

Cooperative Science Services, LLC Dolphinfish Research Program

December 2013



and innovative educational programs to encourage conservation and best management practices for sustainable marine environments.” See more at:

<http://www.guyharvey.com/our-mission/#sthash.EqGfaRdL.dpuf>.

One of the many ventures used by the foundation to raise money for research and conservation is to partner with state lottery programs. They have been involved with the Florida lottery program and in 2013 began working with the South Carolina Educational Lottery. A portion of the price from every ticket sold goes to the Ocean Foundation to fund research and conservation in that state.

It was from these proceeds that Dr. Harvey and the Board of the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, were able to provide a grant to the DRP for the purchase of five pop-off archival satellite tags and the needed satellite time. These high-tech instruments will be placed on dolphinfish off the South Carolina coast to begin tracking the individual routes they take during their migration. It is hoped that some of the fish will be tracked for as long as nine months.

In his presentation, Dr. Harvey noted that dolphinfish are one of the most important species to the offshore recreational fisheries of the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf coasts and that the Dolphinfish Research Program is the leading study on this important game fish. He also noted that it is important for research programs to involve the public as much as possible so as to make them part of ocean conservation.



Guy Harvey Supports Dolphin Research



Steven Stock, president of Guy Harvey, Inc. (left) and Dr. Guy Harvey (right) present a check for \$26,700 to Don Hammond (center), director of the Dolphinfish Research Program, for the purchase and operation of archival satellite tags for study of dolphinfish off South Carolina. Photo by H. Armstrong, SC Lottery.

An Ocean Full of Surface Fish Attractors

Every fisherman in pursuit of dolphin knows the excitement of finding a large floating object in blue water. Whether it is Sargassum, a collection of wooden flotsam or even a shipping container, anglers know it could be holding a large school of dolphin. Just the sight of such an object is enough to send a boat’s crew into a mad scramble for spinning rods and pitch baits.

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People all over the world recognize the name Guy Harvey as that of a renowned artist, but what most don’t know is that he holds a PhD degree in marine fisheries. He is an active research scientist studying many of the ocean’s apex predators as well as physical oceanography and is dedicated to the conservation of the ocean’s environment and animals that live in it.

Dr. Harvey is one who believes in giving back and one of the ways he does this is through the **Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation**. According to their mission statement, “The Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation funds inspired scientific research

Dolphinfish Research Newsletter

December 2013

Page 2.



Anchored oil tankers present as much as six acres of floating structure to attract dolphin. Hussein Azab fights one of the many dolphin he and his fishing buddies caught around anchored ships during a trip out of Fujairah, Oman, in the Gulf of Oman. Photo provided.

How exciting would it be to have six-acre size floating fish attractors every mile or two? This could be likened to the dolphin fisherman's paradise or the fly fisherman's dream come true. It would certainly cut down on the fuel bill, while providing the phenomenally exciting sport of sight-fishing for dolphin.



This bull dolphin from the Indian Ocean appears identical to the dolphinfish found along the U.S. Atlantic coast, but genetically it likely differs slightly from the North Atlantic stock. Note the oil tankers at anchor in the background. Photo provided.

Dolphin Tagging Progress, November 25, 2013.

Zone	Area	Southern Limit	Northern Limit	Number Tagged
1	Bahamas	22° N	28° N	16
2	FL Straits	23° N	25° N	622
3	South Florida	25° N	27° N	363
4	Central Florida	27° N	30° N	36
5	North FL & GA	30° N	32° N	18
6	Southern SC	32° N	33° N	77
7	N. SC - S. NC	33° N	35° N	42
8	Northern NC	35° N	36.5° N	26
9	Virginia	36.5° N	38° N	0
10	N. Mid-Atlantic	38° N		13
11	Gulf of Mexico			45
12	W Central Atlantic			3
13	Caribbean Sea			36
	Total			1,297

Just such a place exists in the Indian Ocean. It is the Gulf of Oman, according to Hussein Azab of Oman. In this area off Oman, oil tankers ride their anchor waiting their turn to load oil bound for ports all over the world. While sitting at anchor these ships serve as giant fish aggregating devices. The local fishermen have quickly learned of the great fishing opportunity these mobile reefs can provide. Anglers move from one ship to the next, looking for schools of dolphin, lurking around the ships.

This different style of fishing for dolphin capitalizes on the dolphin's instinct to congregate under floating objects. In most areas fishermen have to rely on chance to find floating structure or create their own floating fish attractors, but off Oman mega-size floating reefs are abundant. This is just another example of how dolphin fishing techniques vary from region to region, adapting to the conditions that exist.

If you have fished for dolphin in other regions of the world outside the U.S. that employ different techniques from those commonly used in the states, I would like to hear about your experiences. Please email me with your stories.

Big Game Fishing Journal Features DRP



Karen Wall, editor of the *Big Game Fishing Journal* based in Forked River, New Jersey, takes an in-depth look at the findings of the Dolphinfish Research Program in the November/December 2013 issue of the magazine. Her feature article talks about the amazing facets of their life history and the startling findings of how fast and how far these important game fish travel.

Karen does a good job in covering the facts about this amazing fish and the success of the DRP in unraveling the mysteries of its movements. Pick up a copy. It is well worth the read.

The Dolphinfish Research Program needs your financial support. No federal funds support this important research. This program exists because of private donations.

Dolphin Research Newsletter

December 2013

Page 3.

Send in Your Tag Cards

2013 is quickly coming to a close. It is time for all tagging partners to check their boats or where they keep their tagging equipment for any tag cards that may have been used but overlooked and not sent in. Tag cards must be received by January 8, 2014, to count toward the 2013 year-end awards.

Participation has been good in 2013, with more than 160 anglers fishing on 93 different boats providing fish for tagging. A total of 1,294 dolphins have been tagged in the Atlantic, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico with an addition 10 fish in the eastern Pacific off Mexico.

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Your donations to the Dolphin Study are Fully Tax-Deductible

Make checks out to:
HH Reef Foundation/Dolphin Study
Mail checks to the address below.

For More Information, Contact

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Cooperative Science Services, LLC

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