



BIG Prizes for donated fish frames!!

Have you ever wondered how the Fisheries Department come up with the data that they use? For those who think they spend countless days on the water catching fish for research, I'm afraid the real answer is a little different. Although research vessels play an integral role, much of the data is derived from fish frames donated by recreational anglers.



The fish frame is the skeleton, from head to tail, with the guts intact, that is left after the fish has been filleted. Fisheries scientists use frames to determine the 'age structure' of certain fish species, which helps estimate the status of stocks in a given area. Much can be gained from a simple fish frame, including length, sex, reproductive capability, diet, and even the fish's age.

Recreational anglers have been encouraged to donate their fish frames to the Department for some time now, and many have been doing so regularly. The great news announced by the Department of Fisheries this week, is that one lucky donor of fish frames and a friend of their choice will be off on a charter to the Montebello Islands courtesy of Montbello Island Safaris. The prize, worth more than \$5,000, will go to one lucky fisher who has donated their fish skeletons and provided the relevant details of their catch before June 2011.

Department of Fisheries Director of Research Dr Rick Fletcher said he was delighted to see fishing businesses getting behind the important initiative.

"Fish frames are vital to our research programs so we can manage our fish stocks sustainably ensuring there are fish for the future," Dr Fletcher said. "It's great that Montebello Island Safaris are supporting us in this as well as members of the tackle industry. On behalf of the Department, I thank them all for helping us in this work."



Recfishwest encourages all recreational fishers to donate frames for research. Fisheries researchers are particularly interested in Dhufish, Pink Snapper and Baldchin Groper, but also all Whiting species, Tailor, Herring and Garfish. At the present time, researchers only need frames from within the West Coast Bioregion (north of Kalbarri to east of Augusta). Frames from both the Metropolitan and South-West zones in the West Coast Bioregion are much sought after, so if you fish in either of those two areas, consider the sustainability of the species when you're at the filleting bench. For more information, contact Recfishwest, or go to the Department of Fisheries website www.fish.wa.gov.au and click on 'Send us your skeletons' for a full list of demersal and near-shore species required. Remember, the more often you donate, the more chances you have of winning!!

Fish today for tomorrow

www.recfishwest.org.au