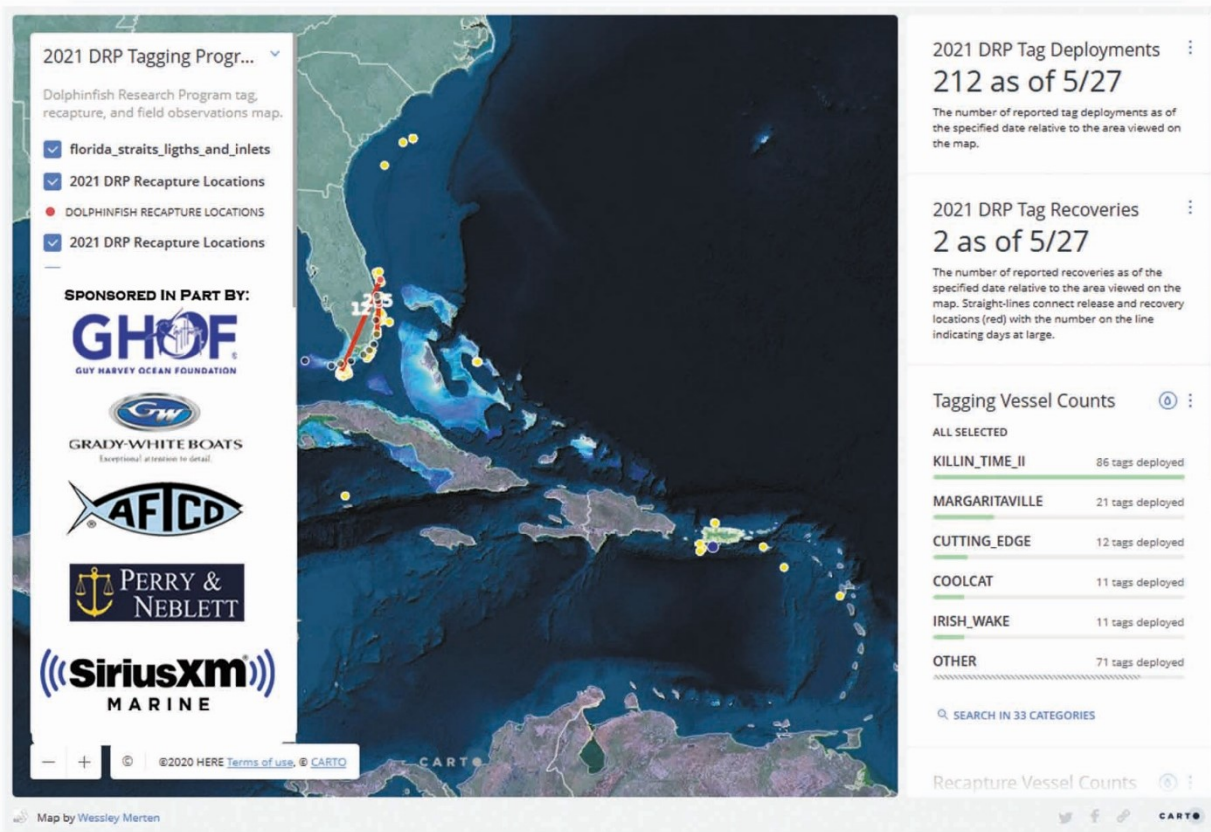


Dolphinfish Research Program™

Made possible by a grant from the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation

May 2021



This past week, we fished off Cudjoe Key and Fowey Light and the largest fish we encountered was a 27" bull. I have personally fished the Keys for the past 3 summers (around 20 outings) and the largest fish I encountered was a 35" male. Nearly every outing, or at least every trip, I embark on in places like Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands I encounter larger fish (up to 51" bulls). A recent seminar published by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council details potential reasons for lower abundance and smaller size class of dolphin in the Keys/Soflo over the past five years. While local depletion was raised in the seminar as well as changes in abundance due to changes in environmental correlates, recent research into reconstructed dolphin landings published by the Sea Around Us (SAU) suggest that dolphin are hit harder than we previously thought before fish even make it to the Lower or Upper Keys or South Florida. For example, 2016 was the last year of reconstructed dolphin landings for recreational fisheries in the Bahamas. The average reconstructed recreational catch for the Bahamas from 2010 to 2016 was estimated by the SAU at 480 metric tons; in 2016 five nations among the Greater Antilles combined to land 622 MT from recreational fisheries alone. When are we going to make the leap from local to regional depletion? We are still hearing of poor fishing for dolphin in much of SoFlo and the Keys as well as places like the Cayman's and Cozumel.

Reported and Received Tagging Progress from 4/29/2021-5/27/2021:

Don Gates (Killin' Time II) 75
Tim Heiser (Irish Wake) 11
Ed Kattel (Cool Cat) 8
Frank Betz (Leviathan) 4
David Neblett (Hit That!) 2
Robert Malloy (Reel Thunder) 2
Eddie Yarbrough (Grady White) 2
Jeremias Luna (Sweet Marlin) 1

Jay Thompson (Margaritaville) 26
Rick and Joe Persson (Swamphopper) 10
Robert Pustizzi (Cutting Edge) 8
Mario Emilio (Catch and Release) 4
Josh Flynn (Bad Beason) 2
Jon Reynolds (Drop Back) 2
Jim and Michelle Henrichson (Isabella) 1
Jackson Davis (Branch Office) 1

Year to 5/27/2021 for Reported Releases:
212 tagged & released for conservation and science by 31 different vessels

2 Recaptures to date in 2021 1 verified 0 PSAT movements
3 PSAT Deployments 0 Acoustic Tag
298 Kits Distributed

Reported Recaptures Since 4/29/2021

Matthew Sherman reported a Killin' Time II tagged fish

CCA Florida STAR Tags Deployed!



This past week, we deployed 22 **Coastal Conservation Association of Florida (CCA) STAR** tags, fishing with **Captain Don Gates** aboard his vessel *Killin' Time II*, off the Lower Keys, and **Captain Dave Neblett** aboard his vessel *Hit That!*, off Miami. The **CCA STAR tags** offer an opportunity for any Florida angler fishing offshore the chance to win big this summer. \$10,000 cash will be awarded to the first **CCA member** who is [registered](#) for **STAR** who catches and reports one of the tagged dolphin we released this past week. The tournament starts tomorrow!

In the summer-long **STAR** tournament, there are two ways for anglers to win:

*Any angler who catches a **STAR** tagged dolphin and submits their catch information will win a **STAR** long-sleeve shirt.

*\$10,000 cash will be awarded to the first **CCA** member who is registered for **STAR** who catches and reports one of the eligible tagged dolphin. Register for [STAR here](#).

Outside of the dolphin categories, there are numerous ways for Florida anglers to win by registering this summer in the **STAR** competition. **STAR** is a great way to make your fishing more rewarding while supporting the conservation of our fisheries. The **DRP** is proud to partner with **CCA FL STAR** on such a unique endeavor that combines conservation, data collection and education. In addition to participating in the **STAR** competition, sign up to participate in the **DRP** to tag and release small dolphin at any time during the year in order to help conserve one of western central Atlantic's most important offshore fish species. Request a tagging kit at dolphintagging.com/tags.

SiriusXM Marine Trial and Award Offer



2-Month Weather Trial
or 1-Month Fish Mapping Trial
+ \$100 Rebate from SiriusXM
Offer Details at siriusxm.com/marineoffers



Dolphinfish Research Program anglers get a two month trial of up-to-date marine weather information and forecasts directly on your multi-function display, plus **SiriusXM** entertainment. Because the service is delivered by satellite, you will have up-to-date situational awareness for up to 200 miles from the contiguous US. [Start your trial](#) and benefit from the following:

- Avoid adverse conditions with Weather Radar, Lightning, Storm Tracking, and Alerts
- Access Local and Marine Zone Forecasts and Weather Map with Isobars/Pressure
- Anticipate conditions with Wind Speed & Direction and Wave Height

- Locate Fish Faster with Less Fuel Using Sea Surface Temperature
- Access over 140 channels of SiriusXM entertainment

Plus, we are excited to announce the top tagging boat in June will be awarded 12 months of **SiriusXM All Access entertainment service** — a \$264 value! Request tags [here](#) or click the image below and submit all your tagging data by June 30th to qualify for the June award.



Dolphinfish Research Program Tagging Kit Request



To sign up to register to receive a tagging kit from the **Dolphinfish Research Program (DRP)** click the image. Thanks!

Dolphin/Wahoo FMP Update



Recently, scientists from NOAA's Southeast Fisheries Science Center provided a seminar that contained information on roles that dolphin and wahoo play in fisheries across the region, potential explanations for the drastic change in dolphin abundance in South Florida over the past five years, economic factors in the commercial and for-hire fishery, and information related to the scope of expanding recreational effort. This seminar was part of the **South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (SAFMC) Seminar Series**. The SAFMC seminar series features presentations on scientific studies relevant to fisheries in federal waters of the South Atlantic. [Click here](#) to watch the seminar. [Click here](#) to register for the webinar to listen to the Council's June 16th meeting regarding pending changes to the U.S. East Coast Dolphin/Wahoo fishery management plan.

Shop to Support Our Tagging Program!



Dolphinfish Research Program Newsletter May 2021

Support Ocean Conservation and Research



We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our tagging program to fund our 2021 tagging effort. With your support, we were able to start 2021 strong and, to date, we have already shipped

out 298 tagging kits! Our goal is to distribute 400 kits and 5,000 tags in 2021 and we are close to achieving this goal but we need your support to do so. We need your support to help us increase our tagging kit and education supplies to



meet the growing demand for tagging kits. Our tagging program is at the forefront of educating anglers, advancing discussions and actions surrounding conservation of the species, and



gathering additional data to help inform data-driven decision making at the state, federal, and international levels. Help the DRP expand in 2021. Click the icons below to shop or donate to support the DRP.

[Click to Shop](#)

[Click to Donate](#)

To Donate by Check [click here](#), Make Checks out to:

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Mail to:
Wessley Merten
Dolphinfish Research Program
Beyond Our Shores, Inc.
PO BOX 3506
Newport, RI, 02840
Email: wess@beyonourshores.org



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Tim Heiser, FL
Barry Lasher, FL
Frank Bracciale, FL
Ron Jones, FL
TJ Williford, AL
Amanda Baryshyan, MA
Angela Gonder, FL

New financial supporters since the last newsletter. Thank you!!

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