



Promulgated in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board Act, 2008 (Act No. 5 of 2008)

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## **Sardine run 2021**

**20th May**

On Wednesday, the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 the KZN Sharks Board conducted a sardine observation flight into the Eastern Cape waters.

This flight was fairly eventful with some decent size shoals of sardines sighted between Mngazana Mouth and The Kraal which is just south of Brazen Head. These shoals were just behind the backline, moving slowly north. The most concentrated activity sighted, was further south between the Kei River Mouth right through to Gonubie. Thousands of Cape gannets, sitting in big rafts were seen spread out in this area, with some groups diving in concentrated spots. These gannets were accompanied by thousands of Bottlenose and Common Dolphins. There were numerous, scattered pockets of sardines seen on the surface throughout this area as well.

These indications are all positive that the sardines are making their way up the Eastern Cape towards KwaZulu-Natal and are possibly a few weeks away. However there have been many occasions in the past when predictions and opinions have been totally incorrect. These fish can move through in the deep and out of sight of most of the predators and arrive in KZN without warning. Then there is always the possibility that they continue moving north on the deeper line and we don't get to see them at all.

There was also an increase in humpback whale sightings, with many animals seen between the Xhora Mouth and the Dwesa Reserve, all moving northwards.

The Sharks Board will continue to closely monitor sardine activity and remove or replace shark safety gear as required.

The next flight to East London is scheduled for the 27<sup>th</sup> of May, however this is dependent on weather conditions. The Head of Operations of the KZNSB will continue to update information on activity as and when flights have been completed.

Acting HOD: Operations  
GREG THOMPSON

