 35,230 tags distributed. 13,368 fish tagged and released across 73 fish species, 782 recaptures reported, 40% of recaptured fish are re-released
- 1 tagged fish caught 6 times, 2 fish 5 times, 3 fish 4 times and 33 tagged fish caught 3 times
- Trust work credited in international research papers

Autumn 2026 8th anniversary

- Alex Burton graduates, after several years studying school sharks for his masters and PhD. We now have a new shark scientist in the Trust. Congratulations Dr. Alex Burton.
- 1760 Registered members. 39,000 tags distributed. 15,051 fish tagged across 73 species, 888 recaptures reported, 40% of recaptured fish are released again.
- Trust acknowledged in local and international research papers.
- New research projects undertaken to compliment the tagging program.
- Tagging program featured in TV show “Fishy Business”
- TMRCT featured in podcasts and radio interviews.



For more information on these and other stories about the Trust check out the quarterly reports on the website newsletter page here. <https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/newsletters/>

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



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



GAME FISH MEASURE



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



Great for land based shark fishing or tag and release tuna, sharks and marlin from boats

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 accessories page <https://tindaleresearch.org.nz/tagging-program/order-tagging-gear/>

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

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** <https://instagram.com/tindaleresearch> #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_id7lbqs?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/7xkCJCI9vBM>
- 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>
- How to use a release weight <https://youtu.be/a5aV1E0HZYU>

- **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/

TMRCT Members section

Tagging Leader board

As of the end of May 28 members in the TMRCT inshore tagging program have tagged over 100 fish, 11 have made it to the leader board tagged and released 250 or more fish. Quite the milestone. Still a way to go to catch Scott and Sue.

Scott & Sue Tindale	3072
Robert Janse	571
Graeme Johnson	513
Graham Wilson	545
Michael Jenkins	393
Liam Shadgett	307
Hadley Dawes	271
Luke Davis	258
Michael Bawden	255
Richard Nawisielski	254
Russell Wilson	240



Longest fish leader board

The following chart shows the longest fish tagged and released for the most common species. There are a few ties but the first fish of that length recorded stands. Many of these are also New Zealand Angling all-tackle length records that required a photo of the fish on the Trust measure mat to qualify.

<u>Snapper</u>	<u>5/02/2023</u>	<u>S. Jameson</u>	<u>Port Jackson</u>	<u>88.5cm VL</u>
<u>Kahawai</u>	<u>5/03/2020</u>	<u>D. Adams</u>	<u>Tauranga</u>	<u>61.5cm VL</u>
<u>Kingfish</u>	<u>9/11/2023</u>	<u>J. Aubertin</u>	<u>East Cape</u>	<u>140cm VL</u>
<u>Gurnard</u>	<u>4/06/2022</u>	<u>G. Gilbert</u>	<u>Nape Nape</u>	<u>53cm VL</u>
<u>Trevally</u>	<u>15/05/2025</u>	<u>P. Mills</u>	<u>Rangaunu</u>	<u>74.5cm VL</u>
<u>John Dory</u>	<u>5/06/2021</u>	<u>H. Botha</u>	<u>Karewa Island</u>	<u>38.5cm VL</u>
<u>Blue cod</u>	<u>12/07/2019</u>	<u>T. Dawson</u>	<u>Chatham Island</u>	<u>48.5cm VL</u>
<u>Blue Moki</u>	<u>8/04/2021</u>	<u>G. Wilson</u>	<u>Marlborough</u>	<u>62cm VL</u>
<u>Hapuka</u>	<u>9/10/2025</u>	<u>B. Finucci</u>	<u>Dusky Sound</u>	<u>73cm VL</u>
<u>Tarakihi</u>	<u>27/12/2021</u>	<u>B. Sowry</u>	<u>Jackson Bay</u>	<u>47cmv VL</u>
<u>Tope shark</u>	<u>16/06/2020</u>	<u>M. Jenkins</u>	<u>Karekare Beach</u>	<u>174cm TL</u>
<u>Rig shark</u>	<u>10/09/2022</u>	<u>G. Gilbert</u>	<u>Napenape</u>	<u>137cm TL</u>
<u>Spiny dogfish</u>	<u>28/10/2022</u>	<u>G. Gilbert</u>	<u>Kaikoura</u>	<u>98cm TL</u>
<u>7 gill shark</u>	<u>8/09/2024</u>	<u>H. Dawes</u>	<u>Havelock</u>	<u>270cm TL</u>
<u>Bronze Whaler</u>	<u>31/01/2021</u>	<u>E. Ballantine</u>	<u>Rangiputa</u>	<u>305cm TL</u>
<u>Eagle ray</u>	<u>29/12/2018</u>	<u>C. Caine</u>	<u>Kaipara</u>	<u>115cm DW</u>
<u>Stingray</u>	<u>27/12/2025</u>	<u>S. Mennell</u>	<u>Tiwai Bridge</u>	<u>156cm DW</u>
<u>Elephant fish</u>	<u>10/11/2022</u>	<u>S. Tindale</u>	<u>Bruce Bay</u>	<u>81cm VL</u>
<u>Porae</u>	<u>1/8/2023</u>	<u>J. Trimmer</u>	<u>Tutukaka</u>	<u>60cm VL</u>
<u>Trumpeter</u>	<u>7/11/2022</u>	<u>I. Gunion</u>	<u>Taiari</u>	<u>44cm VL</u>
<u>Sea Perch</u>	<u>14/4/2024</u>	<u>R. Wilson</u>	<u>Picton</u>	<u>35cm VL</u>



Recapture Certificates



A Big thank you to **Daiwa NZ** who have donated a selection of **Bait junkie** soft bait lures,

And

A big thank you to **GoFish Tackle co** who have donated packs of **Eagle Claw** barbless circle hooks.

These complementary products are to be sent out with the recapture certificates posted to the fishers this quarter.



It is great to see many of our members already using these products while tagging and releasing fish. A high proportion of fish are lip hooked using lures or circle hooks, reducing the potential of gut hooking or injuring fish to be released. Fishing smarter for a sustainable future.

Monthly Recapture Draw

Daiwa New Zealand sponsor the monthly prize draws. One lucky winner will receive a **Daiwa Laguna LT 3000-CA** 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.

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

The **March** draw winner is **Fleur Brydon** who tagged and released a snapper (T36837) measuring 38.5cm she caught at Kaipara Harbour on the 9th of March 2026.

The **April** draw winner is **Leo Banicevich** who tagged and released a 56.5cm snapper (T38122) while fishing on the Kaipara on the 9th of April 2026.

The **May** draw winner is **Andrew Church** who tagged and released a 43cm snapper (T36652) at Pukehina on the 3rd of May 2026.



Remember to send in your completed tag and release data before the end of each month to be in these draws. Old or late entries will be entered into the month received, so it is not too late to send in your data.

Note: tag and release forms sent in with incomplete or missing data are not eligible for prizes.

Tagging Members updates.

House keeping

Thank you to all the tagging program members that send in their tagging data early. This helps with data collating and keeping you all informed of recaptures and results in a timely manner. It is important to send in your tag and release data ASAP so it doesn't get lost or forgotten and is essential if you want the stats to be current throughout the program.

Photos have been a great addition to the tagging program giving us an insight into fish condition before and after as well as showing recovery from barotrauma, healing from injuries or recovery from conditions like milky flesh syndrome and zombie snapper. These are best to send by separate email or you will have to reduce the file size to attach to the website portal.

Some of you will notice the website has been upgraded to include a quick link button for "reporting new tag and releases" on the front cover of the website. This is next to the well-used report tagged fish recovery button and is there to make reporting easier for the casual fisher.



Postage has been an issue for years but this year has been the worst. Reduced services like no deliveries to business street addresses, constant unannounced price increases and members with no letterboxes has made sending out printed material like recapture certificates near impossible. We even tried to hand deliver some of the last batch of recapture certificates only to find street numbers confusing or randomly allocated along the street. Some of you have received the email versions

of the recapture certificates in PDF format as a trial to counter these issues and looks like it will be the way forward. This in itself has its own problems with email spam blocks or changes of addresses so please ensure you have sent in your updated information and current addresses and check you have added the Trust email address to your approved emails so you don't miss out on important announcements.

If you would still like to receive the printed recapture certificates please check you have a waterproof letter box and it is large enough for an A4 letter or monthly prizes.

Autumn 2026 tag and recapture summary- (1/03/2026 to 31/05/2026)

- 582 additional fish tagged and released this quarter
- 30 tagged fish were recaptured during this quarter
- 13 recaptured from recreational boats
- 11 recaptured from recreational shore fishers
- 4 recaptured by commercial fishers
- 1 tag found beach cast with the barb removed
- 13 recaptured tagged fish were released again this quarter
- Longest time at large before recapture this quarter is 1966 days
- Longest time at large before recapture to date is 2187 days
- Furthest displacement via sea of a TMRCT tagged fish is 3132km



TMRCT Inshore Tagging Program

Autumn report 2026.

Membership in the tagging program has increased to just over 1760 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 around 39,000 fish tags to the end of this quarter and have reported 15,051 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.

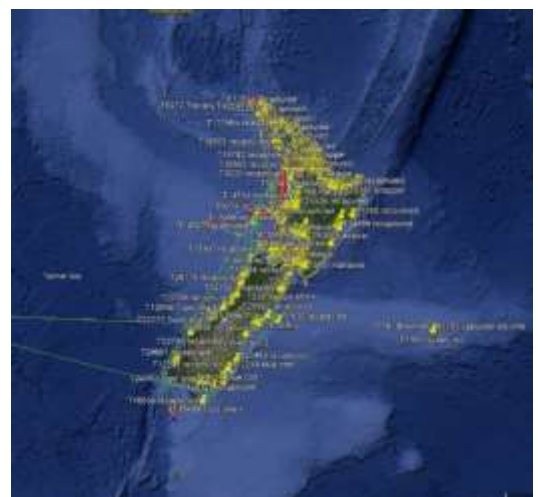
Recapture ratios can vary considerably between anglers as it is up to them to decide where to fish and what species to tag and release. Isolated areas, seasonal fishing effort, and fish density are just some of the factors influencing recapture rates. Those members that joined the tagging program early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

Sadly, still 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 are not 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 specially tagged fish again.

We commend all those that understand the importance of tag and release and reporting data on tagged fish recaptures. It is building a substantial resource that is already helping to monitor trends and changes in the fishery under constant pressure.

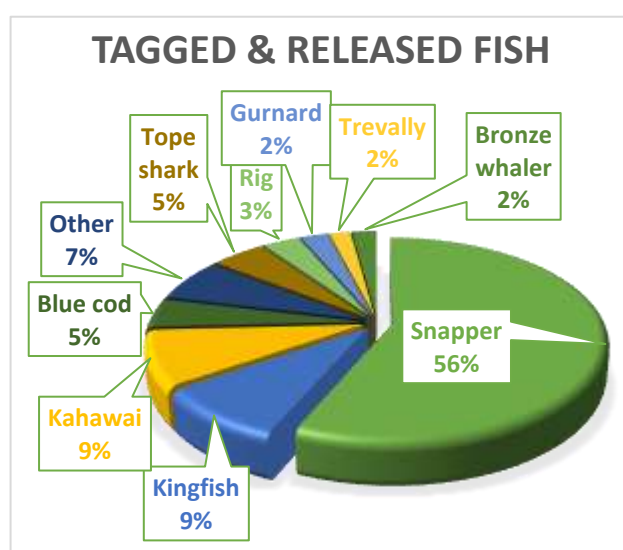
The nationwide recapture rate across all species combined is still around one fish in seventeen (1:17) or about 6%. The bulk of these recaptures are still by recreational methods showing how extensive recreational fishing effort around the country truly is. This recapture ratio is also considered very 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. Even more impressive is with a relatively small population and the isolation of many parts of the country, the constant tagging effort still provides consistent recaptures far and wide.

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



TMRCT Inshore Tagging Program

The inshore fish tagging program membership covers all of 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 recreational fishers, other participants include permitted commercial

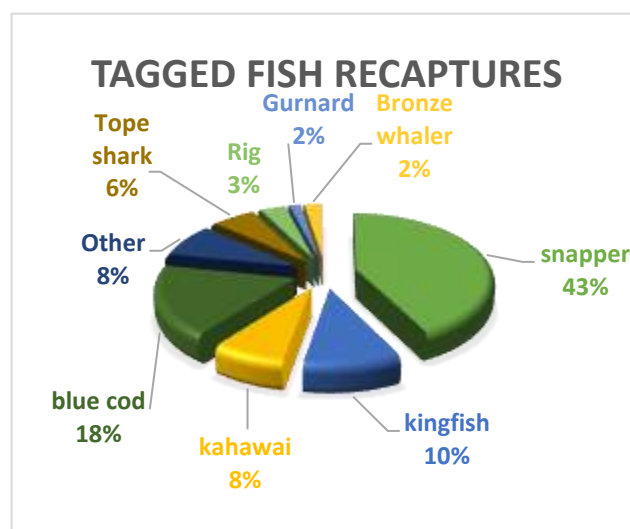


fishers, Department of Conservation staff, research scientists and university students. Inshore species have been tagged and released around the nation so overlap in the areas fished by each sector is high.

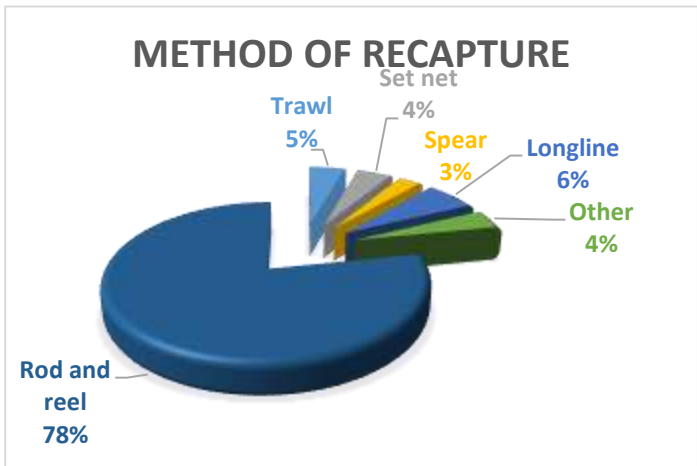
This graph shows the proportion of different species (total number of species 73) tagged and released in the Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust Inshore Fish Tagging Program. As you can see, the most frequently tagged and released species is snapper (56%). Members have tagged a great cross section 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 15,000 km 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 by species. The interesting thing about this graph is that most species are more or less recaptured in proportion to the number tagged except blue cod.

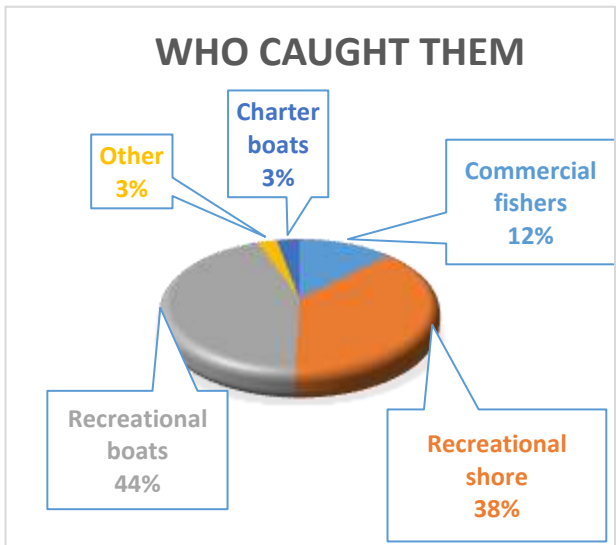


Tagged fish have been recaptured across all types of marine habitat and by all types of methods.

The most common recapture method is recreational rod and reel, with 78% of all reported recaptures being by this method. Next is long line which includes both commercial and recreational setups at 6%. Commercial trawl makes up 5% of recaptures by method, slightly more than combined recreational and commercial set nets. Spear fishing accounts for 3% of recaptures.

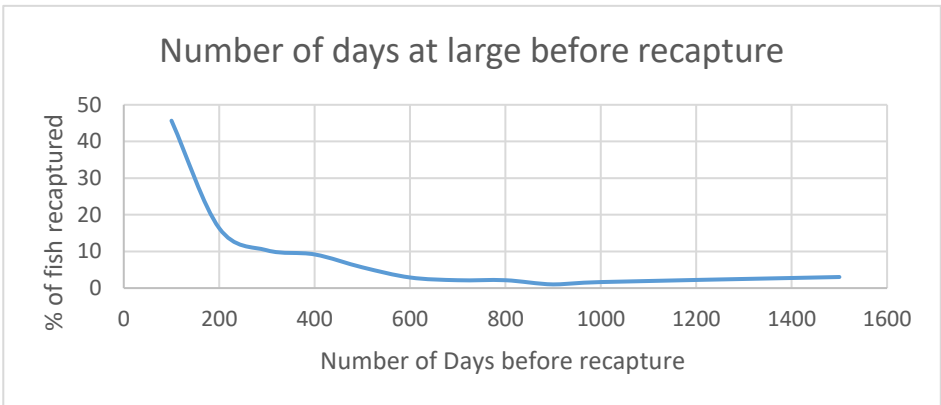
Who recaptured them?

- *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 line, drop line, trawl, seine, set net, cray pot and fish reported by fish receivers and MPI observers.



Note, these percentages have remained consistent since this program began nearly 8 years ago, despite the huge growth in that time.

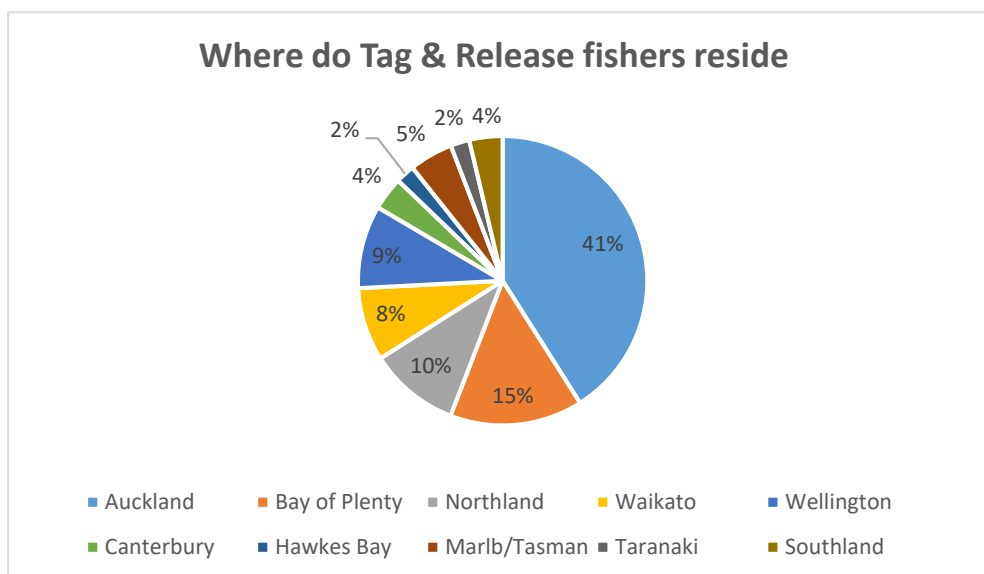
The Tindale Marine Research Charitable Trust set up the TMRCT Inshore fish Tagging Program in April 2018. If we look at the TMRCT recapture data to March 2026 we see that most fish are recaptured within the first year they are released. 93% are recaptured by the end of the second year and 97% after 3 years at large. Around 40% of recaptured fish are released again. In instances where these fish are recaptured multiple times, the calculations are for time at liberty between each recapture.



The longest time at large before recapture is currently 2187 days or just under 6 years.

Where do our tagging members reside?

Tagging programs can also tell us about fishers. Things like where anglers reside, to how often they fish, what time of year and how far we travel to our fishing locations. Many of our members travel the length of the country looking for new challenges, on holiday, for fishing tournaments or fishing with friends. Much of this is seasonal, very much like some of our fish. Whether we travel or fish locally, variations in movements are influenced by available free time and the weather. This graph shows the percentage of taggers by location, which in some cases looks proportional to the population of those areas. This gives a great indication of distribution of our members across the country. What will be interesting in the future is to look at where taggers from each region fish.



This volunteer program was not created or intended for fisheries management purposes but it is 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, how many 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.

TMRCT Inshore Tagging Program Recaptures

As usual there was a constant flow of tagged fish recaptures over summer, 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.

For the Trust tagging program to help you and your community we need you to help us fund fish tags, prizes and supporting educational materials. Every fish released tells its own story, a small price to support sustainability, the value to our marine life's future, immeasurable.



T22237 Bronze whaler

Gilbert Groenewald was land based shark fishing at Papamoa Beach on the 9th of February 2025 and caught a male Bronze Whaler Shark which he measured at a PCL (precaudal) length of 200cm, he noted that it was a nice healthy shark. He tagged the shark and took a photo before re-releasing the shark again.

391 days later on the 6th of March 2026 Gilbert was land based shark fishing in the same general area and recaptured this shark he measured it at a PCL (precaudal length) of 213cm before re-releasing it again.



Since being tagged and released 391 days earlier, this fish has grown 13 cm and was recaptured in the same general area.

T34224 snapper

Trust director Scott received a phone call from Simon Bruce the skipper of the commercial danish seiner 'F.V. 8 Bells' who reported the recapture of a 29.5cm tagged snapper. Simon said that this fish weighed 590 grams and he caught the fish in 42m of water 9km offshore from Piha on the 7th of March 2026.



This snapper had been tagged and released **263 days** earlier on the 18th of June 2025 by Gavin Allan while bait fishing in 33m of water off Auckland's West Coast. The fish measured 27cm and it was one of the 6 fish that Gavin tagged and released that day.

Since its tag and release approximately 9 months earlier this fish had grown 2.5cm and it was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 4.94km away from its original tag and release location.

This is Gavin's 1st recapture from the 80 fish that he has tagged and released since joining the tagging program in December 2024.

T35130 snapper

Trust directors Scott & Sue Tindale went out on the Kaipara Harbour for a couple of hours fishing on the 28th of January 2026. They launched the boat at low tide and decided to fish in 2.1m of water at the Keyhole. The water was a warm 21.45° and the fish started biting as soon as their lines hit the water. They tagged and released 25 fish between them and kept a few extra for dinner. One of the fish that they tagged and released was a 27cm snapper that was caught on a bait.



41 days later on the 9th of March 2026 Scott recaptured this tagged fish on a mullet bait while fishing in the same general area. Since its tag and release this fish had grown 1.5cm, measured on the same mat and released again.

T20399 snapper

Keegan Oxenham has been a member of the tagging program for a number of years. Since joining he has tagged 218 fish. This is his 6th recapture.

On the 26th of April 2024 Keegan was bait fishing in 12m of water at Tairua and he caught a 31cm snapper which he quickly tagged and released.

683 days later on the 9th of March 2026 John Kosar was straylining a pilchard at Slipper Island in 15m of water and he recaptured this fish. John measured the fish at 40cm. He said that he did not notice the tag until he was filleting the fish, he said that the tag had some green growth on it, so it was hard to read the address.



Since its tag and release 683 days (1 year, 10 months, 12 days) earlier this fish has grown 9cm and was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 3.58km away from where Keegan originally tagged it.

T25805 snapper

Graeme Young was having an awesome day fishing in 15m of water at Motuora Island, Hauraki Gulf on the 6th of February 2026 where he tagged and released 67 snapper and 3 kingfish. One of the fish that Graeme tagged and released was a 29cm snapper, T25805.

This fish was recaptured **39 days** later on the 16th of March 2026 by Chad Meyer who was straylining a mullet bait in 18m of water near Motuora Island. Chad measured the fish at 31cm and took a quick photo of the tag details before releasing the fish again.

Since its original tag and release this fish has grown 2cm and was recaptured in the same general area.

T25872 snapper

On the 16th of March 2026 Chad Meyer was straylining a mullet bait in 14m of water off Motuora Island in the Hauraki Gulf where he recaptured a 2nd tagged fish for the day. Chad took a photo of the tag details and quickly measured the fish at 29cm before releasing it back into the water.

This is also Graeme Young's 2nd recapture from the 70 fish that he tagged at Motuora on the 6th of February 2026 (mentioned above). This fish measured 26cm when Graeme tagged and released it 39 days earlier.

Since its initial tag and release this fish has grown 3cm and was recaptured in the same general area.

After recapturing these two tagged fish Chad decided to join TMRCT tagging program so he can tag and release his own fish.

T37457 bronze whaler

This is Gilbert Groenewald's 2nd recapture for this quarter, and his 3rd recapture from the 18 fish that he has tagged since joining the tagging program in July 2022.

Gilbert Groenewald was land based shark fishing at Papamoa Beach in the Bay of Plenty on the 4th of January 2026 and caught a Bronze Whaler Shark. Gilbert measured the precaudal length (PCL) at 221cm before tagging and releasing it.



76 days later on the 20th of March 2026 Gilbert was land based shark fishing in the same general area and recaptured the same shark. He measured it at a precaudal length of 222cm before releasing it again.

Since being tagged and released 76 days earlier, this fish has grown 1 cm and was recaptured in the same general area.

T10065 kingfish



William Preece was fly fishing in 1m of water along the inner Hauraki Gulf on the 22nd of January 2023 when he caught a 52cm V-length yellowtail kingfish. He quickly photographed and tagged it.

1162 days later on the 28th of March 2026 William's kingfish was recaptured by Eddie who was fishing at the Weiti River Mouth. Eddie caught this fish using a top water lure and measured the fish at 83cm V-length. When he cut up the

fish, he found squid and a spotty in its gut.

Since its tag and release 3 Years, 2 months and 7 days earlier this fish has grown 31cm and was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 17.2km away from its original tag and release location.



T21808 snapper

Nathan Timbrell was fishing in 20m of water in Kenepuru Sound, Marlborough Sounds on the 21st of March 2026. One of the fish that he caught was a tagged snapper which he estimated at 40-45cm. Nathan reported that he caught the fish on a herring and it was in really good condition. Nathan took a quick photo of the fish before releasing it again.



This fish was originally tagged and released on the 13th of November 2022, **1225 days** (3 years, 4 months and 9 days) earlier, by long term TMRCT tagging member Graeme Wilson. Graeme tagged this snapper in Kenepuru Sound while softbait fishing from shore. He recorded the length of the fish at 27cm V-length.

Since its release this fish had grown an estimated 13cm and was recaptured 3.84km straight-line distance by sea away from its tag and release location.

This is Graeme's 91st tagged fish recapture from the 545 fish that he has tagged and released since joining the Trust tagging program 6 years ago.

T20156 tope shark

Robert Janse was land based shark fishing at the old wharf site at Whatipu near the Manukau Heads on the 2nd of July 2022. One of the fish he tagged there was this 146cm total length female Tope Shark. Robert posed for a quick photo before sending it on its way again.

1373 days (3 years, 9 months, 3 days) later this fish was recaptured by the commercial fishing trawler F.V. Santi Maria at West Pandora Banks. The skipper reported that the fish was a mature pregnant female but unfortunately he did not have a size.



This fish was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 335km away from its original tag and release location and is Robert's 42nd recapture from the 571 fish that he has tagged since joining the program.

T36234 snapper



Craig Nelder was surfcasting from shore at Waimamaku on the west coast of North Island on the 13th of February 2026. Craig had set up to tag as many fish as he could. One of the fish that he caught was this 27cm snapper.

This fish was recaptured **51 days** later by Melissa while surfcasting from shore at Waimamaku Beach on the 4th of April 2026. Melissa measured the fish at 29cm before releasing it again. She reported there was a bit of algae growing on the tag but the fish was in very good condition. Since being tagged and released this fish has grown 2cm and was recaptured in the same general area.

This is Craig's 1st recapture from the 110 fish that he has tagged and released from the shore since joining the tagging program in August last year.

T32504 snapper

Since joining the TMRCT tagging program in 2022 Doug Lambert has tagged 170 fish. This is the 9th that has been recaptured.

Doug was fishing in 39m of water at Bream Bay on the 10th of October 2025, he said that it was a hard day's fishing that day. Nevertheless this 33cm snapper is one of four that he tagged and released that day.

177 days (5 months, 26 days) later on the 4th of April 2026 it was recaptured by Iain Phillips while fishing in 2.5m of water at Beach Road Onerahi. Iain measured the fish at 36cm before filleting it.



This fish had grown 3cm and was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 24.6km away from its tag and release location.

T8985 snapper

The Trust is now receiving quite a lot of really long term recaptures spanning back to almost the first years of the program, we're seeing some really interesting growth rates in these fish. This is another example.

Graeme Johnson, a keen fly fisher, has been a member of the tagging program since 2019. On the 21st of November 2020 Graeme was out on Kaipara Harbour filming flyfishing for his You Tube channel. One of the 15 fish that he tagged and released in 4m of water was a 28.5cm snapper. Graeme put down a "bait camera" while he was fishing to gather a bit of underwater footage but little did he know that a Great White Shark was lurking below and was captured on the video footage.



Fortunately this fish was not eaten by the shark. Instead it was recaptured **1966 days** later on the 9th of April 2026 by Peter Field while bait fishing in 5m of water in the upper reaches of Kaipara Harbour. Peter measured the fish at 44cm. He kept the fish as it had swallowed the hook and he didn't think it would survive. He commented that it had been a slow day's fishing even though the fish were fat and aggressive feeders.

Since Graeme tagged this fish 5 ½ years earlier, it had grown 15.5cm and was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 16.3km away from its tag and release location. But of course it could have also circled NZ many times in that time.

You can check out the Great White footage on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNo0bZkDaJY>



T17840 snapper

This is another of Luke Davis's long-term recaptures. Luke was fishing in 10m of water at Kawau in the Hauraki Gulf on the 6th of October 2024. One of the four fish that he tagged and released that day was this 67.5cm snapper.

556 days (1 year, 6 months, 9 days) later on the 14th of April 2026 this



fish was recaptured by Andre Kassal.

Andre was fishing on a softbait in 10m of water at Kawau when he recaptured this fish. He measured the fish at 70cm before re-releasing it back into the water again. He commented that the fish was in a good condition and swam off strongly. He said that the water temperature was 20°C.

Since it was tagged one and a half years ago this fish has grown 2.5cm and was recaptured in the same general area. This is the 29th recapture from the 258 fish that Luke has tagged since joining the tagging program.



T23700/B blue cod

On the 16th of January 2024 Graeme Wilson was fishing from shore near Picton when he tagged and released this 34cm blue cod.

89 days later on the 14th of April 2024 Graeme was fishing in the same general area and recaptured this tagged blue cod. This time it measured 35cm. Graeme released it again.

On the 18th of April 2026, 735 days later, this fish was recaptured by Russell Wilson while fishing from shore close to where Graeme tagged it. Russell measured the fish at 35cm before releasing it again.

Since its original tag and release **824 days** (2 years, 3 months, 3 days) earlier the fish had only grown 1cm and remained in the same general area.



T35867 bronze whaler

On the 25th of April 2026 Jason Boa was land based shark fishing at Totaranui when he recaptured a tagged Bronze Whaler Shark. Jason said that the shark put up a good fight. He measured it at 246cm total length (TL) and took a quick photo before releasing it again.

This shark had been tagged and released **36 days** earlier by fellow Trust member Barend Venter while land-based shark fishing at Totaranui on the 21st of March 2026. Barend measured the shark at 240cm TL.

This is Barend's 1st recapture from the 11 fish that he has tagged since joining the tagging program in March 2024.



T24393 snapper

The Trust was contacted by Andy Brannen who reported the recapture of a 33.5cm tagged snapper that he caught on a ledger rig in 32m of water in Delaware Bay, Tasman Bay on the 26th of April 2026. Andy said *'it was quite deep water, but the fish swam away and down strong after he re-released it.*



He said *'that he managed the fish with a rubber net and wet towel. It will be interesting if it gets recaptured again after release success at that depth. Cheers and thanks for your good work'*

This snapper was tagged and released **42 days** earlier on the 16th of March 2026 by Reice Piggott who was fishing in 18m of water in Tasman Bay. Reice measured the fish at 32.5cm prior to release.

Since its tag and release this fish has grown 1 cm in length and was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 31.2km away from its tag and release location. This is Reice's 1st recapture from the 35 fish that he has tagged since joining the tagging program in 2021.

T26467 snapper

Karl Yeo was doing an evening fish in 10m of water at Kawau in the Hauraki Gulf on the 30th of August 2025 and one of the fish that he caught was a 78cm snapper. Karl caught the fish on half a mullet; he said that



the fish was in a really good condition and was really fat. After tagging the fish Karl took a quick photo before re-releasing it.

241 days (7 months, 29 days) later on the 27th of April 2026 this fish was recaptured by Cory Dykman while softbaiting at Kawau in 6m of water. Cory measured the fish at 80cm and said,

'the fish was re-released quickly and in good health'.



Since being tagged by Karl 241 days earlier this fish was recaptured a straight-line distance by sea of 2.49km away from its original tag and release location and has grown 2cm.

This is Karl's 3rd recapture from the 10 fish that he has tagged since joining the tagging program.

T32455 snapper

Trust directors Scott and Sue Tindale took Orokawa on a tagging trip up north in February 2025. As they made their way up the coast they stopped at Whangamumu Bay for the night. While Sue was cooking dinner Scott tagged and released a 36cm snapper that he caught on a bait in 4.19m of water.

453 days (1 year, 2 months, 29 days) later on the 4th of May 2026 this fish was recaptured by Ken Button while softbaiting in 5m of water in Whangamumu Harbour. Ken measured the fish at 43cm and kept it for dinner. It had grown 7cm in that time and recaptured in the same area.



T17012 Rig

The Trust was contacted by Alan Basalaj, Skipper of the commercial trawler Kathleen G to report the recapture of a 92cm Rig that was caught in 60m of water about 9km off the Kapiti coast. Alan said *'unfortunately it was dead by the time we found it had a tag, otherwise we would have liked to record and release it'*. This is the second tagged fish recovered by Alan from the Trust tagging program.

This female rig was originally tagged and released on the 10th of September 2022, **1342 days** (3 years, 8 months, 4 days) earlier by Andrew Boyes who was surfcasting from the Raumati shore. It was one of 3 rig he caught that day and it measured at total length of 82cm.



Since this fish was tagged over three and a half years earlier it had grown 10cm in length and was recaptured 13.2km straight line distance by sea south west of its original tag and release location. This is Andrews 6th recapture from 47 fish tagged and released.

T32025 kingfish

Steven Jameson has been a member of the tagging program for a number of years and since joining the program he has tagged 59 fish and had seven recaptured.

On the 28th of December 2025, Steven was live baiting in 8m of water at Port Jackson where he caught a 110cm kingfish. After quickly tagging, measuring and taking a photo of the fish Steven released it back into the water. Steven said *'this fish was one of the four caught that day and it was a reasonably easy fight for a fish of this size'*.



139 days later on the 15th of May 2026 this fish was recaptured by Gazza Wilson who was fishing with a live kahawai for bait near Port Jackson. Gazza caught and kept the tagged kingfish so was able to measure the fish at 117cm V-length and weight at 18.9kg. An increase of 7cm in length in just over 4½ months.

T38487 snapper

This is Craig Nelder's 2nd recapture for this quarter.

Craig was surfcasting a bait from shore at Waimamaku, Northland on the 20th of September 2025 when he caught this 37cm snapper. After tagging and a quick photo it was released back into the water again.

On the 30th of May 2026, 8 months and 11 days later, this fish was recaptured by Matthew Duffy while surfcasting from shore at Waimamaku Beach. Matthew said *'every bait was getting smashed within seconds of hitting the water. This fish had swallowed the hook, so I wasn't able to release it again'*.



Since Craig tagged and released this snapper **253 days** earlier this fish it has grown 2cm in length and was recaptured in the same general area.

T20701/G blue cod

I enjoy writing about this little guy as he has now been caught 7 times. This fish's story demonstrates that the tag and release process has little or no adverse effect on him. Still foraging, growing and dodging ferries.

His story begins on the 5th of June 2022 when Graham Wilson caught him while fishing off the Picton shoreline. He measured 34cm at the time. On the 3rd of August 2023 he was caught by Russell Wilson in the same general area. Russell measured him at 37.5cm before releasing him again. Russell Wilson recaptured him again on the 29th of August 2023, but has increased to 40cm when Russell caught him the 5th time on the 15th of September 2024. Still in the same general area. Russell and this fish have clearly formed an attachment to each other because Russell caught him again on the 8th of February 2025, and for a 7th time on the 24th of May 2026. The last time it measured 42cm. Since its initial tag and release **1450 days** earlier (3 years, 11 months and 20 days) this fish has had four extra breeding seasons, grown 8cm and is still happily foraging in the same area.



T29607 seven gill shark

Dr. Alice Rogers from Victoria University notified us of the recapture of a seven gill shark that was tagged by Dr. Brit Finucci during an earlier research trip to Fordland on 15th of May 2024. It was recaptured near the release location in Broughton Arm just under 2 years later on the 28th of April 2026, when it was fitted with a pop-off satellite tag and sent on its way again.



This is part of an ongoing seven gill shark project that includes the use of a variety of tag types, including TMRCT dart tags, acoustic tags and archival pop-off tags to monitor their movements in and around the sounds.

Missing data

Sadly, there are a few people out there that don't understand that these tagging programs are set up to help everyone, including the fish. This quarter we have had a handful of tags recovered where the anglers refuse to report the recapture details and two tags have been recovered on beaches hundreds of miles away from their release locations, having been cut off and discarded near boat ramps. The volunteers in this program are passionate about our fishery and spend a lot of their own time and money tagging fish to help expand our knowledge of the fish we all enjoy to catch. For taggers it is exciting to receive word that their fish has been recaptured but a sad end to the story if the catch details are lost or missing.

It's fine if you don't want to get involved in these studies but at least report tagged fish recaptures.



Donations

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.

Thousands of Fish ID posters and stickers have been distributed to government departments, educational institutions, fishing clubs, tackle stores and fishers around the country to help you 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 deductible.

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

Or have a chat with Scott on the telephone by ringing 0274760687

Visit 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....

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.



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"

