

GAME TAG



Gamefish Tagging Update 2025

Thanks to all the clubs and individuals who have sent in tag cards this season. If you still have tag cards for released gamefish please send them to:

Fisheries New Zealand
Gamefish Tagging
PO Box 53030, Auckland 2150

Or Use the online form at
www.fishtagnz.co.nz/record-tag-release/

Striped marlin were plentiful for a time this summer, particularly off the west coast of the North Island and record numbers were seen or caught around the South Island.

Tagged Billfish Recaptures

There have been **seven tagged striped marlin recaptured** so far this season and six of these were caught out west. This included a striped marlin tagged off Mercury Islands in February 2024 which returned to New Zealand this season and headed down the west coast. It was recaptured in February 2025 off Gannet Is, Kawhia, after 355 days at liberty.

Two striped marlin tagged off Raglan in February were both recaptured within a few days, an 80 kg fish was caught 5 days later in the same area and a 70 kg fish was recaptured 4 days later off Waitara, 74 nmiles south.

A 90 kg striped marlin tagged on 24 January off Kawhia moved 40 nmiles north to Muriwai in 10 days, while another tagged off Muriwai on 12 February went the other way and was recaptured off Raglan, 13 days later. This fish was estimated to be 100 kg and was released again with a new tag.

Another striped marlin tagged off Kawhia was recaptured in March, 155 nmiles north, out from Hokianga after 32 days at liberty. This 90 kg fish was re-released.

The sole recapture from the east coast was tagged in January off Lottin Point and recaptured 260 nmiles north-west off Whangaroa 36 days later. This 80 kg fish was retagged and released.

A **broadbill swordfish** tagged on 6 April 2023 at the 400-metre hole, east of the Poor Knights Islands, was recaptured at the same location on the 22 March 2025. Caught and tagged after a 60-minute fight this fish was estimated at 100kg on release and weighed 120kg on recapture. This is the third occasion a tagged swordfish has been recaptured in a subsequent season, back at its release location. Generally, swordfish of this size travel to subtropical breeding grounds in spring.

Tagged Yellowfin Recaptures

There were good numbers of yellowfin tuna caught this season with many small fish tagged and released. There have been **five tagged yellowfin recaptured** so far this season all on the North Island east coast.



Two yellowfin tuna tagged in December 2024 and January 2025 off the Bay of Islands were both recaptured in the Bay of Plenty, 37 and 39 days later, respectively.

One measured 116 cm and weighed 24 kg, while the other was 125 cm long and estimated to weigh between 25 and 30 kg.

A **yellowfin** tagged off Great Mercury Island in December moved south and was recaptured north of White Island 23 days later. It was also estimated to weight 25 to 30 kg.

There was a quick turn around for one small **yellowfin** tagged near Lottin Point and recaptured nearby, 9 days later.

Another small **yellowfin** was reported recaptured off Gisborne on 27 March 2025. The tag was sold by the Gisborne Tatapouri Sport Fishing Club a few years ago but no release details are available at this time.

Tagged Kingfish Recaptures

Two **yellowtail kingfish** tagged from the vessel *Pursuit* have been recaptured in the White Island area. The first in November 2024 had been at liberty for almost 6 years, measuring 114 cm on release, and 125 cm and about 24 kg on recapture. The second, a 15 kg kingfish had been at liberty for 6 years 5 months. It measured 104 cm on release and was estimated at 110 cm on recapture.

A spear fisherman caught a tagged **kingfish** at the end of December 2024 off Helena Bay, Northland. It measured 90 cm and weighed 11 kg but no release details are available at this time.

If you tag a gamefish and have not handed the tag card to your fishing club, you can enter release details online at fishtagnz.co.nz
There is also a form on this website for entering recaptures.

John@bluewatermarine.co.nz

