



2008 Review

Any Tarpon, Anywhere, Any Size!

DNA – the new way to tag tarpon

Angler participation in collecting tarpon DNA samples throughout Florida is essential to the success of this valuable project. In 2008, we had a fantastic year. Angler participation increased and the number of samples returned increased 3.1 times as compared to 2006.

Rementer

Our Goals for 2009:
 Increase participation from East Coast and Florida Keys anglers

Collect 2,500 samples



2008 Tournament Participants

The following tournaments improved our sample collections rate by allowing presentation of our program at tournament events, distributing sampling kits directly to anglers and/or requiring the collection of DNA samples as a condition of entering fish in their competitions.

14th Outback Steakhouse Golden Fly Tarpon Tournament, *Islamorada*

22nd Faro Blanco Invitational Tarpon Tournament, *Indigo Reef*

25th Annual Crosthwait Tournament, *Bradenton*

32nd Ladies Tarpon Tournament, *Marathon*

32nd Women's Spring Fly Tarpon Tournament, *Islamorada*

42nd Annual International Tarpon Tournament, *Marathon*

APG Electric Tournament, *Clearwater*

Don Hawley Tarpon Fly Tournament, *Islamorada*

Ed Alber Tarpon Rodeo, *Tierra Verde*

Firefighters Challenge, *Tierra Verde*

Gold Cup Invitational Tarpon Fly Tournament, *Islamorada*

Howl at the Moon Invitational Tarpon Tournament, *Boca Grande*

Mike Alstott Family Tournament, *St. Petersburg*

Professional Tarpon Tournament Series, *Boca Grande*

Redbone Sunrise/Sunset Tarpon Tournament, *Marathon*

Sarasota All Release Tarpon Tournament, *Sarasota*

Sarasota Slam Challenge, *Sarasota*

Silver King Classic Tarpon Tournament, *Ft. Myers Beach*

Slaw Dawg Invitational, *Anna Maria*

Suncoast Tarpon Roundup, *St. Petersburg*

The Old Man of the Sea Tarpon Classic, *St. Petersburg*

TP Lucerne Gossman Memorial Tournament, *Everglades National Park*

Who takes the credit?

You do! Anglers who take a genetic sample from their tarpon may voluntarily fill out the contact information on the back of each data slip. We use this contact information to mail you updates, to enter you into annual raffle drawings, to tally total samples collected, to contact you if we have a question regarding your sample, or if we need to contact you because you had a recaptured tarpon.

There have been questions about what to do if you are a guide and your client catches the tarpon. We ask that the guide please fill out the data slip using his/her contact information. You may include the name of your client who caught the tarpon if you wish to keep them up-to-date on potential recaptures. However, guides are more likely to be Florida residents and are usually easier to find if we have a question about the sample, but both names (captain and client) are kept in the database (see privacy policy article). Captains can inform their customers of any recaptures and that may be good for repeat business.



Walker

Preparing to scrape the jaw; note tarpon is in the water

FGA Guides can list their contact information on MyFWC.com/outfitters. A great way to gain a little more exposure for your guide service and it's free!



Top ten 2008 samplers

- Ed Walker
- Jeff Owens
- Roy Bennett
- Chris Rhea
- Clark Nash
- Mike Clark
- Tom Stephens Jr.
- John Manuel
- Gary Giles
- Raymond Baird

Anglers who contributed:

- 50 or more samples**
- Roy Bennett
 - Jeff Owens
 - Ed Walker

- 30 or more samples**
- Mike Clark
 - John Manuel
 - Clark Nash
 - Chris Rhea
 - Tom Stephens Jr.

- 20 or more samples**
- Raymond Baird
 - Gary Giles
 - Steven Jones
 - Dave Markett
 - Jay Masters
 - Billy Miller
 - Robin Murphy
 - Lee Roberts

- 10 or more samples**
- Bill Burrows
 - Charlie Crisp

- Jeff Hagaman
- Timothy Humphries
- Ed Hurst
- Bill Jones
- David Lagner
- Nathaniel Lemmon
- Sharon Masters
- Joe Mercurio
- Robby Mielsch
- Jim Parkhill
- Larry Pentel
- Frank Rhodes
- Ashley Templeton
- Mike Wrenn

- 5 or more samples**
- Mike Badarack
 - Joel Bickford
 - Andy Boyette
 - Jerry Chesney

- Gary Clark
- Bob Donzalski
- Mike Ferguson
- Keith Goodman
- Robert Hansen
- Bobby Hilbrunner
- Derrick Jacobson
- Tom Karrow
- Larry Leszczynski
- Becky Moore
- Chris Myers
- Charlie Owens
- Wayne Quinette
- Larry Rudisill
- Casey Steil
- Kelly Stilwell
- Jeff Totten
- John Ulrich
- Karen Wotring

It's all about location!

A huge **Thank You** to our 105 participating bait and tackle shops who support our Tarpon Genetic Recapture Study around the state of Florida and those shops in neighboring states. You have been a valuable asset in promoting the program to your local angler communities and increasing angler participation each year! There are many personnel in several shops who have gone above and beyond in promoting the study in 2008 by urging captains and recreational anglers to take DNA samples. We would like to extend a special thanks to Lehr's Economy Tackle, North Fort Myers, the U.P.S. Store, Fort Myers, Skeeter's Lagoon, Titusville, Half-Hitch, Port St. Joe, Half-Hitch, Destin, Bett's Fishing Center,



O'Hara

2008 Raffle Winners

Everyone who returned a DNA sample was eligible to win a thank you gift box from our annual random raffle. Congratulations to this year's winners:

- Douglas Casey
- Brent C. Gaskill
- Tyler Kapela
- Larry Lutz
- Robert McCue
- Stacy McLeod
- Chris Myers
- Bob Pascale
- Troy Salmon
- Gene White

Largo, Angler's Outlet, Cape Coral, Indian Pass Campground, Indian Pass and Economy Tackle, Sarasota, for obtaining a number of tarpon samples from your anglers.

We are always looking for additional shops to join us in promoting the program, providing free sampling kits to anglers, and acting as a drop-off location for samples. Even if you can just help by displaying a poster promoting the study, please contact us and get on-board for 2009.

To see our list of statewide sample collection centers go to the Web site at: http://research.MyFWC.com/features/view_article.asp?id=26619#list.

Sample Facts

Number of samples returned

2007: 1,031

2008: 1,257

Number of samples in database: 3,143*

*not all samples are used in recapture rate calculations

Top 5 counties in 2008

Pinellas: 241

Manatee: 187

Charlotte: 179

Sarasota: 155

Lee: 136

By regions of Florida

SW: 516

West Central: 453

SE: 96

Keys: 69

Panhandle: 19

NE: 10

Gulf Coast: 1,057

East Coast: 106

Samples from other states received in 2008

Texas: 18

South Carolina: 7

Louisiana: 1

North Carolina: 1

Virginia: 1

Though the primary focus of this study is tarpon in Florida, this year we also received 11 samples from Africa, 18 samples from Mexico and one sample from the Pacific coast of Panama.

Based on your data, 410 (33%) samples came from tarpon over four feet long this year; 227 (18%) samples came from tarpon less than three feet long. Length data were not provided for 620 (49%) of the submitted samples.

Please be sure to fill out your data slips!



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Recaptures, recaptures

The tarpon genetic recapture program has had four recaptures during its first two years. The recaptured tarpon from 2008 will not be disclosed until the upcoming 2009 press release this spring. There were some personnel changes on the tarpon project this past year and we were short staffed during peak season, particularly in the Molecular Genetics Laboratory in St. Petersburg. As a result sample processing ran a little behind schedule. Our new technician started in October and she will have us all caught up by the end of January. Keep watch for this exciting news!

General location of previous recaptures:

- Florida Keys
- Miami area (East Coast)
- Sanibel vicinity (Gulf Coast)
- Tampa Bay area (Gulf Coast)



Privacy Policy

Cooperation from anglers is the lifeblood of our research and we earn that cooperation by being trustworthy with the valuable information you provide. Your privacy is very important to us. Simply stated, our policy is to collect no personal information about you unless you affirmatively choose to make such information available to us. If you choose to share the information, such as by subscribing to this newsletter, sending an e-mail, or filling out a form with personal information, the information will be saved for a designated period of time so that we may comply with the state of Florida's archiving policies. However, your information will not be disclosed to third parties or other government agencies, unless required by state or federal law. Please note that Florida's public records law requires that all information received in connection with state business be made available to anyone upon request, unless the information is subject to a specific statutory exemption.

Important Contact Info:

To receive a free DNA sampling kit and refills:
Call toll-free: 1-800-367-4461
E-mail:
tarpongenetics@MyFWC.com

Contributors

Art Ensemble International (www.artsensemble.com); Captain Joe Hebert (www.captainjoeshing.com); Columbia Restaurants (www.columbiarestaurant.com); Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (<http://myfwc.com>); FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (<http://research.myfwc.com>); Get Reel...Get Fish (www.getreelgetfish.com); Mote Marine Laboratory (www.mote.org); Mote Marine Laboratory Center for Fisheries Enhancement (www.mote.org/fsheries)



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
MyFWC.com

Saltwater Recreational Fishing Licenses

