



Yellowtail Kingfish Tagging Procedure

The Programme

This gamefish tagging programme is a cooperative project between the Ministry of Fisheries, the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council, its affiliated clubs and anglers, commercial fishers and the current fisheries research provider who is Blue Water Marine Research Ltd.

There have been about 16,000 kingfish tagged and released in New Zealand since the programme started in 1975. Most of these have been released in east Northland and the Bay of Plenty in the last 20 years. There have been 1,200 recaptures reported, a recapture rate of 7.5%.

Cooperative tagging programmes provide information on the size and distribution of fish released by recreational fishers. Recaptures provide information on distance and direction of movement, time at liberty, and in some circumstances growth rates of the fish involved.

Where to get tags

- ⊕ Tags are available from your local fishing club or the NZ Sport Fishing Council at cost. For the stainless steel date tags this is \$3.00 each.
- ⊕ Tag applicator tips are available from some sports shops or on line <http://www.fish-crazy.com/index.cfm?pageid=98>

Which fish to tag

- ⊕ Only kingfish over the legal size of 75 cm should be tagged but would like to see some fish across the whole size range of kingfish tagged over that size.
- ⊕ The best fish to tag are ones that are hooked in mouth or lip, where you can remove the hook.

Tagging procedure

- ⊕ Check the number on the tag and the card are the same.
- ⊕ Place the tag in the slot of the applicator and use rubber band to hold the tag in place.
- ⊕ To get the best information from tagging we recommend measuring kingfish on a measuring board (nose to fork of the tail) and recording this on the tag card.

- ⊕ The tag should be placed tag high on the back about half way along and angled back at 45° so that it will stream with the flow of water when swimming (see diagram).
- ⊕ Tags placed in the side of the fish get badly abraded by the fish rubbing on the seabed.
- ⊕ These tags hold best when inserted about 40 mm and with the stainless steel dart pointing forward.
- ⊕ Keep the tag applicator clean to prevent infection in the tag wound.

Releasing your fish

- ⊕ Estimate the weight of your kingfish and take photos if you like.
- ⊕ It is best to remove the hook but if this is difficult it is less stressful for fish and crew to cut the trace close to the hook and note this on the tag card.
- ⊕ Record the date, location (Lat and Long is useful), and other details on the tag report card.
- ⊕ Fill the tag card out immediately after the fish has been released. Don't leave it till later.

You must return your tag card

- ⊕ It is vital that the tag report card is handed into your fishing club or posted to the **Ministry of Fisheries, PO Box 19747, Auckland 1746, New Zealand.**
- ⊕ There is nothing more frustrating than getting a really interesting recapture of a tag that has obviously been out for a while and not having the tag card because someone didn't bother to hand it in. We all miss out gathering important information and you miss out on hearing about your fish. Please don't forget.

Lets make this a success. Do it well and help provide a glimpse into the lives of these great sport fish.

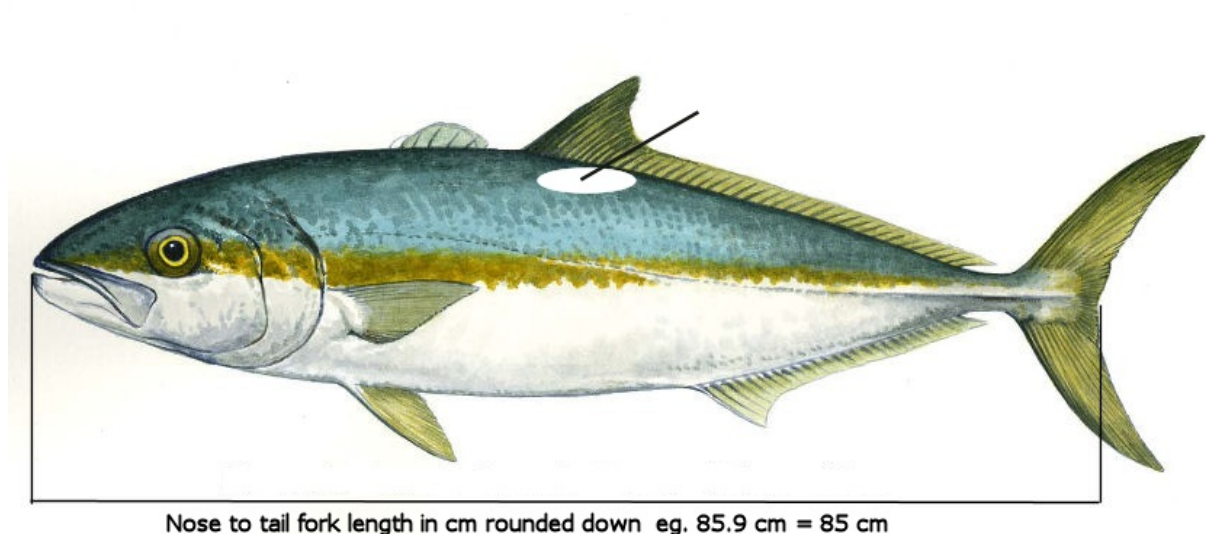


Figure 1: Length of kingfish nose to tail fork in cm rounded down and tagging location.