

Tagging update – black marlin recaptures

A FLURRY of recaptures from Queensland has recently been reported to the NSW DPI Game Fish Tagging Program (GFTP). The majority of these have been juvenile black marlin tagged at the winter grounds of Cape Bowling Green prior to their migration south with the East Australian Current.

Two of the four black marlin released at Cape Bowling Green were tagged on the same day in early September, one four days later and another approximately three weeks before. All four fish were found to have travelled a good distance south (400-640 nautical miles) over a period of three months.

This southward migration is a common trend with the fish over one year old (15-25 kg), where the fish follow the warm



This small black marlin, tagged aboard *Reel Chase* off Townsville, was recaptured over 400 nautical miles to the south three months later.

currents and generally spend much of their time within the continental shelf hunting down bait schools. The fish

tend to grow quickly and are likely to reach 30-45kg over the summer gamefishing season.

There was also a black marlin tagged in early December and a sailfish tagged in October at Mooloolaba, both recaptured at a similar location northeast of Mooloolaba. These fish were reported by Sunshine Coast GFC president Jeff Oates.

Remarkably, Jeff was the angler for both the release and the recapture of the marlin, the skipper for the recapture of the sailfish and was crewing on a boat that recaptured one of the Cape Bowling Green fish.

Sailfish, unlike black marlin, tend to remain in locations relatively close to their release point. The majority of all recaptures have been recorded in locations within 50 nautical miles of the original release. This was supported by the recent recapture, with a movement of only three

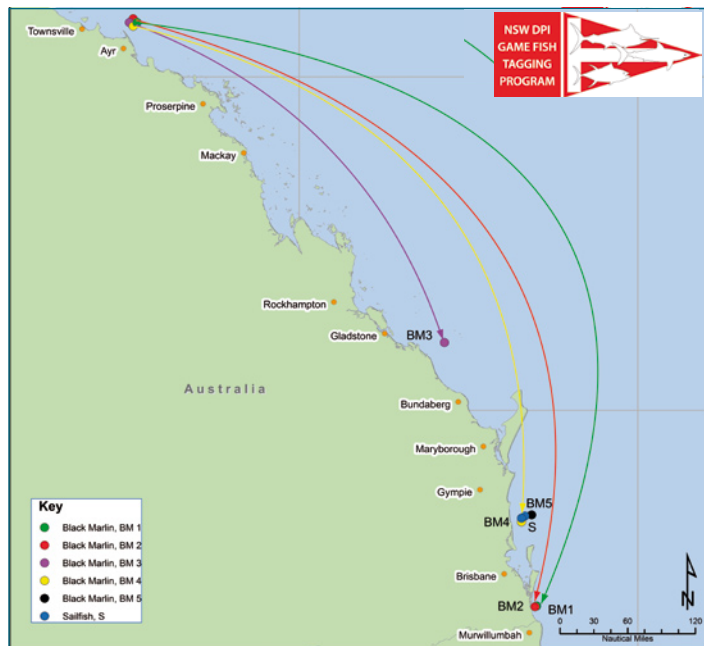
nautical miles recorded after a period of 82 days at liberty.

The program continues to issue tags free of charge to participants and is funded by the NSW Recreational Fishing Trust. It operates throughout Australia and across many Pacific islands.

If you would like to participate in the program, please contact the NSW GFTP: write to NSW DPI, PO Box 21, Cronulla, NSW 2230, Australia; email g a m e f i s h . t a g g i n g @ d p i . n s w . g o v . a u or phone (02) 9527 8411.

Please note: The recently developed tuna and billfish identification guides, along with tagging tips, are now available to purchase. Check out the details on the NSW DPI website: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/recreational

**– Phil Bolton
NSW DPI, Manager,
Recreational Fisheries**



SPECIES	TAG NUMBER	RELEASE DATE	RELEASE LOCATION	ESTIMATED RELEASE WEIGHT/LENGTH	RECAPTURE DATE	RECAPTURE LOCATION	RECAPTURE WEIGHT/LENGTH	DAYS AT LIBERTY	DISTANCE MOVED	MAP REF
Black marlin	B033370	17/08/08	Cape Bowling Green, QLD	12kg	09/12/08	Gold Coast Seaway (1km E)	30kg	114	635nm	BM1
Black marlin	B022803	11/09/08	Cape Bowling Green, QLD	10kg	02/01/09	Surfers Paradise Beach (3nm E)	50kg	113	640nm	BM2
Black marlin	B035332	07/09/08	Cape Bowling Green, QLD	15kg	29/12/08	1770 (20nm E), QLD	20kg	113	400nm	BM3
Black marlin	B019722	07/09/08	Cape Bowling Green, QLD	22kg	02/01/09	Mooloolaba (9nm NE)	20kg	117	545nm	BM4
Black marlin	B027154	02/12/08	Mooloolaba (18nm E), QLD	20kg	31/12/08	Mooloolaba (9nm NE)	22kg	29	9nm	BM5
Sailfish	B025931	08/10/08	Mooloolaba (12nm E)	30kg	29/12/08	Mooloolaba (9nm NE)	30kg	82	3nm	S