

## **The Billfish Foundation's International Tag & Release Awards**

### **2014 Award Winners**

On February 13, 2015, TBF honored over 20 winners from around the globe with their 2014 International Tag & Release Awards at Miami's Jungle Island Treetop Ballroom. The 25th annual award ceremony was sponsored by Bisbee's Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund and the awards were presented by King Sailfish Mounts. Sailfish Brewery supplied guests with delicious local craft beers. All award winners received sunglasses from TBF Conservation Partner Costa and trophy courtesy of King Sailfish Mounts. Guests had the chance to participate in the raffle which included products from ORCA, Fathom Offshore, Troll Pro, Costa, Pelagic, King Sailfish Mounts, FishTrack, Alutecnos, Bluefin USA, Wines for Humanity and artwork by Larry Rackley & Yellowfin Gallery. Every guest received a goody bag filled with items and information from all of our sponsors.

Top Overall Tagging (combined total of all billfish species tagged) Angler was awarded to Keith Brandner and Top Tagging Lady Angler to Sandra MacMillan. Brandner, fishing aboard the "Carol Libby" with Capt. Josh Temple (Top Tagging Captain Pacific Blue Marlin), managed to tag an astonishing 594 Pacific blue marlin, the most ever in a single season. Rivaling their record season was the "Sea Spud" with Top Overall and Top Release Angler Pacific Blue Marlin, Pat McCotter with his Captain, Pete Rae who took home Top Overall Release Captain Pacific Blue Marlin. As in many years past, Guatemala led the pack and was home port for multiple award winners including Top Overall Tagging Captain, Chris Sheeder, Top Overall Release Captain, Chris "Kiwi" Van Leeuwen and Top Overall Release Lady Angler, Tiffany Day.

It is never too early to instill the conservation ethic in a child. As the future of the sport, youth anglers are the future of the sport and in 2001, TBF began its Youth Program. Rounding out top overall categories were Top Overall Release Youth Angler, Gregory Benn and Top Overall Tagging Youth Angler, Shawn MacMullin. As a youth angler, Benn even managed to tally the most white marlin releases than any other adult for Top Release Angler Atlantic White Marlin.

For anglers in the Gulf, TBF introduced the Gulf of Mexico Marlin Tagging Competition. This competition added another region to the international competition, but catered to the region. Aboard the "Business Interruption" Top Tagging Captain White Marlin was Capt. Don Thrasher. Top Overall Tagging Boat and Top Overall Tagging Captain in the Gulf was awarded to Capt. Jimmy Crochet on the "Business Interruption." Top Tagging Captain Blue Marlin for the region was Capt. Al Roper on the "Michi" fishing out of Louisiana.

The 2015 competition began Nov. 1, 2014 and will wrap up on Oct. 31, 2014. TBF members from more than 70 countries are invited to participate and 'Tag Data Reports' and 'Release Notifications' can be submitted to TBF using either the traditional hard copies or reported online at [www.tagbillfish.org](http://www.tagbillfish.org). Separate categories currently exist for each the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans with additional categories being considered for the 2015 competition. To be eligible to receive an award active TBF members must have tagged and/or released five or more of a species to qualify. Youth anglers are only required a three fish minimum for both tag and release categories. For complete rules, categories and more on TBF's annual Tag & Release program please visit [www.bilfish.org](http://www.bilfish.org) or call 954-938-0150 for Peter Chaibongsai (ext. 107) or Michael Kelly (ext. 102).

TBF would like to once again thank our 2014 Tagging Program sponsors: Bisbee's Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund, Costa Sunglasses, Pelagic Gear, King Sailfish Mounts, Casa Vieja Lodge & Simrad. Their constant support proves their commitment to conservation.

### **Top Overall Tag & Release Winners**

**Overall Release Captain** – Chris Van Leeuwen

**Overall Tagging Captain**- Chris Sheeder

**Overall Release Angler** – Pat McCotter

**Overall Tagging Angler** – Keith Brandner

**Overall Release Lady Angler** – Tiffany Sisolak

**Overall Tagging Lady Angler** – Sandra MacMillan

**Overall Release Youth Angler** – Gregory Benn

**Overall Tagging Youth Angler** Shawn MacMullin

### **Top Tagging Angler- Atlantic Ocean**

**Blue Marlin** – Gray Ingram

**Sailfish** – Kasey Swan

**Swordfish** – Matt Bierley

**White Marlin** – Laurent Sahyoun

### **Top Release Angler- Atlantic Ocean**

**Blue Marlin** – Gray Ingram

**Sailfish** – Gray Ingram

**White Marlin** – Gregory Benn

### **Top Tagging Captain- Atlantic Ocean**

**Blue Marlin** – Ronnie Fields

**Sailfish** – Fin Gaddy

**Swordfish** – Mark Pagano

**White Marlin** – Christian Benazeth

### **Top Release Captain- Atlantic Ocean**

**Blue Marlin** - Ronnie Fields

**Sailfish** – Dean Panos

**White Marlin** – John Mumford

### **Top Tagging Angler- Pacific Ocean**

**Black Marlin** – Brady Wild

**Blue Marlin** – Keith Brandner

**Sailfish – Darryl Schroeder**

**Striped Marlin – Robert Hendricks**

**Top Release Angler- Pacific Ocean**

**Black Marlin – Barry Alty**

**Blue Marlin – Pat McCotter**

**Sailfish – Bill Easum**

**Striped Marlin – John “Jack” Duvall**

**Swordfish – John Gregory**

**Top Tagging Captain- Pacific Ocean**

**Black Marlin – Tim Richardson**

**Blue Marlin – Josh Temple**

**Sailfish – Chris Sheeder**

**Spearfish- Gene Vander Hoek**

**Striped Marlin – Jaime Gonzalez**

**Top Release Captain- Pacific Ocean**

**Black Marlin – Brett Alty**

**Blue Marlin – Pete Rae**

**Sailfish – Chris Van Leeuwen**

**Striped Marlin – Chris Bays**

**Swordfish – John Gregory**

**Top Tagging Angler – Indian Ocean**

**Black Marlin – Scott MacGowan**

**Sailfish – Jo-Ann Riley**

**Top Release Angler – Indian Ocean**

**Black Marlin – Murray Teasdale**

**Sailfish – Henry Riggs-Miller**

**Top Tagging Captain- Indian Ocean**

**Black Marlin – Eddy Lawler**

**Blue Marlin – Eddy Lawler**

**Sailfish – Jourdain Ellens**

**Striped Marlin – Eddy Lawler**

**Top Release Captain – Indian Ocean**

**Black Marlin – Eddy Lawler**

**Blue Marlin – Ross Newton**

**Sailfish – Rolly Pierre**

**Youth Tag Divisions**

**8 and Under**

Charles Gaddy & Kyler Swan (TIE)

Runner-up – Caden Alexander

**9-10**

Aidan Burke

Runner-up – Kasey Ray Swan

**11-12**

William Stark

Runner-up Kaleb Richardson

**13-15**

Shawn MacMullin

Runner-up – Bo Ingram

**16-17**

Nick Brackmann

**Youth Release Divisions****8 & Under**

Brown Gaddy

**11-12**

Jonathan Gaskill

**13 – 15**

Bo Ingram

Runner-up- Shawn MacMullin

**16-17**

Gregory Benn

Runner-up Curtis Englert

**GOM Marlin Tagging Competition****Top Tagging Captain Blue Marlin**

Al Roper- *Michi*

**Top Tagging Captain White Marlin**

Don Thrasher – *Business Interruption*

**Top Overall Tagging Captain**

Jimmy Crochet – *Conundrum*

**Top Overall Tagging Boat**

*Conundrum* – Capt. Jimmy Crochet