

Yellowtail Kingfish Report 2018

Results from Bay of Islands Yellowtail Tournament catch sampling

In 2017 there were 152 yellowtail kingfish measured at the BOI International Yellowtail Tournament. This is the most data collected since 2012. The weather conditions were very good and, for once, the only windy day was a lay day.

The average length of kingfish in 2017 was 98.6 cm, 2 cm larger than 2016 and a little more than in 2015. The longest and heaviest fish was 125 cm and 26.25 kg caught on Florence Nightingale.

In 2017 there was a peak in lengths at 100 cm (red line) and it appears the peak in the plot from 2016 (blue line) around 102 to 103 cm has moved to 108 or 110 cm (Figure 1). While this could be growth it is also likely that some larger fish were in on the reefs during the Tournament last year.

There were more fish in the 110 to 115 cm length range than in the previous three years. Most of these fish weighed between 15 & 20 kg.

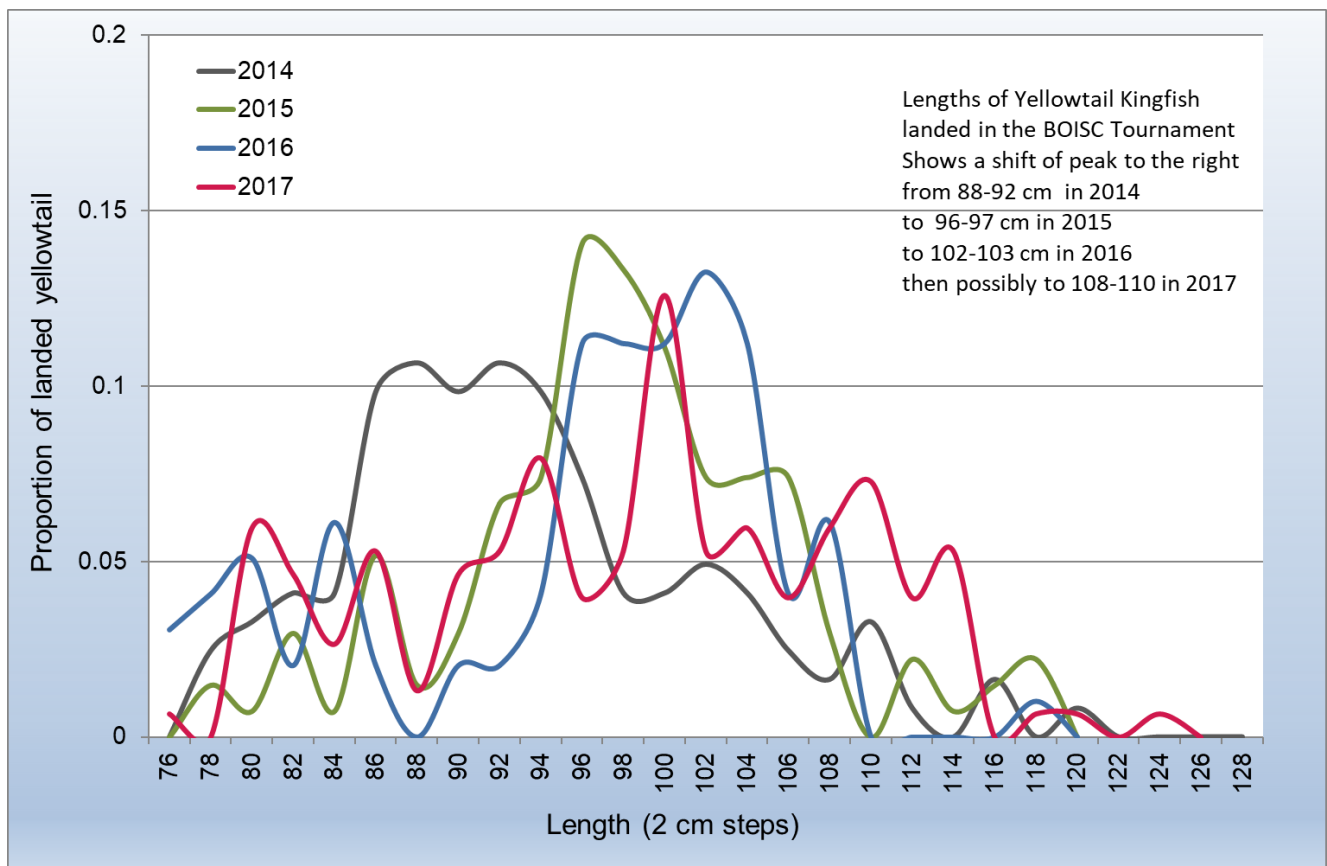
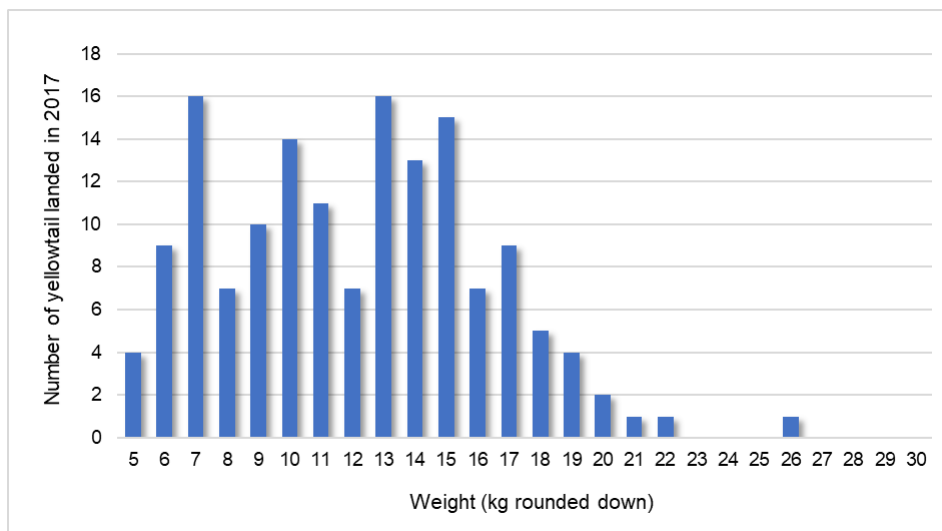


Figure 1. The length distribution of yellowtail kingfish in the BOI International Yellowtail Tournament by year. Does not include fish tagged and released.

There was a broad distribution of fish weights from the 2017 Yellowtail Tournament. Most were between 6 kg and 17 kg with an overall average weight of 12.5 kg. There were 5 fish over 20 kg. This is the most in a year since 2013, which had 11 fish over 20 kg plus one at 32.7 kg.



The weight vs length plot of the data collected in 2017 shows that there is natural variation in the shape and condition of yellowtail at the same length. This is why fish length is a better measure of year on year growth than weight alone.

The variability in weight for fish of similar length is greater for larger fish.

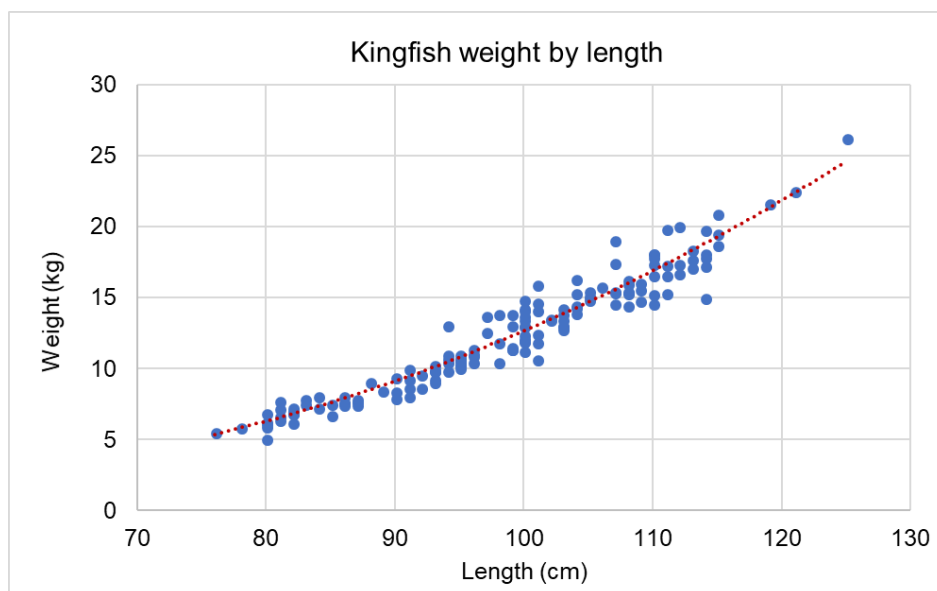


Figure 2: The number of weighed yellowtail kingfish by kilo (top) and the length weight distribution (bottom) measured in 2017 during the Bay of Islands International Yellowtail Tournament.

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The on-going collection of kingfish lengths is supported by the Bay of Islands Swordfish Club, New Zealand Sport Fishing Council, and LegaSea to enable recreational fishers to gather useful information to help monitor kingfish stocks.

Become a LegaSea Legend now and help maintain our world class yellowtail kingfish fishery www.legasea.co.nz/legend

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