The Billfish Foundation’s
2014 International Billfish Conservation Record
2013 Tag & Release Program Sponsors
Investing in Sportfishing Conservation

BISHOE’S FISH & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FUND (BFWCF) works to conserve, restore, and manage fish, wildlife, and their habitats through science, education, and technology. BFWCF’s mission to have thriving fish populations in natural habitats will ensure today’s and future generations fishing success. Their contributions to The Billfish Foundation (TBF) helps further the understanding of the feeding, spawning, and migration patterns of billfish.

CASA VIEJA LODGE, located on Guatemala’s Pacific coast provides anglers with an unbelievable resort experience and a modern fleet for fishing some of the world’s most productive billfish waters. Its location and resources put Casa Vieja Lodge in a unique position to contribute a large amount of valuable tag & release data to TBF. Casa Vieja Lodge practices responsible conservation techniques so future anglers can have the same special experiences as those of today.

COSTA SUNGLASSES, a long-standing partner of TBF, believes that conservation is all about sustainable fishing. Many fish stocks that should be vibrant and healthy have fallen victim to poor fishing practices, unregulated development, lack of watershed protection or all of the above. Costa works with partners around the world, like TBF, to help increase awareness and influence policy so that both the fish and anglers of tomorrow will have healthy waters and fish populations to enjoy.

KING SAILFISH MOUNTS, TBF’s longest-standing program partner, introduced and began promoting the release mount concept for Atlantic sailfish in the 1990’s and quickly gained momentum as an alternative to traditional taxidermy. King Sailfish Mounts is now the industry leader and is the most influential producer of release mounts in the taxidermy industry. King Sailfish recognizes the importance of TBF’s Tag & Release program and the importance of the data generated for managing and conserving billfish and other pelagic species.

PELAGIC GEAR’s partnership with TBF meshes perfectly with the company’s Pelagic Ocean Conservancy Project (POCP). The POCP supports scientific research, conservation, and recreational fisheries management, as well as, providing a voice for a large number of ocean enthusiasts. Pelagic and the POCP consists of responsible, conservation-minded sportsmen and active stewards of the sea who want to see the tradition of sportfishing survive for future generations to enjoy.
The Billfish Foundation’s
2014 International Billfish Conservation Record
Analyzing 2013 Tag & Release Data

This publication is dedicated to the late Dr. Russell Nelson, a nationally acclaimed scientist, who served as The Billfish Foundation’s (TBF) Chief Scientist for 12 years. His legacy and passion will live on through the realization of his vision for healthy fish stocks & thrilling fishing opportunities.

This publication is made possible by the generosity of:

Bisbee’s Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund

2013 The Billfish Foundation Tag & Release Program sponsors:
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Dear TBF Members & Friends,

Thank you for your important contributions that made this annual report a reality; for it is your tag, release and recapture data that provides the substance and the detail upon which improved billfish conservation grows. The listing of your name in this publication is a testament of your support for responsible fishing and billfish conservation. The program sponsors distinguish their businesses from others by giving back to the great billfish upon which their business, tournaments and other activities depend.

Each year someone asks whether traditional tagging should continue? The overwhelming answer is a resounding YES. The “scientific tagging gold” comes through the recapture data you report and it is from that information that scientists are able to draw answers to a wide range of queries. Traditional tags remain on fish longer than the current satellite tag’s batteries allow those tags to stay on fish and collect data. The cost of traditional tags is a fraction of the cost of one satellite tag and is easily transportable by anglers to destinations around the world, including some of the regions where few tags have been deployed.

Those entering your own data direct into our new database system are doubling your conservation contribution; for self-entry saves staff time, reduces mistakes and speeds up the processing of your release certificate. If you haven’t already, please check out the new database online at www.tagbillfish.org and start entering your data!

Without your support, TBF’s ability to achieve successes today is greatly limited and that limits our collective sportfishing conservation legacy to future generations. It is an honor to have you on the TBF Team, please sign up a billfishing friend so we can continue advancing responsible sportfishing, sustainable stocks of fish, healthy oceans and strong economic returns to related businesses.

Best fishing,

Ellen Peel
President
Maumus Claverie, Jr. of New Orleans, Louisiana has an extensive record of service in domestic and international fishery management, including serving on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, the National Marine Fisheries Service Advisory Committee for Highly Migratory Species and the U.S. Advisory Committee for the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. He also served on the Board of Directors of TBF.

Captain Ron Hamlin of Stuart, Florida is well-known for his expertise at the helm of a sportfishing boat, racking up awards, including multiple TBF Tag and Release honors, and recognition for his superb skill in placing anglers on billfish. He is one of the few who initially recognized the conservation benefits of non-offset circle hooks with natural baits, which he supported vigorously in the United States and in Central America where he fished for years.

Eddie Smith, Jr. of Greenville, North Carolina, owner and CEO of Grady-White Boats, has devoted his life to designing and building outstanding fiberglass boats with an understanding of the importance of the ocean and fish conservation to the future of the industry. If there are no fish, customers would soon turn to other interests. Over the years, Smith has given of both his time and energy by taking active roles with numerous recreational fish conservation organizations.
Dedication: Dr. Russell Nelson

Dr. Russell Nelson, a nationally acclaimed scientist who served as The Billfish Foundation’s Chief Scientist for the past 12 years, passed away unexpectedly on October 5, 2013.

Nelson earned his undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina, before earning a Ph.D. in zoology, fisheries ecology and statistics from North Carolina State University. While serving as Director of the Florida Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) he established a solid record of success for the marine resources off Florida’s shores. Former MFC assistant executive director Roy Williams said, “He was well-educated; he was one of those guys, like Einstein, who had pathways through the brain the rest of us didn’t have. He was a good scientist but he also had pretty good political insight. Most of the issues we dealt with were tough, because you had to say ‘No’ to somebody. He was good because he could balance the science and the politics.” TBF board member John Brownlee added, “Russ had the ability, more than any of us, to see those unintended consequences in fisheries management.”

He took complex issues and explained them so average people could understand them. As director of the MFC, Nelson was responsible for many controversial size and bag limits on popular species including red snapper, grouper, kingfish and red drum, some of which remain in place today, 26 years later. He guided Florida’s contentious transition after passage of the 1994 net ban, which imposed limits on the nets used by commercial fishermen. He served for 14 years as a member of both the U.S. South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils that managed fish beyond state waters with their respective regions.

In 2001 Russell moved to South Florida, began his own consulting firm and joined the TBF team. He served on international negotiating delegations for the United States in both the Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean. The President of Peru invited him to draft measures for the nation to manage black marlin as a game fish. In Mexico, Costa Rica and Panama he spearheaded the development of three socio-economic studies that documented the value of sportfishing tourism, thus making clear why conserving billfish and other species made strong economic sense to the participating nations. He was leading a Caribbean campaign for TBF and was asked by the World Bank and the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization to broaden the work to include the whole region and additional issues.

He was also passionate about his family: wife and TBF President Ellen Peel, his mother Ruth Nelson, daughters Rebecca and Kate, brothers Randall and Raymond, and sister and brother-in-law Barbara and Gary Vetter, along with three nephews, their families and his beloved Doberman, Mia. Nelson also liked to stir things up a bit, as there was nothing traditional or boring with him. He lived life with genuine gusto. A great void now exists both in his family and in the fishery science and management world, though he left plenty of fun memories and excellent marine conservation successes from which all can draw for comfort and wisdom.

Captain Bouncer Smith summed it up nicely when he said, “Russell was a visionary. We will never fish without him because Dr. Nelson formed the fishing that we have today as well as the fishing that we’ll have in the future.” The world is a lesser place without him, and so this 2013 Conservation Report is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Russell Nelson.

Editor’s Note: Dr. Russell Nelson’s inductions into numerous Halls of Fame this year illustrate how much he will be missed by conservation and sportfishing community.
2013 Officers

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<th>Chairman</th>
<th>Fin Gaddy</th>
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<td>Vice Chairman</td>
<td>Jack Duvall</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Scott Cooper</td>
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Board of Directors

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<th>Luis Bacardi</th>
<th>John Brownlee</th>
<th>Gary J. Chouest</th>
<th>Bennett Long-MBGFC</th>
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<td>Keith English</td>
<td>Chris Fischer</td>
<td>Bill Gooch</td>
<td>Norm Isaccs</td>
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<td>Elaine “Laney”Jones</td>
<td>Sandra MacMillan</td>
<td>Chase Offield</td>
<td>Tim Simpson</td>
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Emeritus

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<th>Francisco Rangel Castelazo</th>
<th>Paxson Offield</th>
<th>Don Tyson (Deceased)</th>
<th>Ralph “Age” Vicente</th>
<th>Jack Willits (Deceased)</th>
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“We don’t inherit the world from the previous generation. It’s loaned to us from our children; it’s placed in our custody for the next generation.”
- Winthrop P. Rockefeller
**TBF Team**

| Ellen M. Peel, J.D., LL.M. - President | Ellen manages and leads TBF’s operations; coordinates development of conservation and management strategies with the Board of Directors, staff and consultants; provides media interaction; serves as the primary interface with the Board and conservation partners and represents TBF before all levels of fisheries management organizations. Contact Ellen at (954) 202-9267 or ellen_peel@billfish.org |
| Peter Chaibongsai - Chief Science & Education Officer | Peter oversees TBF’s Tag & Release Program; manages TBF’s International Tagging Grant program; researches marine policy issues; and assists in cultivating strategy with key conservation partners; oversees TBF’s volunteer/intern program and provides educational and outreach assistance at special events. Contact Peter at (954) 938-0150 ext. 107 or peter_chaibongsai@billfish.org |
| Andrew Cox - Chief Government Affairs Officer | Andrew works closely with TBF President, Ellen Peel, on international and domestic fisheries management issues. He currently focuses the majority of his efforts towards U.S. Highly Migratory Species (HMS) and ICCAT related matters. Andrew also works extensively in TBF’s Tag and Release Program, analyzing tag recaptures. Contact Andrew at (954) 938-0150 ext. 115 or andrew_cox@billfish.org |
| Michael Kelly - Science & Policy Specialist | Michael reviews the science and policy pertaining to the impacts of marine protected areas to the sportfishing industry; assists with TBF’s Tag & Release Online Database; and provides angler outreach at tournaments and events. Contact Michael at (954) 938-0150 ext. 102 or michael_kelly@billfish.org |
| Deborah Cummings - Membership Manager | Deborah manages member services, recruitment, membership renewals, member outreach, the Chairman’s Club and TBF merchandise. Deborah also cultivates membership at tournaments and special events. Contact Deborah at (954) 938-0150 ext. 106 or deborah_cummings@billfish.org |
| Robert Jones - Chief Operating Officer | Robert is responsible for all day-to-day accounting activities, monthly & annual financial reporting, budgets and annual audits; designing and enhancing internal controls and written standard operating procedures. For grant monitoring, Robert works with the President to assure that all grants and contracts meet required financial processes, systems and procedures; he is the main point of contact for grantee financial matters. Contact Robert at (954) 938-0150 ext. 113 or robert_jones@billfish.org |
| Elizabeth Black - Management Assistant | Elizabeth (Beth) Black serves as the primary contact between the President and the public through Board member contact, Foundation and fund raising liaisons as well as staff operations. Beth is also editor of TBF’s Billfish publication. Duties include assisting President Ellen Peel with whom she cultivates strong development, marketing and constituent networks, but will also assist with the organization’s program and operational needs. Contact Beth at (954) 938-0150 ext 104 or elizabeth_black@billfish.org |
| C. Phillip Goodyear, Ph.D. - Scientist | Dr. Goodyear provides all of TBF’s scientific analysis on population dynamics, catch data analysis and other statistical analyses needed for establishing a sound foundation for conservation and management strategies. |
| Herbert Nanne - Conservation Director, South America | Herbert serves as TBF’s main representative in the Central American region, helping coordinate conservation and science activities; he also serves as a scientific counselor for Costa Rica before the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC). |
| Jackie Marsolais - Graphic Designer | Jackie consults as the graphic designer and marketing consultant for TBF’s advertising, graphic design and printing including Billfish, Sailfish and Spearfish magazines. |
TBF's 2013 Tag & Release Captains

Abreu, David W.
Abuchaibe, Alonso
Acevedo, Francisco
Adams, Zack
Adderhold, Kevin
Afonso, Artur
Aguettaz, Matthieu
Aguilera, Pablo
Akazawa, Masayuki
Akihito, Shigeyuki
Albemar Nazo, Neto, Paulo
Manga Beira
Albert, Derek B.
Albors Velez, Luis
Albuquerque, Antonio
Alcala, Yoan
Alexander, Kevin
Altonso, Jose III
Alligood, Matt
Alty, Brett
Alvarenga, Chico
Alvarenga, Francisco
Alvarez, Oscar A.
Alvik, L
Amaral, Antonio
Anderson, Knut
Anderson, Marc
Angel, Billy Chase
Araiza, Tony
Araujo, Rafael
Arioka, Michio
Armada, Nio
Asami, Morio
Assal, Igor
Assolari, Giorgio
Austin, Schnieder
Authement, Brian
Bairez, Edwar
Bajo, Reuben
Ball, Jerrie M.
Baltodano, Elvis
Bankston, Keller
Bankston, Brent
Barnish, Ron
Barragan Ayala, Isidro
Barrett, Rich
Bartell, Mark
Barrett-Smith, Adam
Bate, Harrison
Bays, Chris
Beal, Jeff
Bell, Andrew
Benazeth, Christian
Bennett, Neil
Bennett, John
Berrios, Javier
Berry, Chris
Berthelot, Toby
Bertran, Eduardo
Bingham, Derrith
Birriel, Robin
Black, Nigel
Blackley, Mitchell
Blaha, Lauret
Blaha, Godofredo
Blanchant, Chris
Bloomer, Chuck
Boender, Jack
Bogdan, Greg
Bolinger, Reid
Bonin, Paul
Bonin, Olive
Booth, Glen
Borer, Billy
Borgese, Jordan
Bossard, Olivier
Botello, Manuel
Bouchard, Bertrand B.
Bowman, Brady
Breaux, Brad
Brigham, Rafael Gonicalves
Brinkmeyer, Robert Cujo
Brown, John
Brown, Brick
Brown, Royall III
Brown, Dave
Brown, Owen
Bryant, Daniel
Buck, Jason
Burleson, Bill
Bustos Abarca, Junior
Cabell, Charles
Cabrera, Libardo
Campos, Santos A.
Candau, Christian
Canino, Mike
Carrano, Maneco
Carrasco Martinez, Andres
Carrera, Daniel
Carri, Manuel
Carter, James “Bubba” III
Cartwright, Jason
Carvalho, Stanford
Carvalho, Candido
Cash, Steve
Cassidy, Chip
Cassidy, Kevin
Castro, Julio
Castro, Jose Antonio Romero
Castro, Juan Jr.
Cedeno, Luis A.
Cenac, Christopher E. Jr.
Center, Bill
Cesena, Eduardo
Cesena, Pablo
Cesena Burgoin, Eduardo
Charley, Peter
Chellerni, Richard
Cheramie, Marc
Choy, Sam Jr.
Cintas, Dennis
Clifford, Gary J.
Cochrane, John
Cookle, Trevor
Coffman, Danny
Coffrin, Jason
Coker, Kiki
Colley, Myles III
Collignacio, Santiago
Collins, Alex
Colombo, Carlos
Combos, Gregg
Cooper, Jon
Cordoba, Gavilán
Cordova, Luis E.
Cordova Jimenez, Jorge
Cossio, Ernie
Coughlin, Jay
Couto de Silva, Jose
Cox, Butch
Creed, Richard
Critt, Christopher G.
Crocket, Jimmy
Cross, Rene P.
Crosait, Jordan
Cruz, Rui
Cumberland, Doug
Dalling, Jim
Dana, Skip
Davis, Rodger
Day, Tim
Day, Mike
De Almeida, Francisco
De Sacadura Botte, Jose Sr.
Decoito, Boyd
Decosta, Bob
Deerman, Kevin
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Deleon, Matthew
Delgado, Martin
Deniz, David
Desilva, Allen
Diamond, Bill
Diaz, Manuel
Diaz Grandos, Carlos C.
Dickson, Michael A.
Dieterlie, Quinton
Dill, Matt
Disanto, David
Douglas, Matt
Doxey, Kenneth
Draher, Hank
Du Plessis, Calvin
Duarte, Fernando
Dunham, Rasta Dean
Dunkley Bill
Dunn, Baker
Durán Rivera, Jesus
Endee, Dennis
Engel, Shawn
Egas, Rodolfo Sr.
Eros, Nuno P.
Estraca, Jim
Ettinger, Dean
Ewing, James
Fabrini, Caetano
Fallon, Luke
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Farrier, Bill Jr.
Fedele, Ken
Ferraz, Ernesto Costa
Fields, Ronnie
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Ford, Daniel Hunter
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Foret, Chad
Forman, Alan
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Fowler, Jason
Fox, Bill
Francis, Edward
Fraser, Scott
Fritz, Kerry
Fuchs, Toby
Fujiwara, Yoji
Fulqueiria, Juan
Fullana, Angel Antonio
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Fusaro, Joe
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Gaddy, Fin
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Gomez Pajon, Jose
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Gonzalez, Ricardo
Gonzalez, Jaime
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Grajes, Adolfo
Grandstaff, Allen
Graves, Brad
Green, Josh
Gregory, John
Greig, Rob
Griffin, Larry D.
Griffin, Campbell III
Grimmowski, Olaf
Groen, Luke
Guelder, Thomas
Gustavson, Al
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Hagiya, Takahiko
Hall, Robert
Hamamoto, Yoshinori
Hansen, Bob
Hara, Sunao
Hart, Frank
Hatano, Hiromi
Hatano, Norio
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Heiser, Michelle
Heiser, Timothy
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Hernandez, Odett
Hines, Allen
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Holding, Robert IV
Hood, Chris
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Houreaux, Christophe
Howard, Tim
Hubbard, Steve
Huddie, Harris
Hunter, Mike
Huxter, Ian
Ikeya, Kimitaka
Iliungh de Almeida, Francisco
Inman, Andrew
Inocencio, Paulo
Intunzon, Luis
Isaacs, Neal
Ishikawa, Mitsuhiro
Ito, Kazuyuki
Jacquard, Joel
Jacquard, Eric
Jean Christophe, Lesboires
Jenks, Eduardo
Jim, Haney
Johnson, Mark
Jolley, John W.
Joneschaap, Jan hendrik
Jordan, Sergio L.
Kanari, Kazuhiko
Kanes, William T.
Kass, Bill
Katayama, Takao
Katsumata, Masakazu
Kelly, Patrick
Kennedy, Chris
Kielhisen, Bill
Kimura, Nobuhiko
Kinjo, Kazushi
Kitchell, Jimmy
Kiyohara, Yoshihusa
Knight, Kenny
Ko, James
Kocher, Peter Otto
Kojima, Yasuaki
Krielow, Kendall
Kropp, Albert
Kuchta, Jacque
Kudara, Ko
Kuri, Camilo
Kuri, Antonio
Laborde, Richard S.
Abbott, Veronica
Abbood, Mark
Abboh Pirene da Silva, Nuno
Abboh, Nuno
Abboh, Nuxio
Abuchaibe, Alonso
Aad, Martin
Adams, Gwen
Adams, Jim
Adams, Mary
Adkins, Aaron K.
Adkins, Gene
Afonso, Fabio
Agramoto-Nicolaou, Aggeliki
Aggett, Julian
Aggett, Muatzi
Ahles, Matt
Akaawa, Ayako
Aker, Ano
Albenaz Neto, Paulo
Albemarle, Michael B.
Albert, Brad
Albicki, A.
Albors Velez, Luis
Albors, Frances
Albuquerque, Francisco P.
Aldinger, John
Aldridge, Robert
Alfaya, Cao
Alfonso, Joao
Alisop, Silv
Alird, Eric
Alsop, Sam
Altmann, Hal
Alty, Barry J.
Alvarado, Bobby
Alvarado, Lou
Amarante, Will
Ambrose, David
Andersen, Peter
Andersen, Philip
Andersen, Charles
Anderson, Gary
Anderson, Graham
Anderson, John
Anderson, Lori
Anderson, Matthew
Anderson, Nathan
Anderson, Richard
Anderson, Ronald L.
Anderson, Tyler
Andou, Mitsuru
Andrews, Adam
Andrews, James W.
Angarone, Philip
Anton, Jose Pepe Jr.
Antosh, Steve
Aoya, Takeshi
Araujo, Rafael
Arjona, Bryan
Armad, Scott
Armand, Armando
Arner, Luke
Arnold, Rick
Arroca Barraza, F.
Asp, Tyler
Arrais, Paulo
Arun, Louis
Arun, Arndis
Arrigu, Heman
Arsenault, Craig
Artencio, Edgar
Arzillo, Fabio
Atkin, Darrell
Atsumi, Hitaki
Aubrecht, Tomas
Augen, Arnaud
Ault, Paul
Ault, Mark
Auld, Roger
Ainsworth, Craig
Aisen, Edgar
Airen, Joe
Aird, Martin
Aisop, Steve
Alisdair, Eric
Allsop, Sam
Altman, Hal
Alty, Barry J.
Alvarado, Bobby
Alvarado, Lou
Amarante, Will
Ambrose, David
Andersen, Peter
Andersen, Philip
Andersen, Charles
Bachmann, Stewart
Back, James
Badillo-Alberto, Elias
Baggadi, Jack
Bailey, David
Beck, Brian
Beck, “Tim”
Beem, Edward T.
Beeson, Curtis
Beauchesne, Sooges
Beegs, Christopher
Beitman, Matthew
Belge, Steve
Bell, Charles
Bell, Jack
Bell, Nicole
Bell, Ron
Beller, Rick
Bellemin, Stephen
Bennert, Anna
Bernard, Tianna
Bersu, Angry
Bess, Brian
Betancourt, Fernando
Bevan, Rex
Beyer, Molly
Blaise, Blaire
Bill, Stuart
Black, David
Bates, Jonathan
Bates, Bradley
Baxter, Mark
Bays, Chris
Bays, Janelle
Beal, Penny
Beals, Nick
Beaver, Britt W.
Beecle, Brian
Beck, Brian
Blanco, Roberto P.
Blanc, Paul
Brandner, Keith
Brandstetter, Matthew
Brauser, Mike
Breaux, Allen D.
Brecher, Paul
Brickman, Oscar
Brotto, Jon
Brosz, Steve
Buck, Samantha
Burdinsh, Phil
Buck, Kevin
Burkett, Bill
Burleson, Donny
Burnette, Bradley
Burns, Christian
Burns, Jack
Burtnick, Mark
Bursch, Tony
Busher, Colton
Buss, Kyle
Butler, John
Butler, Mark
Butler, Russell
Buxton, Will
Byerly, Mark
Byron, Tom
Bzowsky, Ed
Bzowsky, Jack
Bzowsky, John
Bzowsky, Tom
Cade, Jeremy
Cajochen, Davide
Cajochen, Geri
Cajochen, Gis
Cajochen, Hans Christian
Cajochen, Paul
Cajochen, Paul
Cajochen, Thomas
Cajochen, Will
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Tag & Release Program

Established in 1990, The Billfish Foundation’s Tag and Release Program includes the largest private billfish tagging database with over 200,000 tag and release reports. TBF annually receives close to 10,000 - 12,000 tag and release records worldwide that provide vital information for billfish conservation.

The application of traditional tags from recaptured billfish provides valuable scientific data pertaining to growth rates, longevity, migratory patterns, habitat utilization and is used in stock assessments of billfish.

Tagging provides a means for important science contributions to be made by members of the recreational fishing community. The social and economic benefits derived from billfishing have become increasingly important in a world where longline by-catch represents the largest source of marlin mortality. Billfishing is compatible with sustainable use of marine resources and generates strong economic returns to communities.

REPORTING TAGGED AND RELEASED BILLFISH

- Submit the data online at www.tagbillfish.org
- Legibly fill out and mail the Tag Data Report Card to TBF
- Make sure to report the release date, species of fish, and location (latitude/longitude) of the release
- Measure or estimate the length and weight of the fish

In the case of recovering a tagged billfish, clip the monofilament off the original tag and, if possible, retag the fish.

If you have any questions about the Tag and Release Program or would like to purchase tags please go to our website at www.billfish.org, or contact us at tag@billfish.org or call (954) 938-0150.
One of the biggest accomplishments for TBF in 2013 was the complete redesign and overhaul of the Tag and Release Database (www.tagbillfish.org). The system is a very important tool for TBF’s conservation and education efforts with the goal of increasing tagging efforts and engaging anglers, captains, and the general public around the world.

The system will serve as your ‘digital logbook’, allowing you to see and share all of your billfish tag and release records submitted to TBF. Once logged in, even as a new user, the system will try to match you with any of your historical catch records. If for some reason you don’t see one of your records, this is more than likely due to an old address associated with your name and TBF can easily remedy the situation. Once everything is synced, you can look back and see your catch and release records, as well as share them via Facebook and Twitter.

The Interactive Map section on the database plots your historical catches, allowing you to see all of your catches plotted across the globe. Color-coded by species, you can click on any particular personal record and see the catch details as well as any photos or video that you may have uploaded.

The Explorer section provides anyone complete access to all of TBF’s tag and release records. More than 200,000 tag and release billfish records are now completely transparent and ready to be explored. Sure to satisfy the curiosities of any angler or captain, it can also serve as a unique tool for students from elementary school to graduate school. The database creates basic reports and graphs with information regarding tags, releases and recaptures of billfish. Queries can be built to virtually look up anything one could imagine. Graphs, reports, and even the raw data can be downloaded to further analyze or use for school reports and research projects.

Utilizing a feed from FishTrack, captains and anglers can use the Weather section to find detailed weather forecasts and other important oceanographic features including sea surface temperature (SST), currents, and tides customized for any location.

In addition to current uses of tag and release data, the new system provides a tool that expands educational opportunities for captains, anglers, and the next generation of billfish advocates. Instilling the fascination and interest today will make lasting impacts that will inspire them for years to come.
2013 Tag, Release & Recapature Data Summary

The Billfish Foundation received reports for 9,110 billfish released in the calendar year of 2013; 4,999 were tagged fish and 4,030 were released. The following pages summarize the recorded data by species, ocean and event. Overall, more fish were tagged and released in the Pacific than in the Atlantic Ocean. A large increase in reports from Cape Verde, Gabon, Mozambique, Seychelles, Malaysia, Dominican Republic, and Japan were received in part from TBF distributing tags in new and remote regions. The most commonly reported species was sailfish (5,024) and the least reported was swordfish (59). With the ever-increasing conservation ethic amongst billfish anglers, the use of circle hooks increased to 68.5% for fish reported with the type of hook used.
RECAPTURES - THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF THE PUZZLE

Over the duration of TBF’s tagging program, TBF has the highest reported billfish recapture rate worldwide. In 2013 a total of 81 tagged billfish were recaptured, which raises the number of recaptured billfish to 2,879, over the life of the program. Of these, the species with the all time highest recapture rates are swordfish followed by white marlin and blue marlin.

When a fish is recaptured, the scientific loop of data collection is completed. Of the billfish recaptured in 2013, the longest time at-large was a sailfish that swam for 2,573 days (7 years), recaptured 72 miles (1,280 km) from where it was originally tagged. The longest distance between tagging and recapture locations in 2013 was a blue marlin tagged off of Kona, Hawaii and recaptured off of French Polynesia, 2,540 miles (4,088 km) away and 157 days later. The most commonly recaptured species of billfish in 2013 was sailfish (30), followed by blue marlin (28) and swordfish (13).

One of the greatest challenges when analyzing billfish recapture data is missing original tagging information. Failure to submit original tagging data creates a critical void that diminishes the value of the tagging. Please submit tagging data at the conclusion of each fishing trip to avoid a loss of critical data. Utilize TBF’s online database at www.tagbillfish.org to report your billfish data.

- **TAG BY OCEAN**
  - 381 (Indian)
  - 2,380 (Atlantic)
  - 2,238 (Pacific)

- **RELEASE BY OCEAN**
  - 2,778 (Pacific)
  - 1,222 Atlantic
  - 31 (Indian)

- **RECAPTURE BY OCEAN**
  - 66 (Atlantic)
  - 15 (Pacific)
Three major oceans and nearly every continent were represented with top billfish reporting locations for 2013 thanks to the information reported by anglers and captains worldwide through TBF’s online database. The push pins represent locations from which the most tagging reports were received.
SPECIES DATA

TBF’s 2013 tag and release data breakdown per species
BLACK Marlin

MAKAIRA INDICA

DISTRIBUTION:
Found in the tropical waters of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Black marlin can be found in near-shore waters and around reefs, as well as the open sea in scattered numbers.

CHARACTERISTICS:
Black marlin are identified by their rigid “sickle-shaped” pectoral fins that are not retractable. The dorsal fin is considered to be the shortest of any of the billfish, less than 50 percent of the body size by height.

SIZE:
Female black marlin, as is the case for all billfish, are larger than males weighing on average 700 pounds, while the males weigh in around 300 pounds. Commercial longline boats have reported individuals weighing 2,500 pounds, and many over 1,000 pounds have been caught by anglers in the waters off Australia, Peru, Panama and Mozambique.

DIET:
Opportunistic feeders - squid and other pelagic fish.

LIFESPAN:
Mature at 2-4 years. Estimated to live as long as 27 years for females and 18 years for males.

STATUS:
A formal assessment of black marlin stocks has never been completed for the whole Pacific; however, given dramatic declines in longline catches over the last thirty years, a Pacific-wide assessment must be a high priority. In the Indian Ocean catches are reported as stable; however, many scientists question the data and fishery pressures are on the rise.

COMMENTS:
Referred to as the “bull” of the sea, the black marlin has incredible strength and does not tire readily. Scientific analysis of their diets has shown that blacks feed in deep water as well as on the surface. Like many apex predators, they travel incredible distances.

TBF received 239 reports of BLACK MARLIN in 2013. Of those 183 were tagged and 56 were released without a tag. A majority of the effort for black marlin was based on both sides of Australia specifically in Exmouth, Cairns, Townsville and Dampier. Outside of Australia, another top location for black marlin was off the Andaman Islands.
**BLUE Marlin**

**MAKAIRA NIGRICANS / MAKAIRA MAZARA**

**DISTRIBUTION:**
Found in offshore tropical and warm temperate oceans around the world.

**CHARACTERISTICS:**
Blue marlin are identified by pointed dorsal fins, pectoral and first anal fins. The pectoral fins are not rigid and can be retracted against the body. The lateral line is reticulated and can be difficult to see in larger animals.

**SIZE:**
Pacific blue marlin have been caught weighing over 2,000 pounds by commercial fisherman and up to 1,805 pounds have been caught on rod and reel. On average, blue marlin heavier than 300 pounds are female. Atlantic blue marlin average between 300 and 400 pounds. Typically, the largest blues are caught in the Pacific Ocean.

**DIET:**
Opportunistic feeders - squid and other pelagic fish.

**LIFESPAN:**
Mature at 2-4 years. Estimated to live as long as 27 years for females and 18 years for males.

**STATUS:**
Population levels of Atlantic blue marlin have plummeted over the past decades. Their levels are now estimated by scientists to be at 40% of what is considered a healthy population. In the Pacific, preliminary assessments have given conflicting results, but at best, Pacific blues are fully exploited. Catch reductions would greatly benefit stocks throughout the entire range of the species.

**COMMENTS:**
Blue marlin are renowned for their strength, speed and aggressiveness, making them one of the most challenging of the billfish. They have been recorded making incredible journeys throughout the world’s oceans. There is debate by scientists whether to recognize two separate but closely related species – *Makaira nigricans* in the Atlantic, and *Makaira mazara* in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.
In 2013, TBF received 2,128 reports of BLUE MARLIN. Of those 1,522 were tagged and 578 were released without a tag. Surprisingly much of the tag & release effort for blue marlin was Pacific-based off Golfito, Costa Rica and Japan. In the Atlantic a great number of blues were tagged in Cape Verde and the Dominican Republic. A total of 28 blue marlin recaptures were reported this year and the longest time at large was 2,109 days or close to 6 years. The longest distance for a recaptured blue marlin was approximately 2,540 miles from Kona, Hawaii to French Polynesia in just 157 days.

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<th>DIST. TRAVELED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BF525465</td>
<td>A: Capt. Luis Cedeno October 23, 2012 Port Antonio, Jamaica TENACIOUS</td>
<td>160 lb 73 kg</td>
<td>A: Julian Mair C: Craig Sasso May 21, 2013 La Guaira, Venezuela RIO CARONI</td>
<td>77 in 195 cm 117 lb 53 kg</td>
<td>210 days 0.6 years</td>
<td>795 mi 1280 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF507827</td>
<td>A: Kazutoshi Matsushita C: Kevin Nakamaru August 9, 2012 Kona, Island Of Hawaii NORTHERN LIGHTS</td>
<td>175 lb 79 kg</td>
<td>C: Taupotini Puto January 13, 2013 French Polynesia MOKAI</td>
<td>88 lb 40 kg</td>
<td>157 days 0.4 years</td>
<td>2540 mi 4088 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF497499</td>
<td>C: Rogelio Casellas September 17, 2010 San Juan, Puerto Rico SEA TRIAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>A: Capt. Pablo Aguilera June 5, 2013 La Guaira, Venezuela ARIZONA</td>
<td>82 in 208 cm 159 lb 72 kg</td>
<td>992 days 2.7 years</td>
<td>552 mi 888 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF467735</td>
<td>A: Ricky Cox C: Adam Uttenstrom August 1, 2011 Bermuda OFFSHORE LADY</td>
<td>175 lb 79 kg</td>
<td>C: Miguel Villarreal Milan March 2, 2013 La Guaira, Venezuela YORCEL</td>
<td>77 in 195 cm 133 lb 60 kg</td>
<td>579 days 1.6 years</td>
<td>1490 mi 2398 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF461466</td>
<td>A: Christian Hampl C: Edgar Montero July 23, 2013 Golfito, Costa Rica KAMILA</td>
<td>175 lb 79 kg</td>
<td>C: Luis Martinez September 22, 2013 Puerto San Jose, Guatemala DOLPHIN III</td>
<td>150 lb 68 kg</td>
<td>61 days 0.2 years</td>
<td>599 mi 964 km</td>
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<tr>
<td>BF455725</td>
<td>A: Sam Jennings C: Mike Lemon September 2, 2009 St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. REVENGE</td>
<td>125 lb 57 kg</td>
<td>C: Miguel Villarreal Milan March 5, 2013 La Guaira, Venezuela YORCEL</td>
<td>79 in 200 cm 137 lb 62 kg</td>
<td>1280 days 3.5 years</td>
<td>574 mi 924 km</td>
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<tr>
<td>BF428811</td>
<td>September 1, 2007 Green Canyon, Louisiana MISS REMY</td>
<td></td>
<td>A: Camilo Kuri C: Antonio Kuri June 10, 2013 Vera Cruz, Mexico MORO</td>
<td>156 in 396 cm 746 lb 338 kg</td>
<td>2109 days 5.8 years</td>
<td>673 mi 1083 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF398023</td>
<td>A: Ricky Jaen September 13, 2013 Cabo Rojo, La Parguera, PR</td>
<td>80 lb 36 kg</td>
<td>A: Jon Cooper C: Quintan Dieterle August 18, 2013 Cap Cana, DR GET LIT</td>
<td>85 in 216 cm 175 lb 79 kg</td>
<td>1435 days 3.9 years</td>
<td>81 mi 130 km</td>
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Sailfish

**ISTIOPHORUS ALBICANS / ISTIOPHORUS PLATYPTERUS**

**DISTRIBUTION:**
Found in tropical and subtropical waters near land in all oceans of the world. Sailfish will travel alone or in groups along edges of reefs or current eddies. Sailfish seek out warm surface water and their migration patterns are tied to temperature changes of even a few degrees. In the Atlantic Ocean, sailfish can be found in high numbers in the Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico, around the Florida shoreline and the West Indies. In the Pacific Ocean, sailfish are found in high numbers off the coasts of Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Mexico.

**CHARACTERISTICS:**
Sailfish are easily identified by the long, high first dorsal fin for which it is so aptly named. The color of the “sail” is slate or cobalt blue with scattered black spots. The sides of the fish have pale, bluish gray vertical bars or rows of spots. The body is slender with a single lateral line.

**SIZE:**
The Indo-Pacific sailfish are the largest in size, averaging 100 pounds. Atlantic sailfish are much smaller, averaging 51 pounds and 5.5 feet long.

**DIET:**
Squid and other pelagic fish. Hunts alone or in groups using their sails to force schooling fish into tight “baitballs” on which to feed.

**LIFESPAN:**
Mature at 2-4 years. Estimated to live as long as 27 years for females and 18 years for males.

**STATUS:**
While eastern Pacific sailfish stocks appear healthy, extremely large harvests of sailfish off the coast of Africa may be jeopardizing stock abundance across the Atlantic.

**COMMENTS:**
Sailfish were the first to attract the attention of anglers. Today they are the most encountered and tagged of the billfish species. Like the blue marlin, scientists are debating whether to recognize two species of sailfish – *Istiophorus albicans* in the Atlantic and *Istiophorus platypterus* in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.
In 2013, TBF received 5,123 reports of SAILFISH worldwide. 2,210 were tagged sailfish and 2,883 were released sailfish without a tag. A majority of the tagging and release effort was reported off Guatemala, Mexico, Costa Rica and South Florida. One of the surprising things was the increased amount of sailfish tagged off Angola. A total of 30 sailfish were recaptured; the majority in the south Florida region. However, one of the recaptured sailfish was tagged off West Africa and travelled at least 1,600 miles from Angola to the island of Sao Tome.

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<tr>
<td>BF035600</td>
<td>C: Thomas Pledger January 6, 2006 Jupiter, Florida</td>
<td>75 in 191 cm</td>
<td>A &amp; C: Johnnie Fuqua January 22, 2013 Miami, Florida</td>
<td>55 lb MASITA 3</td>
<td>2573 days 7 years</td>
<td>72 mi 116 km</td>
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<tr>
<td>BF388530</td>
<td>A: Rob Vanden Langenbergc C: Mike Gautreaux March 23, 2012 Pelican Reef, Caranavera, FL</td>
<td>60 in 152 cm</td>
<td>A: Ron Paquette Capt. Dean Panos March 11, 2013 Miami, Florida</td>
<td>45 lb DOUBLE D</td>
<td>353 days 1 year</td>
<td>162 mi 261 km</td>
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<tr>
<td>BF450538</td>
<td>A: Peter Miller C: Quintan Dieterle January 22, 2012 Islamorada, Florida</td>
<td>84 in 213 cm</td>
<td>January 2, 2013 Fort Lauderdale, Florida</td>
<td>50 lb REEL APPEAL</td>
<td>346 days 0.9 years</td>
<td>88 mi 142 km</td>
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| BF456245 | A: Christian Mansur C: Eric Mansur Sr November 23, 2012 Aruba | 63 in 161 cm | C: Juan Romero June 14, 2013 La Guaira, Venezuela | 35 lb VIGEN DEL CARMEN | 203 days 0.6 years | 228 mi 367 km |

| BF482722 | A: Mark Taylor C: Bouncer Smith May 17, 2010 Miami, Florida | 86 in 218 cm | A: John Brownlee C: Greg Bogdan April 9, 2013 Palm Beach, Florida | 40 lb PERMITTED | 1058 days 2.9 years | 67 mi 108 km |

| BF500318 | A: Ruben Leal C: Paulo Leal March 24, 2013 Lobito, Angola | 47 in 120 cm | A: Bastien Loloum C: Bastien Loloum July 24, 2013 Sao Tome | 20 kg | 122 days 0.3 years | 1605 mi 2583 km |

| BF50355 | C: Michael Fili April 25, 2012 Fowey Rocks, Miami, FL | 73 in 186 cm | A: Robert Aldridge January 26, 2013 Stuart, Florida | 36 v BOUNCER'S DUSKY 33 | 276 days 0.8 years | 122 mi 196 km |

| BF506400 | A: Andrew Cox C: Fin Gaddy January 12, 2012 Isla Mujeres, Mexico | 35 lb 16 kg | A: Ramiro Meralla Hernandez C: Jose Gomez Pajon July 25, 2013 Havana, Cuba | QUAILIFIER | 560 days 1.5 years | 272 mi 428 km |

| BF523981 | A: Ty Hlavaty C: Jimmy Kitchel January 8, 2013 Costa Rica | 73 in 186 cm | A: Hugo Gerardo Quesada January 3, 2013 Quepos, Costa Rica | 36 v GOTCHA | 328 days 0.9 years | 11 mi 18 km |

| BF527004 | A: Jonathan Lonske C: Bouncer Smith March 2, 2013 Miami Beach, Florida | 35 lb 16 kg | C: Scott Stanczyk December 28, 2013 Islamorada, Florida | BOUNCER'S DUSKY 33 | 301 days / 0.8 years | 68 mi 109 km |

| BF506548 | A: Inchiro Takahashi C: Fong Pong October 1, 2012 Rompin, Malaysia | 66 lb 30kg | C: Nathan Cela September 19, 2013 Kuala Rompin, Malaysia | INUCHAN | 353 days .97 years | 32 mi 51 km |
**Spearfish** (* All four species)

**TETRAPTURUS SPP.**

**DISTRIBUTION:**
Found in the tropical and subtropical offshore waters in all of the world’s oceans. Spearfish are found feeding near the surface.

**CHARACTERISTICS:**
Spearfish are identified by their slender and long body type, short bill and high dorsal fin similar to a marlin but lacking the height and length of a sailfish. Spearfish can be confused with white marlin, but are distinguished by looking at their scales which end in several points on tiny prongs.

**SIZE:**
Spearfish are generally small, measuring four to five feet in length.

**DIET:**
Squid and pelagic fish.

**LIFESPAN:**
Have the shortest lifespan of the billfishes, maturing at 2 years and living no more than 5.

**STATUS:** Spearfish are considered to be the rarest and least understood of all the billfishes. Little data exists on their stock status. In the Atlantic, roundscale spearfish are frequently lumped with white marlin in fishery reports and studies.

**COMMENTS:**
Scientists recognize several separate species of spearfish. Because of the low number of spearfish encountered and the difficulty in quick identification, TBF groups these species together when gathering tagging data. Spearfish represent the least widespread and least studied of billfish.

The most common species caught in the Atlantic is the roundscale spearfish whereas in the Pacific, the most common species is the shortbill spearfish.

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**CATCH SUMMARY**
- 90 (Tags)
- 78 (Pacific)
- 1 (Recapture)
- 12 (Releases)

**TAGS BY OCEAN**
- 12 (Atlantic)

**RELEASES BY OCEAN**
- 10 (Pacific)
- 2 (Atlantic)

*Recaptures only in the Atlantic*
In 2013, TBF received 103 interactions with SPEARFISH, with only 90 tagged, 12 releases, and 1 recapture. While the Pacific was the leader in spearfish encounters (specifically Hawaii), TBF did have some reports from locations like Japan and Cape Verde. We had one recapture in 2013 off of Wilmington Canyon and was at large for over 2 years.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BF449403</td>
<td>A: Andy Harris</td>
<td>80 lbs 36 kg</td>
<td>A: Chris Roosevelt August 28, 2013 Wilmington Canyon, Ocean City, MD TYLER M</td>
<td>704 days 1.9 years</td>
<td>110 miles 177 km</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
**STRIPED Marlin**

*Tetrapturus audax*

**DISTRIBUTION:**
Found widely distributed in the tropical and warm temperate waters of the Pacific and Indian Oceans. High numbers are reported in the eastern and north-central Pacific, as compared with the western Pacific. Also, plentiful in the waters of the Indian Ocean and the western Arabian Sea. Striped marlin feed on the ocean surface or in mid-water depths.

**CHARACTERISTICS:**
Striped marlin are identified by their high, pointed first dorsal fins, which on average equals or exceeds the body depth. They have the highest dorsal fin of all the marlin species. These stripes can “light up” with greater intensity. Scientist theorize this is used in communication when hunting in groups.

**SIZE:**
Striped marlin range from 125 pounds to 483 pounds. Although not the biggest of the billfish, most of the largest individuals have been been reported off the coasts of Chile and New Zealand.

**DIET:**
Opportunistic feeders - squid and other pelagic fish.

**LIFESPAN:**
Mature at 2-3 years. Estimated to reach an age of 10 years.

**STATUS:**
A recent assessment was done on a new stock definition that splits the former North Pacific striped marlin stock into two stocks: the Western Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) stock and the Eastern North Pacific stock. According the most recent report for the WCPO, the stock is currently depleted and currently experiencing overfishing. If separate northern and southern stocks exist, the northern group may be overfished.

**COMMENTS:**
Striped marlin are the acrobats of the billfish world leaping and “grey-hounding” across the water when hooked. Tagging data shows striped marlin to be highly migratory, moving back and forth toward the equator in response to the cold and warm seasons. In 2002, a striped marlin was tagged off of Costa Rica and over 3 years later was recaptured off Cabo San Lucas by Timothy Pawlowski and Jesus Perez, traveling almost 2000 miles!
TBF received reports of 575 tagged STRIPED MARLIN and 163 released without a tag. A large portion of the tag and release effort was based off of the Baja California Sur region but other top destinations included Japan and Mozambique. There was one recaptured striped marlin, off Mazatlan, Mexico that was tagged originally off Los Cabos.

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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>BF517709</td>
<td>A: Bess Wilson</td>
<td>104 in 264 cm</td>
<td>A: Vince Wright</td>
<td>78 in 198 cm</td>
<td>338 days</td>
<td>376 mi 605 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C: Jose Romero Carballo</td>
<td>140 lb 64 kg</td>
<td>March 12, 2013 Mazarin, Mexico</td>
<td>150 lb 68 kg</td>
<td>.9 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Los Cabos, Mexico PICANTE EXPRESS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Swordfish

**Xiphias Gladius**

**DISTRIBUTION:**
Found in temperate and tropical waters throughout the world’s oceans. Swordfish have a vast range and were once considered common.

**CHARACTERISTICS:**
Swordfish, also called broadbill, are identified by their very broad, flattened "sword" that is longer and wider than those of the other billfishes. The color of the body varies from metallic purple-blue to a black-blue, or sometimes a bronze tone becoming lighter on the sides, and on the ventral a silvery gray-white.

**SIZE:**
On average swordfish weight between 251 and 350 pounds with fish over 300 pounds tending to be female. In the western Atlantic they have been caught up to 700 pounds and up to 1,182 in southeastern Pacific.

**DIET:**
Opportunistic feeders - squid, pelagic fish, and other cephalopods.

**LIFESPAN:**
Females estimated to mature at 4-5 years, males at 3-4 years; living up to 9 years on average.

**STATUS:**
With the advent of longlining, swordfish experienced a steep decline. After 10 years of domestic and international restrictions on commercial fleets, the north Atlantic stock has fully recovered.

**COMMENTS:**
Most group swordfish with the marlins and sailfish under the name billfish, because each has a long, spear-like extension of their upper jaw (a bill). In fact, the swordfish's resemblance to a marlin is superficial, since it lacks pelvic fins and scales and has a flattened rather than a round bill. Although all billfish share a common ancestor, the swordfish split off from the other billfishes millions of years ago, and belong to the family Xiphiidae; the other billfish are members of the family Istiophoridae. The swordfish is difficult to locate and highly migratory. The species also has the greatest range of temperature exposure of any other billfishes with adults preferring cooler waters except for spawning. Swordfish also have a tremendous depth range, giving them the ability to feed at great depths. Their large blue eyes aid the billfish in its deep sea environment.
In 2013, TBF received 23 tag reports and 23 SWORDFISH releases. Most of the effort was based in the North Atlantic in South Florida and the Gulf of Mexico but the top spot was in New Zealand. There were 13 recaptured swordfish, all originally tagged in south Florida with recapture locations such as Canada and Cuba. The longest distance traveled was about 2,100 miles from Palm Beach, Florida to the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and the longest time at large was over 4.5 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAG #</th>
<th>ORIG. TAG DATA</th>
<th>ORIG. EST. WEIGHT</th>
<th>RECAP. TAG DATA</th>
<th>RECAP. EST. WEIGHT &amp; LENGTH</th>
<th>TIME AT LARGE</th>
<th>DISTANCE TRAVELED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BF426749</td>
<td>C: Scott Walker June 10, 2008 Islamorada, Florida TAILWALKER</td>
<td>45 in 114 cm 40 lb 18 kg</td>
<td>C: Tim Sabaka September 20, 2013 Cape Lookout, NC FV BLUEFIN</td>
<td>59 in 149 cm 271 lb 123 kg</td>
<td>1727 days 4.7 years</td>
<td>739 mi 1189 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF505804</td>
<td>A: Richard Gudoian C: Sean O’Connor October 11, 2011 Key Largo, Florida DEEP THREAT</td>
<td>51 in 130 cm 50 lb 23 kg</td>
<td>C: Tommie Vickery July 13, 2013 George’s Bank, Nova Scotia RARIN TO GO II</td>
<td>130 lb 59 kg</td>
<td>641 days 1.8 years</td>
<td>1357 mi 2184 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF512694</td>
<td>A: Mat Bierley C: Mark Pagano December 22, 2011 Palm Beach, Florida MOONSHINE</td>
<td>40 in 102 cm 35 lb 16 kg</td>
<td>April 9, 2013 Mid Atlantic Ridge</td>
<td>47 in 118 cm</td>
<td>474 days 1.3 years</td>
<td>2186 mi 3518 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF505806</td>
<td>A: Richard Gudoian C: Sean O’Connor October 12, 2011 Key Largo, FL DEEP THREAT</td>
<td>41 in 104 cm 35 lbs 16 kg</td>
<td>January 20, 2013 Santa Cruz Del Norte, Cuba</td>
<td>50 lbs 23 kg</td>
<td>466 days 1.3 years</td>
<td>164 mi 264 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF452440</td>
<td>A: Dan Erb C: Bouncer Smith August 8, 2008 Miami, FL BOUNCER’S DUSKY 33</td>
<td>44 in 112 cm 35 lbs 16 kg</td>
<td>C: Matt DII February 20, 2013 Fort Lauderdale, FL</td>
<td>300 lbs 136 kg</td>
<td>1657 days 4.5 years</td>
<td>68 miles 109 km</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHITE

**Marlin**

**Tetrapturus albidus**

**DISTRIBUTION:**
Found in deep tropical and temperate waters throughout the Atlantic Ocean, including the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea and the western Mediterranean Sea. White marlin stay near the surface and follow the seasonal warm water patterns.

**CHARACTERISTICS:**
White marlin are distinguished from all other billfish by their rounded first dorsal fin, pectoral fins and first anal fin. Their color is light, showing more green than other marlins. Light blue or lavender vertical bars may show on the sides when the fish is active. Dark blueblack to purple spots are scattered throughout the first dorsal and anal fins which are light lavender blue.

**SIZE:**
On average the white marlin is generally 40 to 60 pounds, with weights up to 180 pounds having been recorded. The largest fish are typically reported off the coast of Venezuela.

**DIET:**
Squid and pelagic fish.

**LIFESPAN:**
Estimated to live as long as 18 years.

**STATUS:**
Stocks are reported to be at all time lows; however, anglers have been reporting signs of a slight improvement. The most recent assessment indicates a slight upswing in their abundance.

**COMMENTS:**
White marlin compete with the striped marlin for the most acrobatic title. Whites can dance and “tail-walk” for long distances giving a strong fight for the smallest of the marlin species. White marlin can reach the age of ten; they spawn in late spring and early summer.
A total of 769 WHITE MARLIN were reported to TBF in 2013. Of those 419 were tagged and 342 were released without a tag. A majority of the tag and release effort was located in the Northern Atlantic, specifically in the Mid-Atlantic region. A large number of reports also came from Morocco and the Dominican Republic. TBF received 8 white marlin recapture reports. The majority of the recaptures were in the Mid-Atlantic region, with one reported from Venezuela. One of the recaptured white marlin was originally tagged off Ocean City, MD and recaptured in the middle of the Atlantic ocean 2.5 years later and more than 1,800 miles from where originally tagged.
**BLUEFIN Tuna**

**THUNNUS THYNNUS**

Since 1990 the valuable data contributions made by the sportfishing community are well documented at TBF and by other scientists. Dr. Molly Lutcavage, Director of the Large Pelagic Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, her work featured in National Geographic and in the New York Times, is one of those scientists. She established a Research Partnership with TBF, for collecting the much needed tagging data on juvenile bluefin tuna by creating the Tag-A-Tiny™ project. The project enlists anglers and charter captains to report the data, which is included in TBF’s Tag and Release Data Base. Thus far over 1,400 tagged small bluefin tuna have been from the program to TBF, which has generated important recaptures, including multiple trans-Atlantic records. Several of these fish were at large for 5 years and grew over 300-400 pounds. Tag a Tiny™ program helped engage the recreational fleet, and established a US reporting network for ICCAT-linked bluefin projects.

Since 2005 LPRC scientists also deployed over 247 electronic tags on juvenile bluefin, providing the first fishery-independent understanding of their year-long migrations and habitat use. With the continued growing international scrutiny placed on juvenile Atlantic bluefin tuna, LPRC’s research and additional data collection grows in importance for the United States.
GROWING TRENDS in Circle Hook Use

The use of circle hooks began not as a regulation, but as a tool for conservation initiated within the sportfishing community. In 2008, non-offset circle hook usage was mandated during tournament fishing in the U.S. when a natural, combination or live baits were used to target billfish. However, prior to the regulation, the trends in circle hook usage began to grow and have substantially become the more prominent hook type used within TBF’s tag and release records – the trend is catching on!

CIRCLE HOOK BASICS
- Circle hooks, as their name implies, have a circular appearance where the point of the hook is perpendicular to the hook shank. This is in comparison to the traditional “j” hooks where the point is more or less parallel to the hook shank. These hooks have become a conservation tool for billfish by benefitting the fish and the angler by making successful hookups easier. Circle hooks also increase the post-release survival rate of billfish.

When circle hooks are used with live or dead bait, particularly in a ‘drop back’ fishery, the vast majority of fish are hooked somewhere in the corner of the mouth due to the hook shape and the feeding mechanics of billfish. Since the point of the hook is pointed inward, the hook can freely move internally without snagging vital areas before reaching the hard jaw. This results in minimal bleeding and no damage to internal organs. However, when J hooks are used with this same type of ‘drop-back’, a very high percentage of the fish are hooked in undesirable locations such as the gills, throat, or stomach because the point of the hook is not facing towards the shank of the hook. This subsequently reduces the post-release survival of the fish.

TBF encourages the use of ‘in-line’ (non-offset) circle hooks. Many hooks are labeled circle hooks, but are offset and actually cause damage similar to that of J hooks.

TBF is excited to continue to work with conservation partners to expand the use of circle hooks in new locations while also increasing the education of anglers and captains on the importance of using circle hooks as a conservation tool... they might find their hook-up percentages will actually go up!
TBF Annual Tag & Release Competition

You can participate in TBF’s Annual Tag & Release Competition by becoming a member of TBF and promptly turning in your Tagging Data Report cards. The competition runs from November 1st through October 31st of the following year.

**COMPETITION DATES:**
November 1 - October 31 of the following year.

**DEADLINE:** All Tagging Data Report and Release Notification Cards must be received by TBF no later than November 15.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Anglers, captains and mates MUST be a current TBF member to receive an award based on their submitted Tagging Data and Release Data Cards. Regardless of membership, all data from each submission is valuable for billfish research. You can check your membership status by registering with TBF’s online tag and release database or by calling (954) 938-0150 ext. 106.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Online entry of data at tagbillfish.org assures timely submission. If you wait until the end of the competition year to send in your cards, you run the risk of not having your cards reach TBF by the deadline.

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**CATEGORIES**

**OVERALL**: Awards are presented to the top overall anglers within each division, along with top captains who tag and/or release the most fish during the competition year.

**TAGGING**: Captain and angler awards are presented to those who tag the most of each billfish species in each ocean with a 5 fish minimum required.

**RELEASE**: Captain and angler awards are presented to those who release, without tagging, the most of each billfish species in each ocean with a 5 fish minimum required.

**LADY**: Awards are presented to the lady anglers who tag and/or release the most billfish.

**MATES**: TBF recognizes the valuable contribution of mates in both the release and tagging of billfish through our Mate Recognition Program, a cumulative, on-going program that awards mates with a pair of Costa Sunglasses and a plaque for his or her level of achievement. Mate awards are given on a yearly basis for the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.

**YOUTH ANGLER**: Awards are presented to anglers under 18 years old (as of the end of the competition) who tag and/or release a minimum of 3 fish within five age range categories. Anglers birth dates must be included on each card or online submission.

**PLEASE NOTE**: Fish that are tagged and released are NOT counted in the Release Category. These fish are only counted in the Tagging Category.
2013 Award Winners

OVERALL TAGGING WINNERS
Top Overall Tagging Angler – Christian Hampl – San Jose, Costa Rica
Top Overall Tagging Lady Angler – Martha MacNab – Balboa Island, CA USA
Top Overall Tagging Youth Angler – Nick Brackmann – Huntington Beach, CA USA
Top Overall Tagging Captain – Edgar Montero – Golfito, Costa Rica

TOP TAGGING ANGLERS – ATLANTIC
Striped Marlin – Eddy Lawler – Exmouth, Australia
Black Marlin – Bernard Vale – Coral Bay, Australia
Blue Marlin – Mike Brauser – Lighthouse Point, FL USA
Spearfish – Chris Bays – Kailua, HI USA
Sailfish – Jose Guanipa – Caraballeda, Venezuela

TOP TAGGING ANGLERS – INDIAN
Blue Marlin – Chris Bays – Kailua, HI USA
White Marlin – Christian Hampl – San Jose, Costa Rica
Swordfish – Richard Gudoian – Key Largo, FL USA
Spearfish – Ronnie Fields – Lake Park, FL USA
Sailfish – Gray Ingram – Jupiter, FL USA

TOP TAGGING ANGLERS – PACIFIC
Blue Marlin – Barry Alty – Gold Coast, Australia
Blue Marlin – Christian Hampl – San Jose, Costa Rica
Swordfish – John Gregory – Keri Keri, New Zealand
Spearfish – Gene Vander Hoek – Kailua-Kona, HI USA
Striped Marlin – Bernabe Ruiz – Cabo San Lucas, MX

TOP TAGGING CAPTAINS – ATLANTIC
Blue Marlin – Mike Brauser – Lighthouse Point, FL USA
Spearfish – Mike Brauser – Lighthouse Point, FL USA
Sailfish – Jose Guanipa – Caraballeda, Venezuela

TOP TAGGING CAPTAINS – INDIAN
Blue Marlin – Eddie Lawler – Exmouth, Australia
Swordfish – Sean O’Connor – Key Largo, FL USA

TOP TAGGING CAPTAINS – PACIFIC
Blue Marlin – Paul Fisk – Spearfish, FL USA
Spearfish – Gene Vander Hoek – Kailua-Kona, HI USA
Striped Marlin – Eddy Lawler – Exmouth, Australia

TOP RELEASE ANGLERS – ATLANTIC
Blue Marlin – Gray Ingram – Jupiter, FL USA
Sailfish – Gray Ingram – Jupiter, FL USA
White Marlin – Gregory Benn – Great Falls, VA USA

TOP RELEASE ANGLERS – INDIAN
Blue Marlin – Henry Riggs-Miller – Victoria, Seychelles
Sailfish – Henry Riggs-Miller – Victoria, Seychelles

TOP RELEASE ANGLERS – PACIFIC
Blue Marlin – Barry Alty – Gold Coast, Australia
Blue Marlin – Christian Hampl – San Jose, Costa Rica
Swordfish – John Gregory – Keri Keri, New Zealand

TOP RELEASE CAPTAINS – ATLANTIC
Blue Marlin – Brad Philips – Guatemala City, Guatemala
Sailfish – Scott Leon – Pembroke Pines, FL USA
White Marlin – Fin Gaddy – Manteo, NC USA

TOP RELEASE CAPTAINS – INDIAN
Blue Marlin – Brad Philips – Guatemala City, Guatemala
Sailfish – Scott Leon – Pembroke Pines, FL USA
White Marlin – Fin Gaddy – Manteo, NC USA

TOP RELEASE CAPTAINS – PACIFIC
Blue Marlin – Paul Fisk – Spearfish, FL USA
Spearfish – Gene Vander Hoek – Kailua-Kona, HI USA
Striped Marlin – Eddy Lawler – Exmouth, Australia

TOP RELEASE WINNERS
TOP TAGGING
AGES 11-12
Jack Way – Houston, TX USA
Runner-Up
Serenity Schneider - Boca Raton, FL USA

AGES 13-15
Nick Brackmann – Huntington Beach, CA USA
Runner-Up
Lillian Way – Houston, TX USA

AGES 16-17
Matthew Hancock - San Antonio, TX USA

TOP RELEASE
AGES 8 AND UNDER
Brown Gaddy – Manteo, NC USA

AGES 11-12
Bo Ingram – Greensboro, NC USA

AGES 13-15
Gregory Benn – Great Falls, VA USA

AGES 16-17
Ridge Murphy – Homestead, FL USA

RUNNERS-UP
AGES 11-12
Katie Davis – Malibu, CA USA
Bo Ingram – Greensboro, NC USA

AGES 13-15
Brown Gaddy – Manteo, NC USA

AGES 16-17
Matthew Hancock - San Antonio, TX USA

RUNNER-UP
AGES 13-15
Brown Gaddy – Manteo, NC USA

* Denotes a tie
GET ON BOARD!

Tag ‘Em Today, Catch ‘Em Tomorrow!

For information on becoming a tagging partner, call (800) 438-8147 ext. 107 or 115, or email tag@billfish.org