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BlueWater

B O A T S & S P O R T S F I S H I N G

YELLOWTAIL KINGFISH
Catch the giants

DAYTIME SWORDFISH
Deadly *NEW* technique



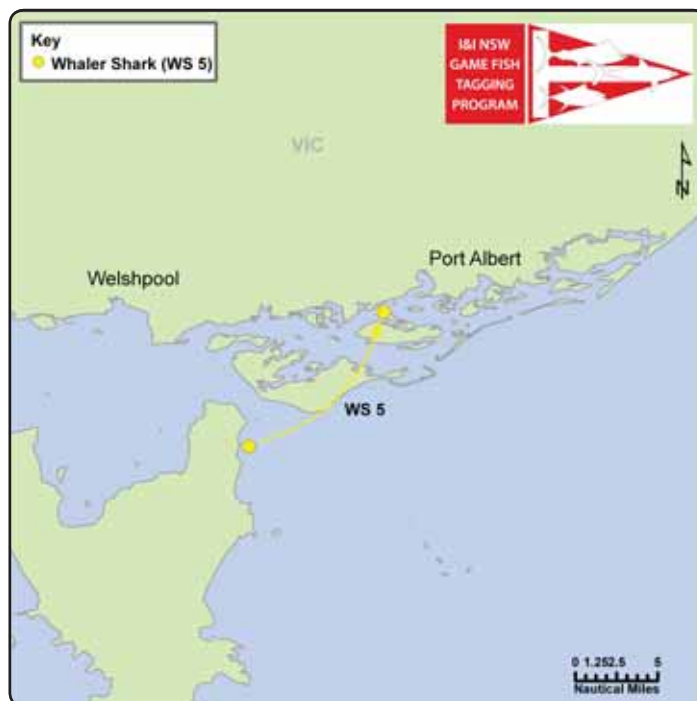
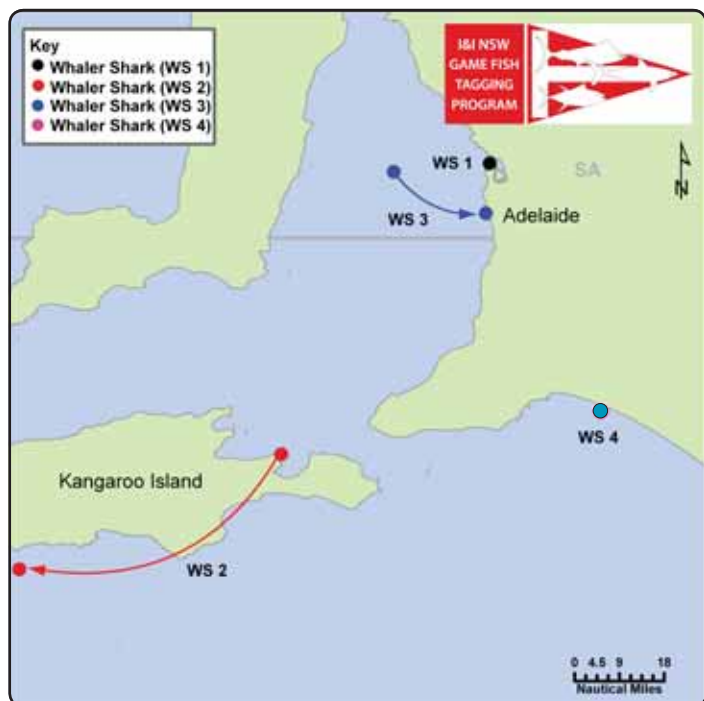
ISSUE
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\$12.95 NZ\$14.90

JIGGING
Masterclass



Whaler shark recaptures



WHALER sharks make up a significant proportion of the sharks tagged by the Industry & Investment NSW Game Fish Tagging Program. Many whaler sharks are similar in appearance and because of this are often mistakenly identified by anglers and the general public. Separating out blue sharks and tiger sharks (species that are obviously different), there have been over 10,700 whaler sharks tagged in the I&I NSW Program. This makes up approximately 38 per cent of all sharks tagged.

Most commonly, whaler sharks that are reported to the tagging program are recorded as bronze whalers. However, as discussed in detail by Dr Julian Pepperell in *BlueWater Issue 78*, there are many different species recorded

in Australian waters. Other similar species include dusky whaler, bull shark, spinner shark and silky shark.

Over the past six months the program has received reports of several different 'bronze whaler' sharks recaptured from the southern states of Victoria and South Australia. The heaviest of the five reported whaler sharks was a fish recaptured on November 7th, 2009, and reported in *BlueWater Issue 77*. The shark was recaptured by Adelaide GFC member Brad Smith, only 200m from where he first tagged it off St Kilda, near Adelaide, 1078 days earlier! The whaler shark had grown from an estimated 140kg to 185kg and has now been recognised as a state and Australian record bronze whaler for the 8kg line-class.

Of the four other sharks recaptured, two were landed by recreational anglers and two were taken by commercial nets. Three of the four sharks were caught from beaches, and all were juveniles, with the largest weighing 14kg (dressed). This same fish had travelled the furthest between release and recapture points, and had covered a straight-line distance of 48 nautical miles over a period of 193 days at liberty. Two sharks were at liberty for over 700 days, however neither had moved any great distance, with the furthest being recaptured a mere 18 nautical miles from its original release point.

Whaler sharks are known to be a generally slow-growing, long-lived species group and this is supported by the I&I NSW

tagging data. A whaler shark tagged off South Australia and recaptured off Victoria was at liberty for 11 years, 123 days. This is the second-longest time at liberty for any fish tagged under the program. This fish was recorded as a female and was estimated to only weigh approximately 80kg on recapture, despite being at liberty for many years.

The Industry & Investment NSW (I&I NSW) Program issues tags to individuals and fishing clubs and is funded by the NSW Recreational Fishing Trust. If you would like to participate in the program please phone (02) 9527 8411 or email: gamefish.tagging@industry.nsw.gov.au

- Phil Bolton
Fisheries Manager, Tagging
I&I NSW

Species	Tag Number	Rel. Date	Rel. Location	Est. Rel. Length/Weight	Recap. Date	Recap. Location	Recap. Length/Weight	Days at Liberty	Approx. Distance Moved (nm)	Map Ref
Whaler Shark	A424651	25/11/06	St Kilda SA	270cm/140kg	07/11/09	St Kilda SA	285cm/186kg	1078	5	WS 1
Whaler Shark	S227534	07/02/09	Kangaroo Island SA	130cm/15kg	19/08/09	Kangaroo Island SA	183cm/14kg (dressed)	193	48	WS 2
Whaler Shark	A453117	28/12/07	St Vincent Gulf SA	100cm/3kg	01/12/09	Henley Beach SA	99cm/7kg	704	18	WS 3
Whaler Shark	S234436	14/11/09	Goolwa Beach SA	109cm/8.5kg	16/12/09	Goolwa Beach SA	120cm/11kg	32	1	WS 4
Whaler Shark	S218490	17/11/07	Mount Hunter VIC	95cm/5.5kg	30/11/09	Port Albert VIC	104cm/8.1kg	744	11	WS 5