SUNTAG NEWS 37

13 May 2001

What Happens to Tagged Fish?

Tag details		Recapture details
Tag	J83167	
Species	Dusky Flatehad (*Platycephalus fuscus*)	
Date	15/7/00	26/4/01
Length	360mm	400mm
Location	Jumpinpin	Jumpinpin
Fisher	Ron Kruger	Steve Day
Days Out	285	
Growth	40mm(0.14mm/day)	
Movement	Recaptured same area	
Released	No	

It is not often that data is obtained on natural mortality of a tagged fish. In this case Steve found the fish dead and it appears to have choked on a small leatherjacket.

Tag details		Recapture details
Tag	K55728	
Species	Barramundi (*Lates calcarifer*)	
Date	11/5/96	10/5/01
Length	240mm	955mm
Location	12 Mile Ck	12 Mile Ck
Fisher	Mary Gardner	Fish Kill
Days Out	1825	
Growth	715mm(0.39mm/day)	
Movement	Found dead same area	
Released	No	

This fish was one of 150 barramundi that were killed in a large fish kill. A total of 3,200 fish were killed. Of these there were 2,750 striped butterfish (*Selenotoca multifasciata*) from 80-200mm, 300 tiger mullet (*Liza argentea*) from 150-600mm with most over 400mm and the barramundi.

While the loss of the fish is tragic we have managed to obtain some useful data. All the barramundi were measured to obtain size frequency data and 37 had previously been tagged included 4 of the larger fish. As well otoliths from 76 of the barramundi were recovered to assist with ageing of the fish. Extracting otoliths from barramundi that have been dead for several days was an experience not to be missed and my smell senses will never be the same again.

The barramundi featured here was the largest fish killed and it was tagged at a very small size (see photo). With the bonus of the otolith data this will be very useful.

The cause of the kill has not yet been determined however the Environment Protection Agency has taken water and fish samples.

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