Citizen Science Program Update

Dolphin Wahoo AP
April 2025

Program Activities

- CitSci Program Initial Evaluation
- SMILE Project Update
- FISHstory
- SAFMC Release
- Project Idea Portal

Initial Program Evaluation

Gather baseline levels of knowledge about, confidence in, and trust in the citizen science process of collecting data to inform fisheries management

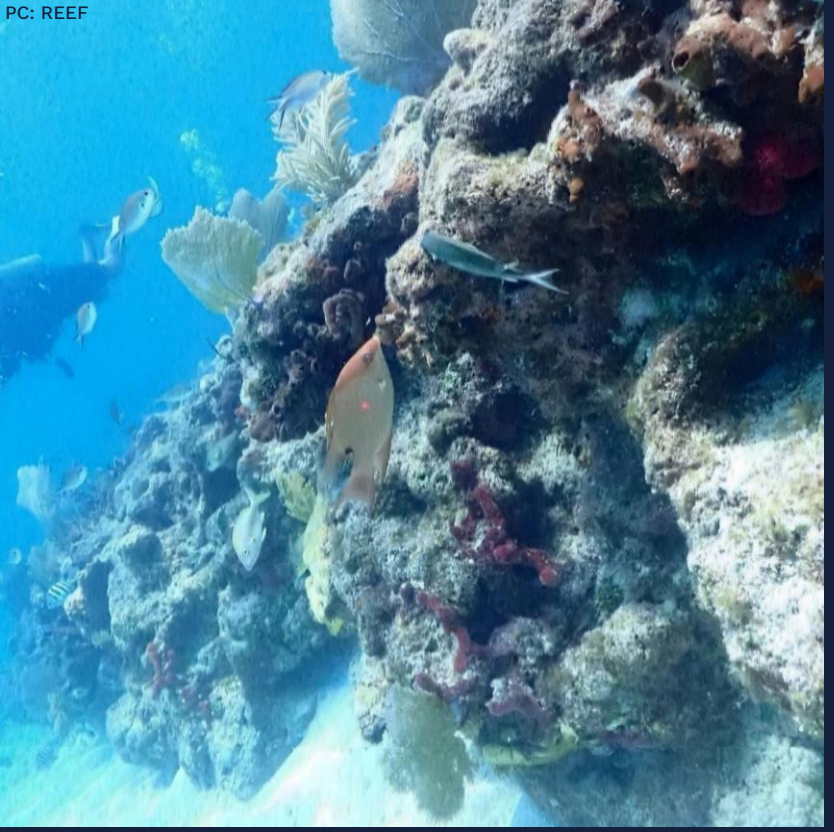
Pilot Interviews → 6 fishermen, 6 scientists, 6 managers

Online Survey → Gather information from a broader group of scientists & managers

79 respondents, 53% response rate

Interviews → Gather information from a broader group of commercial, for-hire, and recreational fishermen

41 interviews


PC: REEF

PC:Tom Sparke

PC: REEF

SMILE Project

- Partner with divers to collect length info on data limited species
- Laser-mounted Olympus underwater cameras
- Field testing in FL Keys
- Second field season wrapping up
- Data processing & analysis underway

REEF™
Reef Environmental Education Foundation

Citizen Science

SECOORA
Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association

PC: Cathy Owen & Charles C. Owen Jr.

PC: Billy Smitherman

FISHstory

A SAFMC CitSci Project

FISHstory

Citizen Science

Project Components

Digitizing & archiving historic fishing photos

Estimating for-hire catch composition using the online crowdsourcing platform Zooniverse

Developing method to estimate fish length in historic photos outside of Zooniverse and estimating size composition for key species

FISHstory
A SAFMC CitSci Project

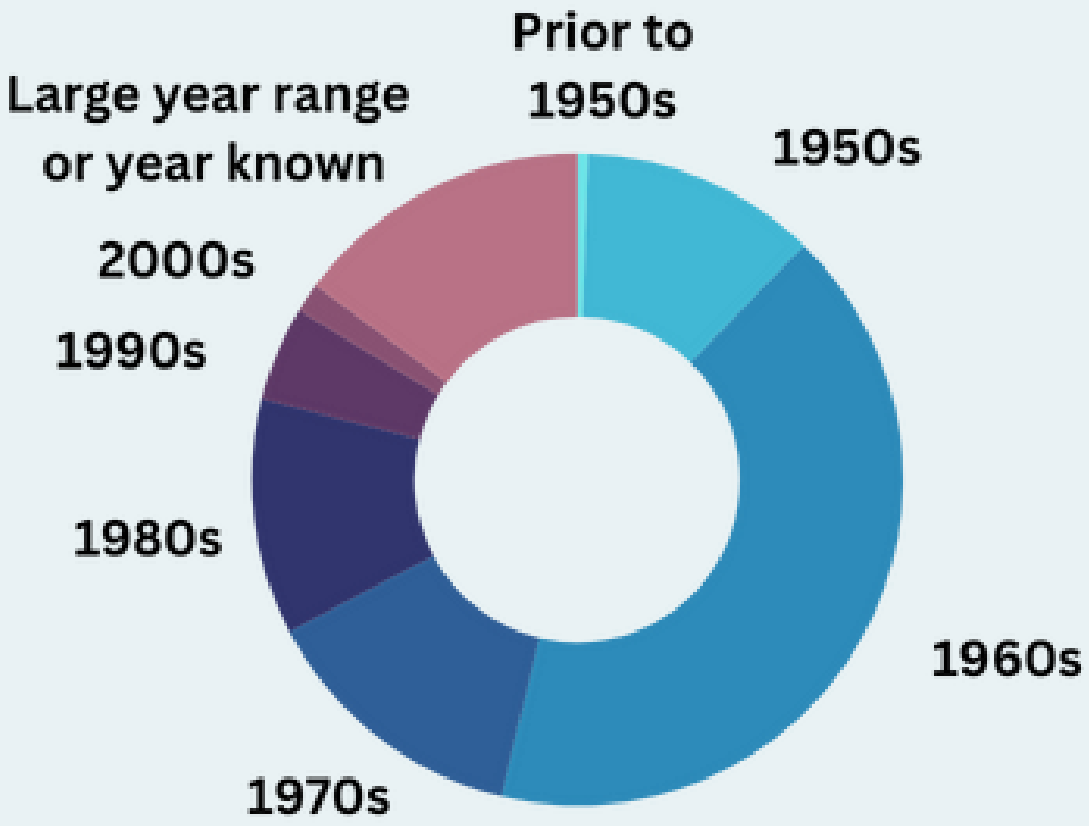
FISHstory Photo Archive

>2,300 photos contributed to FISHstory by **14 photo providers**

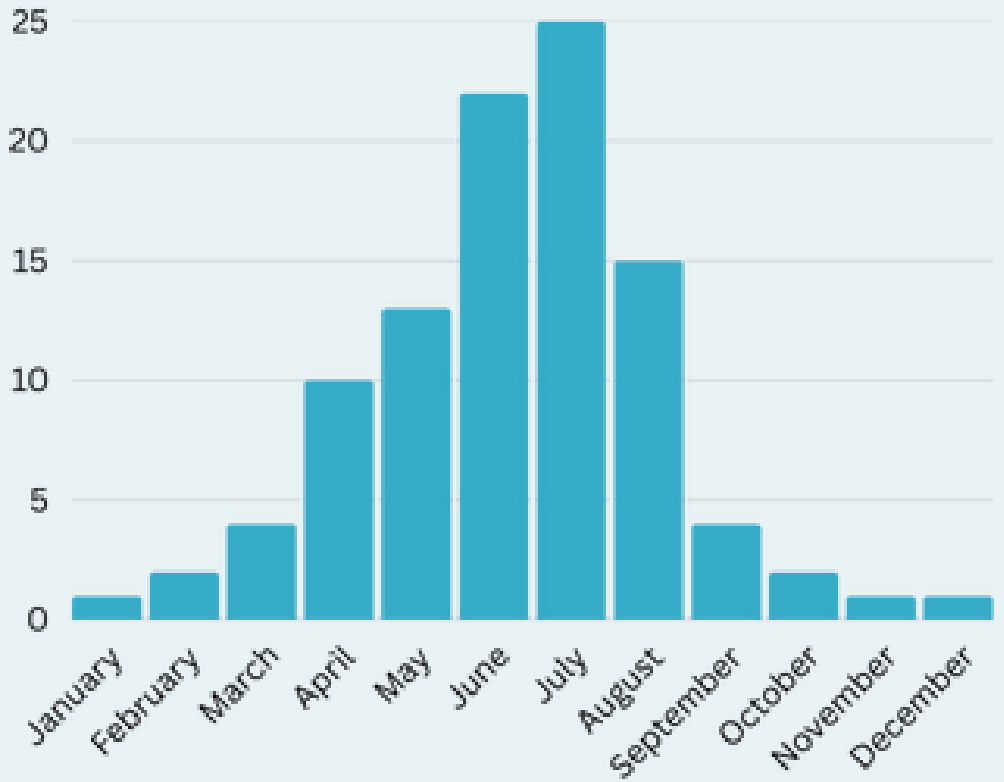
PC: B. Freeman; J. Garner & Sanitary Fish Market; and S Neilsen

FISHstory Photo Archive

Percentage of photos by decade



Percentage of photos by month



FISHstory: Photos for Analyses

Photo Description	Good	Better
Photo Type	Picture taken at the end of a trip displaying harvested catch with anglers	Fish hanging on leaderboard
Photo Date	Year	Month & Day
Photo Location	State	City & Dock
Photo Background	Photo provider name & contact	Vessel name & captain name

FISHstory project re-launched in Zooniverse July 2024!

FISHstory

ABOUT CLASSIFY TALK COLLECT RECENTS

Level 3 is now unlocked for all volunteers - so you can keep classifying away and helping us identify and count fish within the photos. Not a fish ID expert? No worries - we have tips and tricks in our tutorials and field guide. Feel free to reach out to our research team via the Talk Boards with any fish ID questions.

FISHSTORY

Filling Fisheries Data Gaps with Historical Dock Photos

LEARN MORE

GET STARTED!

Welcome to the FISHstory Project! We have four workflows where you can help us collect information from historic dock photos. Start with LEVEL 1 and unlock additional levels as you classify more photos. If you're not a fish ID expert, no worries! We welcome all and encourage you to use our Field Guide to help identify fish and provide your best guess. Thank you for your participation!

The collection of SAFMC FISHstory information is authorized under the OMB Control Number included in the Citizen Science & Crowdsourcing Information Collection page.

UNLOCKED

5% COMPLETE
LEVEL 3: Classify Red Snapper, Amberjack & Sharks

2% COMPLETE
LEVEL 4: Classify Dolphinfish, Cobia, Gray Triggerfish & Little Tunny

LOCKED

Good participation thus far.....

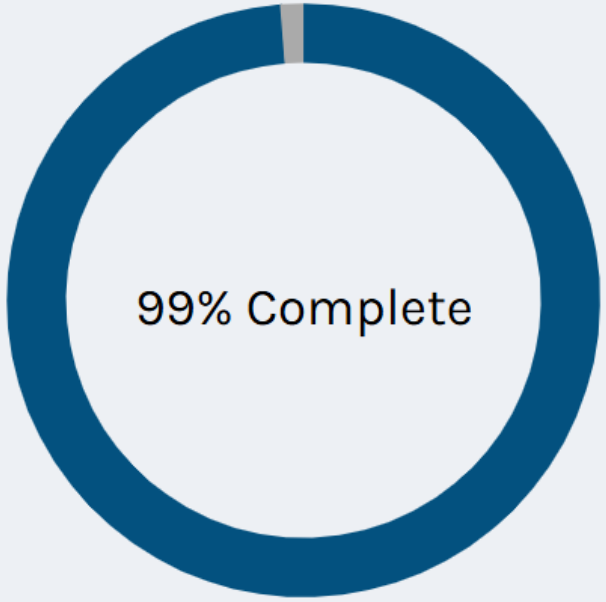
As of April 7, 2025

LEVEL 1: Count Fish and People
Retirement limit: 20
Images retired: 580 / 580
ETC* 0 days

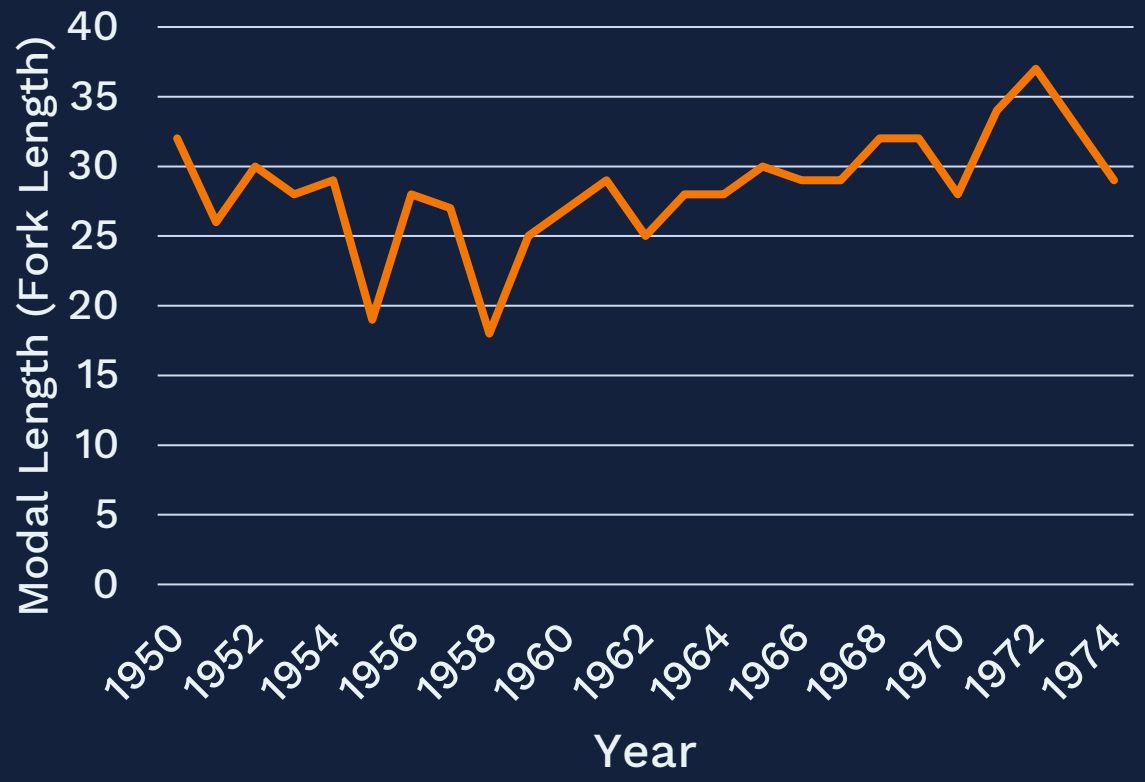
LEVEL 2: Classify King Mackerel, Grouper & Sailfish
Retirement limit: 20
Images retired: 1,054 / 1,054
ETC* 0 days

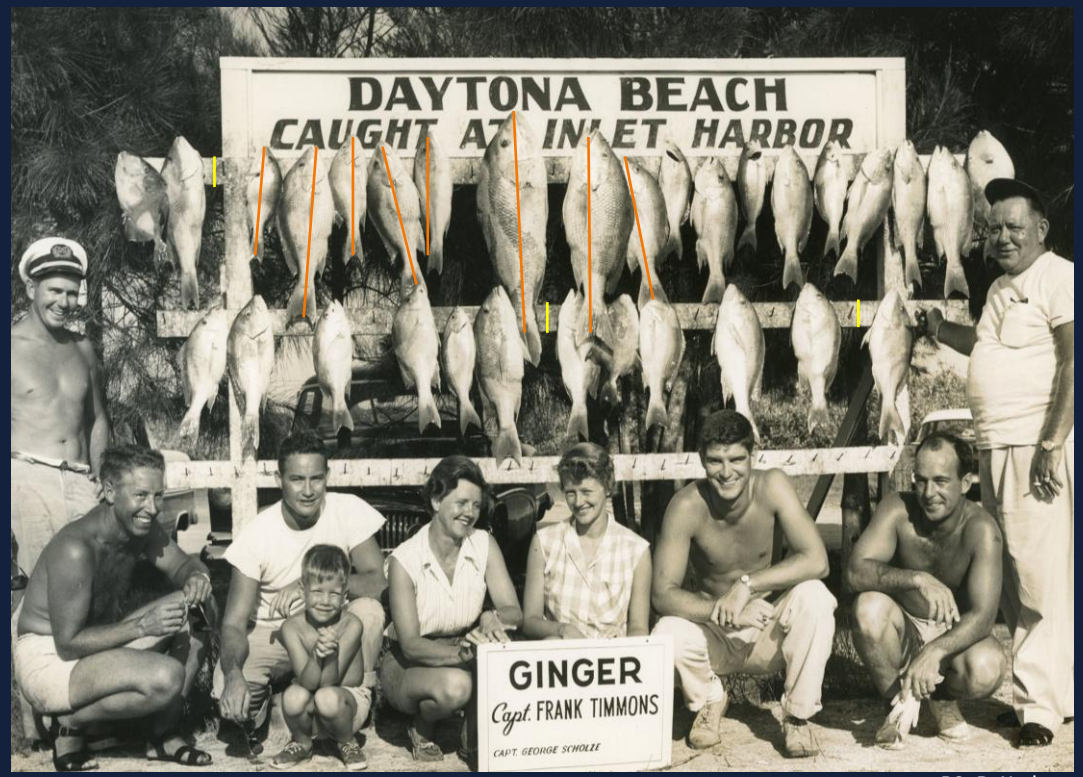
LEVEL 3: Classify Red Snapper, Amberjack & Sharks
Retirement limit: 20
Images retired: 1,054 / 1,054
ETC* 0 days

LEVEL 4: Classify Dolphinfish, Cobia, Gray Triggerfish & Little Tunny
Retirement limit: 20
Images retired: 923 / 1,054
Classifications: 20,825 / 21,080
ETC* 4 days

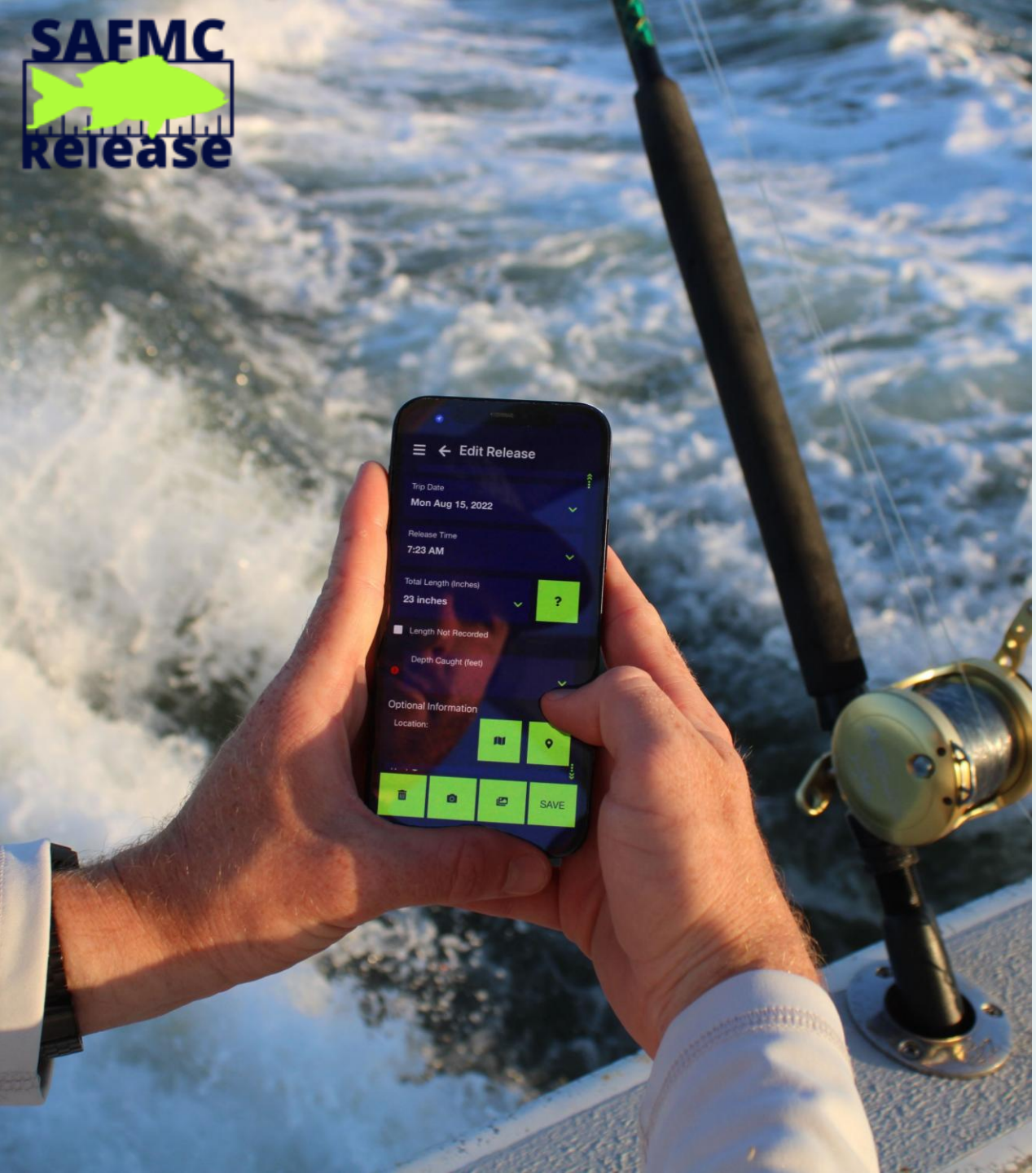


Estimating Fish Lengths





PC: R. Hudson



South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
"To Conserve and Manage"

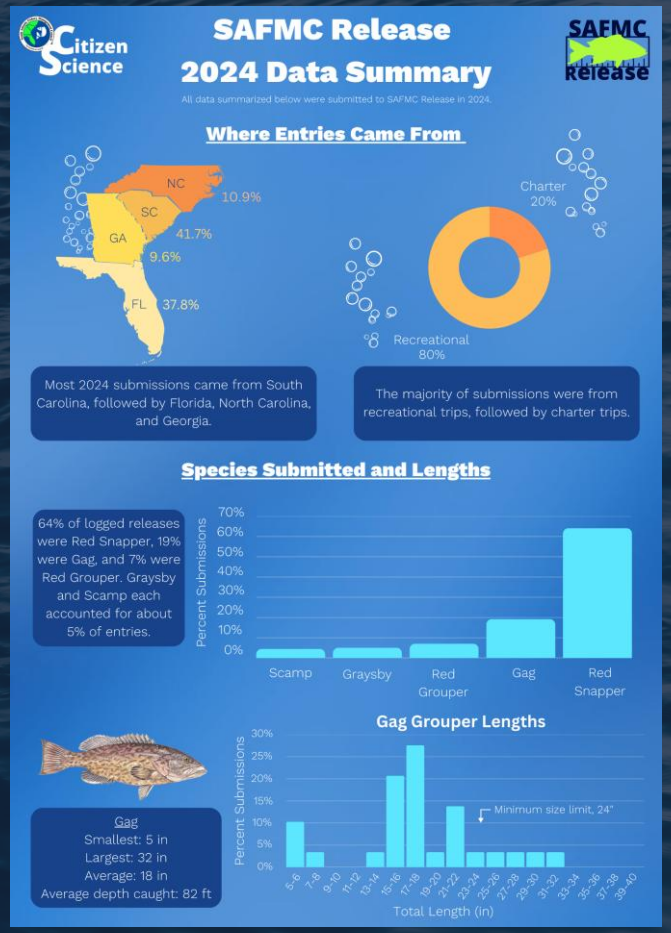
SAFMC Release

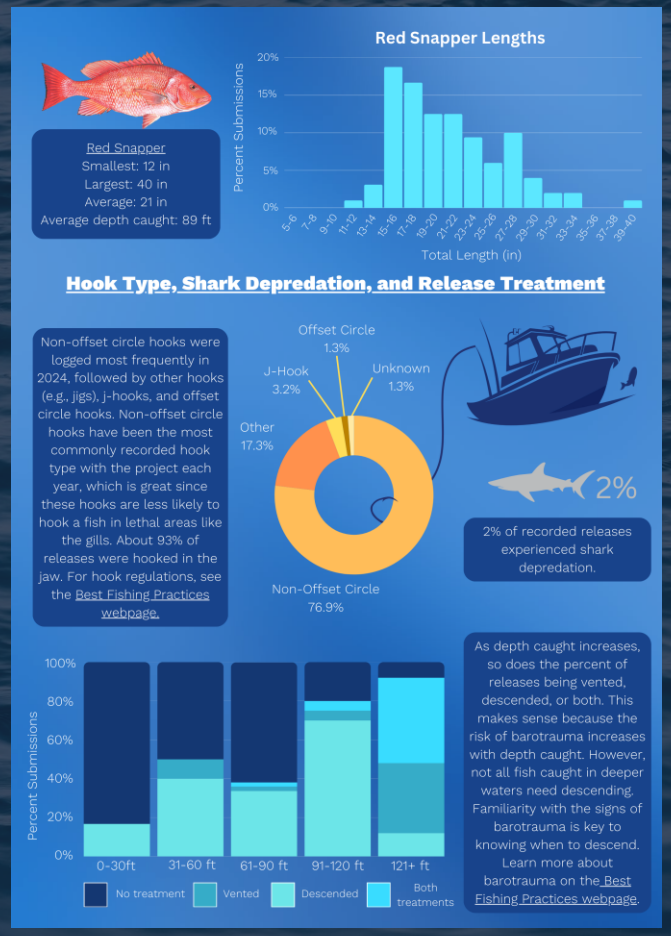
SAFMC Release

Updates

- Participants recording released shallow water grouper and Red Snapper in SciFish app
- Continued outreach, including collaboration with Best Fishing Practices initiative
- 2024 Annual Data Summary
- 2025 Sea Grant Partnership

2024 Data Summary



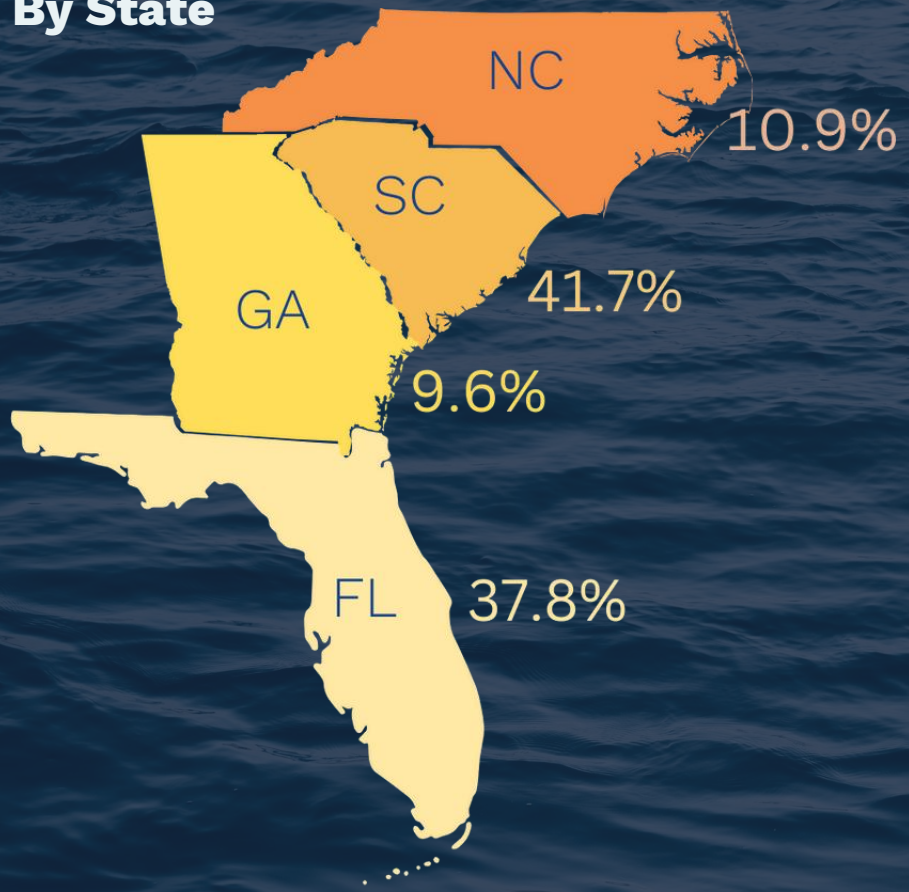


Summary includes:

- Release submissions by state & fishing sector
- Species submitted
- Length compositions
- Release treatment by depth
- Shark depredation
- Hook type & location
- 2024 Participant Recognition Milestones

2024 Data Summary: Where Release Submissions Came From

By State

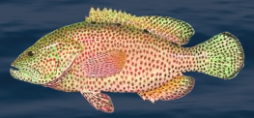


By Sector

2024 Data Summary: Releases Logged by Species

Red Snapper – 64%

Scamp – 5%

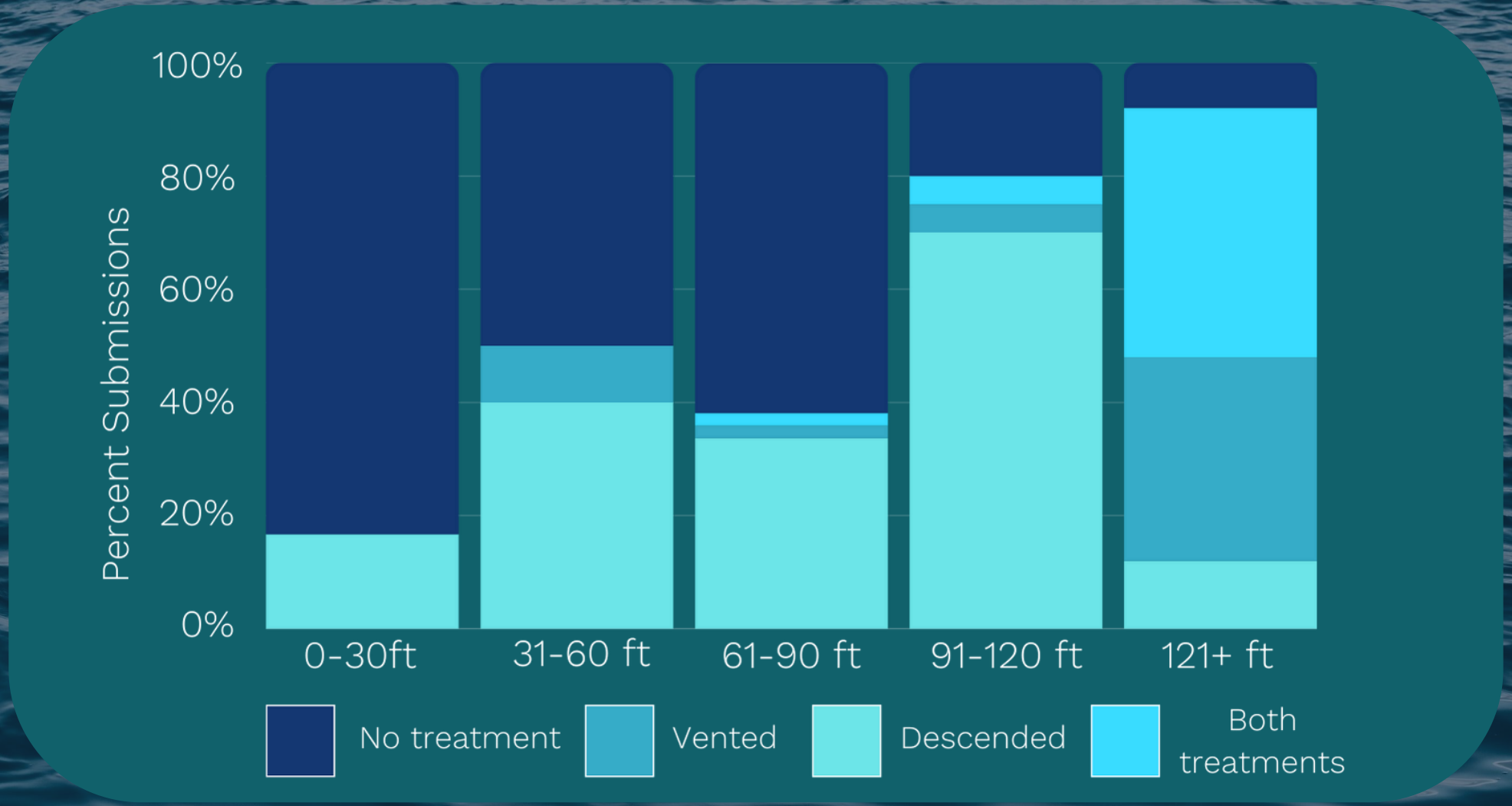


Graysby – 5%

Red Grouper– 7%

Gag– 19%

2024 Data Summary: Release Treatment



2024 Data Summary: Participant Recognition

Red Grouper
Smallest: 11 in
Jon Reynolds

Largest: 24 in
Jon Reynolds

Gag
Smallest: 5 in
Tom Roller

Largest: 32 in
Jake Harmon

Scamp
Smallest: 18 in
Nigel Bowers

Largest: 34 in
Jake Harmon

Around the Reef – Jake Harmon

Release Champion – Mark McWaters

Reef Fish Release Rodeo

Sea Grant wants best fishing practices gear in fishermen's hands

SAFMC Release wants more entries that can be used for validation

Rodeo Structure

May - July

4 entries/month

8 entries/month if include ruler

2 names drawn by Sea Grant/ month!

Have a citizen science project idea?

Share it via the online Project Idea Portal!

Ideas will be used to update the SAFMC's Citizen Science Research Priorities

Citizen Science Project Idea Portal

Keep up with projects & the Program!
safmc.net/citizen-science-program/

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