



AFRICAN BILLFISH NEWS

A Newsletter of the African Billfish Foundation

The African Billfish Foundation (ABF) is a unique Kenyan-based charity working along the East African coast that aims at promoting a smart approach to the conservation, research and management of the Billfish species and their environment. The foundation also encourages fishing practices that support sustainable uses compatible with conservation, whilst still maintaining economic returns.

Message from the ABF

Welcome to the African Billfish Foundation Newsletter in which we share the highlights of the [2010/2011](#) season and the past months. We have had a busy season with challenges and accomplishments which have enabled the foundation to continue evolving and sharpen its effectiveness.

It is gratifying to report that [2723](#) fish were tagged and [31](#) recaptures were reported which included an exciting recovery of a black marlin off [Madagascar](#). The ABF has also continued to make great strides in the sharing of information through reports that will be presented at international meetings in both the Seychelles and Berlin. We have also extended our tagging programme to the Middle East and Zanzibar.

On the tag recovery front, we are now looking at the wider picture of creating a network of representatives collecting recapture information for us. The first phase of this recapture programme was marked by the success of the 'Migrating with the Billfish' expedition in Tanzania, Zanzibar and Pemba. The second phase of the expedition will cover the Kenya Coastline in September 2011.

Nelly, our Programmes Coordinator was awarded an Earth Watch- Rufford grant to train in Data management and GIS. She will be going to the USA later this year to complete this training at the University of Washington, Tacoma. While in the States, Nelly will be giving presentations about the ABF's work at several places including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). She also hopes to meet with representatives from The Billfish Foundation (TBF). The ABF is greatly indebted to Professor John E. Banks and the Environmental Science Department at the University of Washington, Tacoma for facilitating Nelly's travel and stay in the States.

The foundation is still struggling to fund itself. With the expansion of our programmes and the growing pressure to address the issues affecting the billfish in the Indian Ocean, our biggest challenge is insufficient financial backing. Nevertheless, we are committed to keeping the programmes going and continue to seek funding.

www.africanbillfish.org

June, 2011

We thank the Sport fishing fraternity and particularly, the boat captains, the anglers and the crews for their efforts in willingly tagging and releasing billfish. A big thank you to our sponsors for their financial support and to Tania Harris for setting up our facebook page. Special thanks to Nick Conway for his time in setting up the PayPal facility for on-line membership registration on our website, for constantly updating our website and also for once again compiling our annual reports.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy reading our news and reports that will provide interesting information to inspire your continued support.

Wish you tight lines and happy tagging

Tina Harris and Nelly Kadagi

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Tagging Programme - New tagging areas established

The ABF has expanded its tagging programme to the [Middle East \(Oman\)](#) and [Zanzibar](#) through partnership with fishing operations in these areas.

Ed Nicholas who runs No Boundaries fishing charters in Oman has very kindly agreed to be our [Middle East representative](#).

We will be expanding our tagging programme to Southern Tanzania and Mozambique in the coming season

Tag Recovery Programme

In response to the photograph below of dead billfish that was taken in Zanzibar, we immediately sent our representative to Pemba and Zanzibar to investigate. Upon visiting the fish markets and landing sites, we found a shocking amount of dead billfish mainly caught in gillnets. Several fishermen reported to us that many of the billfish are found with ABF tags but they are not returning these tags to us for the following reasons:

- They believe fish with tags in are either poisoned so they throw the tags away before the fish are brought to the market.
- They think that tagged fish are marked fish and they shouldn't be catching them and therefore illegal for them to catch them.
- They are not aware what the tags are for and therefore just throw them away.



In an effort to address the above issues, the organization has managed to reach out to local fishermen in Pemba, Zanzibar and Tanzania in an effort to increase awareness regarding the importance of reporting tag recoveries information through the **'MIGRATING with the BILLFISH' expedition**.

Under this initiative, the foundation has set up ten contact people in major areas who will help us in collecting recovered tags. It is anticipated that we will get more tag returns from these areas. We will also continue to visit and educate all the parties concerned in order to increase our recovery rates and strengthening our ties with the contacts we have made. In the meantime, we are now turning our attention to the **Kenya expedition** which we are planning to kick off with in September.

Active sharing of information

We are pleased to announce a first-time presentation about the findings and the work that our fishermen and anglers from all over the world have been doing for over 15 years at the [9th Session of the Working Party on Billfish](#) in the Seychelles from the 4th to 8th of July, 2011

The Foundation has also been invited to present two papers at the *6th International World Recreational Fisheries Conference* that will be held in Berlin, Germany from the 1st to 4th of August 2011.

If you are interested in further information about these two conferences, please click on the following links: <http://www.worldrecfish.org> , <http://www.iotc.org/English/index.php>

Quote of the Month

"Conservation is not just about humans; it's about valuing everything that makes up Nature and then having the enthusiasm and the spirit to act on that principle. That's what my involvement in this expedition is all about....sharing newfound wisdom so that resource users and the billfish can share the benefits."

MIGRATING with the BILLFISH Expedition team leader- Nelly Kadagi

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Reports and Papers in progress

With the increasing need for more information regarding billfish species in the Indian Ocean, the ABF continues to collect data and disseminate the findings to the anglers, the public and to the fisheries management authorities.

You can now download from our website current papers and reports in progress under the following headlines:

- *East Africa billfish Conservation and Research: Marlin, Sailfish and Swordfish Mark- Recapture field studies*
- *Change, adaptation and evolution in recreational fisheries: the Case of Sport Fishing in Kenya's marine waters*
- *Globalization of Marine Recreational fisheries in Kenya: Trends, Opportunities and Challenges*

In the Media

The ABF has received some good media coverage in the last quarter. Our special thanks to the following that featured us:

- The Fishing Dutchmen Foundation in Holland and Belgium
- Marlin World Tv Online Magazine
- Ski-boat magazine
- The World Billfish Series
- No Boundaries- Middle East – Oman

Our 2010/2011 Members, Sponsors and Donors

The African Billfish Foundation relies on the support of individuals and donors to make our billfish conservation and research efforts possible. We would like to record our special thanks to our [47 members](#) and [Watamu Sea Fishing Club](#) whose contributions have helped us to run the programmes both locally and regionally. We also express our sincere appreciations to the following who have come to our assistance.

To the following for sponsoring our tags for the 2010/2011 season:

- David Johnson
- Howard Henley Foundation
- Lars Korschen

To the following who have helped fund our expedition in Tanzania, Pemba and Zanzibar:

- Rick LeMonnier - Safar Oil Field, United Arab Emirates
- Joan Vernon- The Presidential Challenge – Central America
- Mike Kirkland -
- Southern Cross Safaris
- Satao Camp,
- Raymond Matiba
- Ocean sports Resort
- David and Anne Taylor
- Stuart Simpson
- Gina Scott – Color Crops
- The Penn Challenge International

And The Billfish Foundation (TBF), USA for their aid with Education materials



Join us ONLINE



<http://www.africanbillfish.org>

We Need Your Help

We still have billfish conservation and research activities in desperate need of funding. We wish to continue expanding our tagging programme and supporting the local communities through our tag recovery incentive and awareness programmes in Kenya, Tanzania and Zanzibar.

Your donations and support have kept the ABF running since the beginning. Please join us in the season [2011/2012](#) to enable us to continue championing the survival of billfish in the Indian Ocean.

The African Billfish Foundation would like to request captains to encourage their anglers to become members of the ABF. *As a concerned sport fisherman, you play a critical role in the future of the billfish and we believe that by joining forces we will ensure that billfish continue to survive and swim in our oceans.*

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