

U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Tiburon Sport Fisheries Marine Laboratory

COOPERATIVE MARINE GAME FISH TAGGING PROGRAM

Pacific Area

NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
International Game Fish Association
Department of Fisheries - Mexico

February 1971

To all participants:

Last year was the all-time high year for numbers of game fish tagged in the Pacific by the Cooperative Marine Game Fish Tagging Program (see Figure 1). A total of 2,040 fish was tagged, an increase of 769 fish over last year, which marked the low point in a two-year decline from the previous peak year of 1967 when 1,829 fish were tagged. Record numbers of all major big game species were tagged, except striped marlin. The numbers of striped marlin tagged did not attain the tagging level of the peak year of 1967 despite the increased overall interest in tagging. This suggests a possible lower abundance of striped marlin in the marine game fishing areas. There was an increasing interest in tagging small fish.

Last year also produced a record number of recaptured fish, mostly striped marlin and roosterfish. Twenty-five tags were returned--12 from striped marlin, 10 from roosterfish, and one each from black marlin, sailfish, and dolphin.

The roosterfish returns showed local movements of only a few miles. The sailfish and dolphin were among those returns for which tagging cards have not been returned. The black marlin was recaptured in the Coral Sea after a full year at large only a short distance north of where it was tagged off Cairns, Queensland, Australia. Eight of the striped marlin returns had cards, and their movements are shown in the lower panel of Figure 2. From the Cape region the three eastward movements were made in the late winter and early spring; the three southward to southwestward movements were made in the summer, and the northwestward movement to the Magdalena Bay region was made in the early fall. The fish from Mazatlan was out only five days in January. The upper panel of Figure 2. shows the movements of striped marlin to date that were greater than 500 miles.

For eight of these recaptured fish (30%) we have not received the tagging cards and, therefore, have no idea where or when the fish were tagged. To date we have a total of 19 returns without cards. Since only about one in a hundred fish is ever recaptured, these 19 recaptures without cards must represent about

1,900 outstanding cards. We, therefore, urge all of you to please look around for tagging cards you forgot to mail and send them in as soon as possible. Nineteen Conservation Certificates await the lucky cardholders. Nearly a year's worth of results will be added just by the return of these cards.

Last November, the Thomas and Margaret Gardiner Foundation began an annual tagging contest for hotels and their boat captains (Mexican Nationals only) in the Cape region of Baja California. This contest has the full support and cooperation of the Cooperative Game Fish Tagging Program and Department of Tourism - Mexico. We hope that this contest will increase the number of tagged fish by providing a monetary award for the Mexican fishing captains. First awards will be made in June 1971.

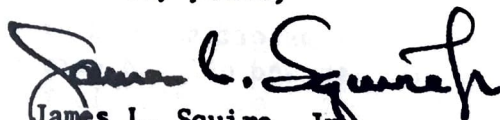
So far most of the billfish have been tagged in the Cape region of Baja California and at Mazatlan. We hope in the future that anglers in other areas such as Guaymas, Puerto Vallarta, Acapulco, Panama, Ecuador, Tahiti, and southern California will accept the challenge and increase the numbers of fish tagged in these locations. The recent activity at Cairns, Australia has already produced results and is greatly appreciated.

For the coming year we are planning to convert to a new metal-barbed tag (H-Tag) after using up the plastic ones (FM-67). These tags have proved as good as the plastic tags and in several ways will be simpler to handle. In the future we are also planning to emphasize the tagging of yellowtail in the Gulf of California. The new tag can be used for yellowtail as well as for billfish.

Thanks to all of you who helped make this a record year.

GOOD LUCK AND GOOD FISHING!

Sincerely yours,


James L. Squire, Jr.
Acting Director

NOTE--Please fill out the attached Angler Report and return it in the self-addressed envelope. The purpose of this report is to obtain an annual measure of fishing (catch compared to effort) for striped marlin and Pacific sailfish and other billfish species in the Pacific. Data currently available from resorts concerning the number of anglers and their catch are difficult, and in most cases impossible, to obtain. Conservation research requires that an accurate measure of catch and effort (catch per angler day) be obtained. We do get these data for the foreign longline fishery, however, we lack reliable continuing data for the sport fishery. In the 1970 tagging report (Feb. 1970) we requested the same information for year 1969 from the 1,560 anglers tagging billfish and other species, and we appreciated your response. This continuing project to obtain catch data will give us reliable information for use in conservation negotiations. Please return the report form as soon as possible.

BILLFISH RECOVERY DATA

(Information received at the Tiburon Sport Fisheries Marine Laboratory in 1970)

STRIPED MARLIN

TAGGED

RECOVERED

Location/Date	Tagger	Date	Location	Recaptured by:	Distance traveled	Days at large
Mazatlan 1/13/70	Bill Heimpel Mazatlan, Mexico	1/18/70	Lat. 22°40'N Long. 106°31'W	Capt. Hiroyuki Miki Chokyu Maru #12	32 nm S	5
Gordo Bank, B.C. 3/1/70	John O'Hara Smith Orange Park, Florida	3/21/70	Lat. 22°45'N Long. 107°25'W	Capt. Yoshimi Miki Keifuku Maru #7	120 nm E	20
Gordo Bank, B.C. 2/5/70	Randy Hodgden San Diego, Calif.	2/25/70	Lat. 22°38'N Long. 107°47'W	Japanese Fisherman Fukuju Maru #18	98 nm E	20
Gordo Bank, B.C. 3/5/70	Dr. Robert S. Fadem San Diego, Calif.	5/18/70	Lat. 23°45'N Long. 108°59'W	Capt. Yoshimi Miki Keifuku Maru #7	53 nm NNW	74
Rancho Buena Vista 5/28/70	Charles M. Errega Chula Vista, Calif.	7/3/70	Lat. 20°23'N Long. 108°29'W	Capt. Akio Fukuda Fukuju Maru #18	195 nm S	36
Golden Gate Bank 1/22/70	Bill Ashby Newport Beach, Calif.	3/20/70	Off Mazatlan	Tina Mary Schiltz Dubuque, Iowa	210 nm E	57
(Tag issued to D. L. Stone)	Tagger unknown Tag No. 06051	8/14/70	Lat. 24°08'N Long. 109°18'W	Capt. Setsuo Itoh Shoei Maru #12	--	--
(Tag issued to Rancho Buena Vista)	Tagger unknown Tag No. 28107	4/24/70	Lat. 21°50'N Long. 110°30'W	Capt. Yoshio Matsueda Kyowa Maru #2	--	--
Rancho Buena Vista 6/16/70	Dr. Wm. B. Marcusson Oak Park, Illinois	8/4/70	Lat. 22°10'N Long. 110°43'W	Capt. Takao Torii Asuma Maru #31	120 nm SW	49
Rancho Buena Vista 5/26/70	Guy Robinson San Leandro, Calif.	10/8/70	Lat. 22°50'N Long. 109°00'W	Capt. Seigo Kawaguchi Chokyu Maru #15	60 nm S	135

STRIPED MARLINTAGGEDRECOVERED

Location/Date	Tagger	Date	Location	Recaptured by:	Distance traveled	Days at large
Gordo Bank, B.C. 2/9/70	Robert E. von Otto Washington, D.C.	9/22/70	Lat. 24°10'N Long. 111°50'W	Capt. Seigo Kawaguchi Chokyu Maru #15	95 nm NW	225
(Tag issued to Rancho Buena Vista)	Tagger unknown Tag No. 11703	10/8/70	Lat. 23°35'N Long. 107°40'W	Capt. Makoto Shimazu Shinko Maru	--	--
<u>BLACK MARLIN</u>						
Hope Reef, Australia 11/2/69	Bob Dyer Sydney, Australia	10/25/70	Lat. 15°30'S Long. 145°55'E	Japanese Fisherman Konpira Maru #28	125 nm	364
<u>SAILFISH</u>						
(Tag issued to M/V Conquistador)	Tagger unknown Tag No. 25895	4/4/70	Gordo Bank Baja California	Jim Francis Seal Beach, Calif.	--	--

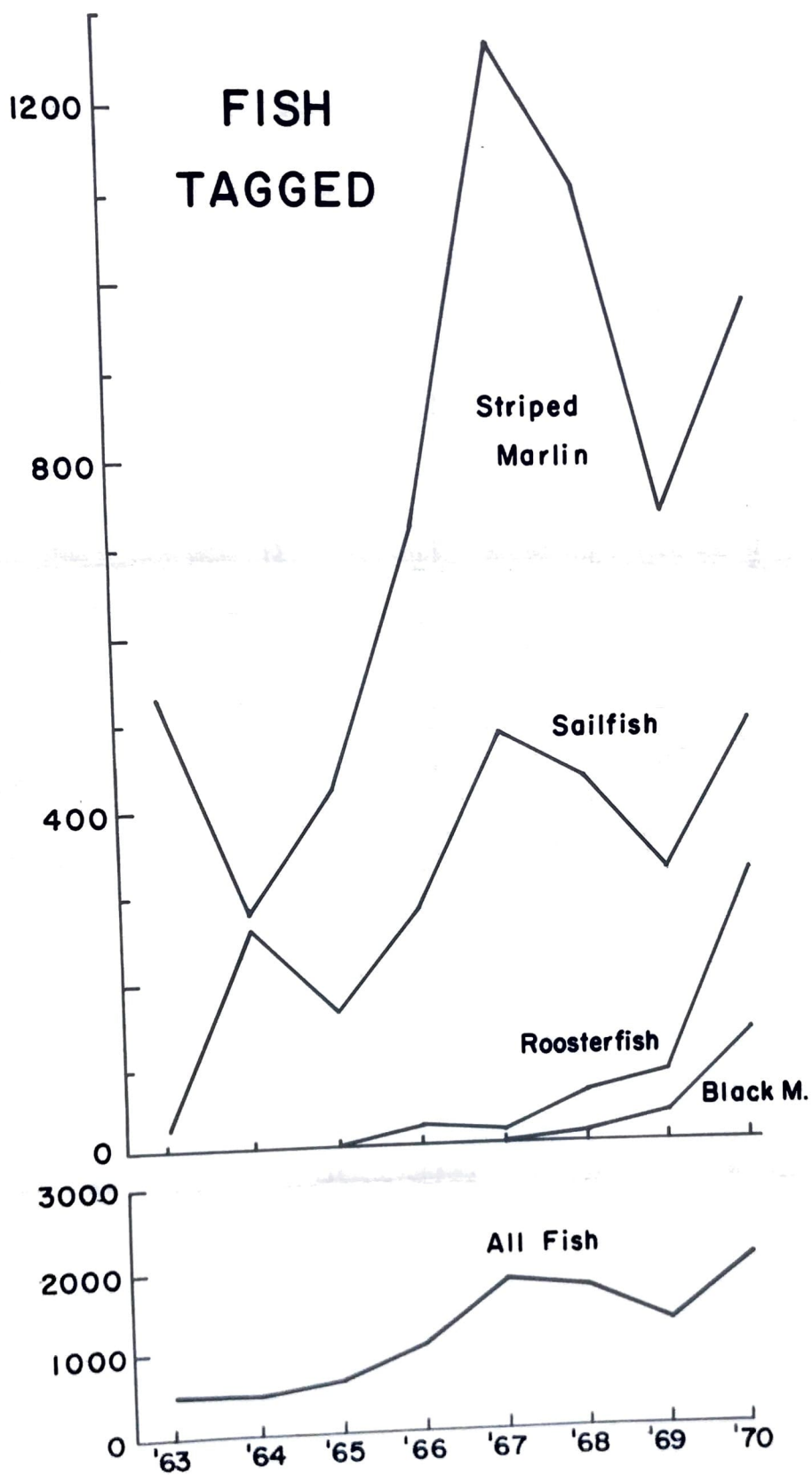


Figure 1.

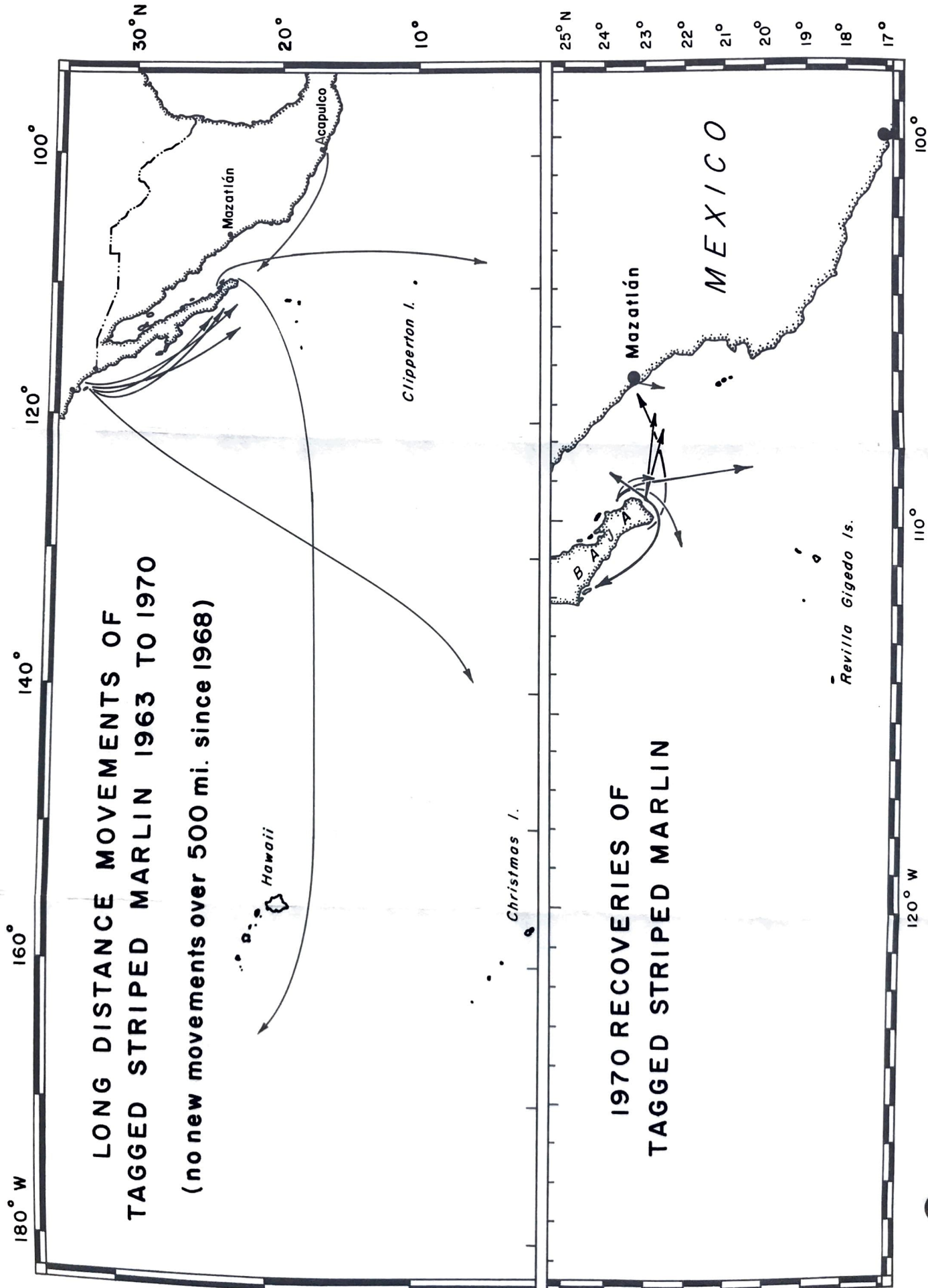


Figure 2

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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