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BIG GAME FISH OF NEW ZEALAND SEAS
NEANDERTHAL MAN *NOT* OUR ANCESTOR
MILLIKAN TELLS OF COSMIC RAYS

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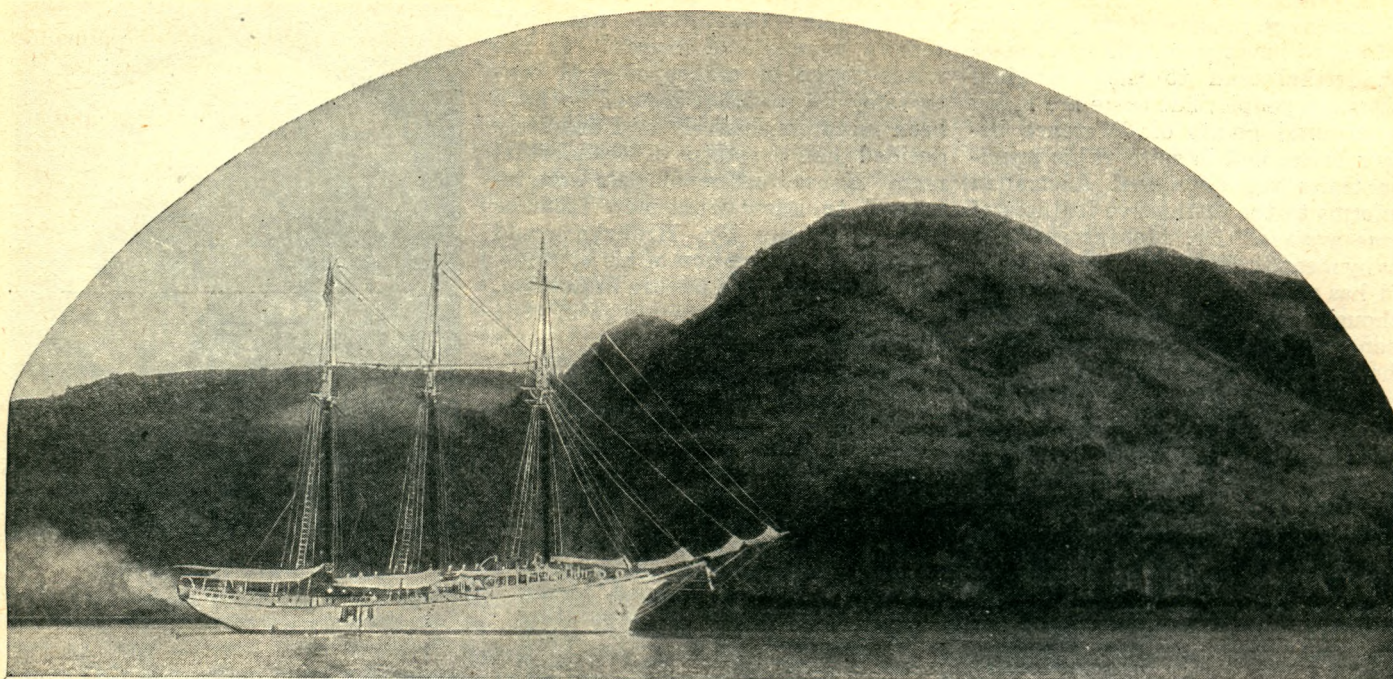
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COVER

At about the time that Zane Grey's article on big game fish (see page 116) was accepted for publication, the editor was taking motion pictures of fish and fishing scenes off the coast of Florida. By a stroke of good fortune, his camera was trained properly just as a large sailfish was hooked, and subsequent feet of film recorded a series of spectacular jumps. Our artist, Howard V. Brown, has transferred to oil paints and canvas the thrilling beauty of these leaps, and the result is a fitting introduction to the interesting story which Mr. Grey has to tell. Incidentally, the sailfish illustrated was subsequently landed after a hard battle, and is being mounted for our editorial office as an inspiration to other anglers of the staff.



THE YACHT "FISHERMAN" IN NEW ZEALAND WATERS

In this yacht, Mr. Grey, the author of the accompanying article, and his party visit remote corners of the world, exploring the depths of the

oceans with rod and line. Scorning the use of "mass production" methods of fishing, their search for unusual fish results in great sport

Big Game Fishing in New Zealand Seas*

*The Sportsman and the Scientist Work Hand in Hand
to Provide Specimens for Museums*

By ZANE GREY

Patron of the American Museum of Natural History

MY first fishing trip to New Zealand (1926) was in the nature of a pioneer expedition. The game was new there, and methods and tackle crude in the extreme. We anticipated criticism and opposition, and we certainly got it in plenty. The English anglers were slow even to consider American tackle and methods, let alone to adopt them.

The results of this trip, however, justified our venture and rewarded us beyond measure, and we had the satisfaction of winning a number of New Zealand anglers to our methods. We secured five world records, two of which were phenomenal. Here follows a partial summary of our catch; and the large number we think is justified owing to the desire of the New Zealand Government that we catch and identify and photograph fish, to attract the attention of the scientific and angling world to these new waters.

Captain Mitchell took two black marlin (*Makaira marlina*) of 685 and 976 pounds (the latter the world's

record); 21 striped marlin (*Marlina mitsukurii*) ranging from 192 to 350 pounds and averaging 259½ pounds; 3 yellowtail (*Seriola dorsalis*) of 70, 75, and 80 pounds, averaging 75 pounds; and 6 mako (*Isurus* sp.) varying from 180 pounds (two specimens) to 299 and averaging 236 pounds.

I TOOK, among other fishes, one broadbill swordfish of 400 pounds—the first *Xiphias gladius* ever caught with rod and reel in New Zealand waters; one black marlin of 704 pounds; 41 striped marlin, ranging from 168 (the only specimen below 200 pounds in weight) to 450 pounds (the world's record) and averaging 268½ pounds; 17 mako ranging from 56 pounds (the next smallest being 115) to 300 and averaging 190 pounds. Among others of my catches was a yellowtail of 111 pounds—another world's record.

This extraordinary fishing (surely never surpassed in the angling history of the world) explains why we (Captain Mitchell, my brother R. C. Grey, my son Romer, and I) were all so desirous of making a second trip in

1927. We did make this trip, as the following account tells in part, but owing to 42 days of storm we did not equal our first experience.

The strangest and biggest fish we captured on our second expedition to New Zealand waters was a thresher shark (*Alopias vulpes*) of 640 pounds, incidentally the largest ever taken on rod and reel. But I cannot claim the record because, although I got the strike and hooked the fish, I mistook it for a common shark and handed the rod over to my son Romer.

We were fishing off Stevenson's Island, outside of Whangaroa, where some miles off there is a submerged reef of large area. In 1926 Captain Mitchell and I fished this location and also the Cavalli Islands, where I was the first to land a swordfish. Both places have since become popular with anglers. These are indeed magnificent fishing waters. During the summer great schools of *kahawai* and *crevallé* feed there on the surface at certain hours of the day. While feeding, one of these schools will make a rushing noise like the tumbling of a brook over

*Published by permission of Mr. Grey and *Natural History*.

stones. At such time swordfish, *mako* and other sharks abound.

The thresher shark is one of the rare fish of the seas. At Catalina I have had several follow a trolled bait. They stuck their long tails out of the water and struck at the bait with them. Of all strange weapons that have evolved upon fishes of the seas, I think the tail of the thresher is the strangest. If his body is nine feet long, his tail will be ten. When swimming, he can look backward and upward at the tip of this tail and strike very accurately with it, since his eyes are situated almost on the top of his head. He makes one think of a prehistoric monster that has survived to the present.

THREE threshers have been caught at Catalina in twelve years—all small ones, around 300 pounds each. Each one was hooked through the tail. They had snagged themselves on the hook while striking at the bait. In New Zealand threshers are caught pretty often, and run fairly big. Often they leap like greyhounds of the sea, a most unusual and wonderful spectacle. And they are hard-fighting fish.

This 640-pound one that I ran on to in New Zealand, fooled me in the strike. He had not shown on the surface and his bite was nothing much to speak of. But he felt heavy and slow, like a *reremai*—a ground or sand shark—so I gave the rod to my boy with the remark: "Here, Romer, see how quickly you can lick this fish."

Now Romer is a husky lad and has had some luck with big fish. As all boys do, he brags a little. Sometimes seeing me or Captain Mitchell or R. C.* in difficulties with a big fish he is

*My brother R. C. Grey.



A "MAKO" SHARK

The author, standing beside a 278-pound mako shark which was caught and landed with the rod and line which he holds. Fish of this kind put up a terrific battle

prone to remark: "Say, it takes you a long time on that fish. Pull his head off. I could!"

However, Romer met retribution in this thresher. For the first hour he could do nothing with the fish. Meanwhile R. C. came up and made remarks. "Why don't you pull him up? You're weak in the back, boy. We can't hang around all afternoon."

Then Captain Mitchell ran up in his boat: "Hey, Romer, what're you on? We're mighty curious to see if you can lick him." And I said: "Son, for a

boy who's a sprinter and who aims for football, you are sure slow as an angler."

Altogether—for the boatmen and his pal, Johnny Shields, got after him too—we made him see red. It really was a mean trick. But Romer himself sometimes plays mean tricks. However, he worked on that fish as he had never worked before on anything—and he has fought some pretty good battles.

At the end of two hours he had the thresher stopped, and in another hour and a half he had him whipped. Really he gave a magnificent exhibition. He blistered his hands, lamed his back, and ruined my rod, but he whipped the thresher.

WHEN the great fish came up so we could see him, I certainly sustained a shock—and I have seen a great many remarkable sea-creatures come up out of the deeps. He was a huge, grotesque, frightful, and terrible fish to gaze upon. All my fishing years I had longed to catch a great thresher. Here I had struck one—a record—and had turned the rod over to my son! The joke was on me.

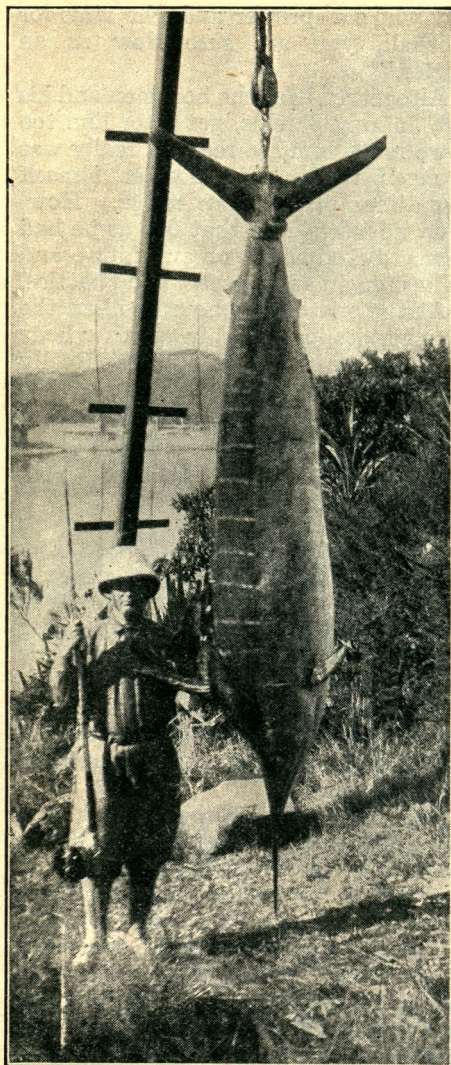
The thresher must be classed as a game fish. He fights deep most of the time and is exceedingly stubborn. Comparing him with the *mako*, he is pound for pound a harder fish to whip.

The *mako*, however, is the aristocrat of all sharks. It is really unfitting to call him a shark at all. I seldom use the word with regard to him. And after he attains some weight—say over 400 pounds—he is indeed a magnificent sporting fish. His leaps are prodigious, inconceivably high above the water. The ease and grace of this leap is indescribable. It must be seen. He



A THRESHER SHARK ON THE BEACH

This shark, classed by the author as a game fish, has the peculiar feature of an unusually long tail. If the shark's body is nine feet long, the tail will be ten feet long. It was one of these sharks that Mr. Grey's son battled for six and a half hours, and conquered



R. C. GREY AND SWORDFISH

The author's brother poses with a 386-pound striped marlin swordfish. This fish comes next in size to the author's record catch of a 450 pounder, landed in 1926

comes out slick, glides up, turns a somersault, and goes down heard first, like a diving gull, almost without a splash. Then instantly he is out again. Seldom does a *mako* leap once only. I have had one go up six times—a most thrilling sight. His third leap is always the highest.

The *mako* seems to be known only in New Zealand and Japanese waters. He attains huge size, up to 2000 pounds. Captain Mitchell hooked one in 1926 that leaped twice—the first time scaring us nearly to death, and the second giving us time to judge his weight fairly at around 1200 pounds. Needless to state here, that *mako* is still roaming the sea. Some day, though, we will catch one that large or even larger.

We caught two black marlin in New Zealand waters in 1927, both small fish—340 and 380 pounds. Quite a comedown from our 1926 fish of 704 and 976 pounds. However, the capture of any black marlin is an event to be proud of, and 1927 was a bad season because of rough waters. Captain Mitchell's fish, the larger of the two,

leaped out of the water as the captain was winding in the bait, and nearly landed in the boat. The fish was after that bait and he got it. Then he gave a grand exhibition of fighting on the surface. My black marlin, 340 pounds, charged my "teasers" and bait, and certainly committed suicide.

It is my opinion that fishes of this species do not like rough water, as the striped marlin do. During three months, I had hold of only one, beside that which I caught. I saw this fish heaving up behind my bait and he sure was big. He took it and I struck at him, but—alas!

We saw a very large black marlin, surely a 1000-pounder, riding the swells. It was in shore near the en-



AUTHOR AND SON

The 640-pound thresher shark is shown. Note the extreme length of its strong tail

trance to the Bay of Islands, on the way to my yacht at the close of day when we had no good bait. I put on the only one there was—a *kahawai* stiff as a poker.

We followed this marlin—all three boats—and the closer we got to him as he rolled up in the swells the louder we yelled. If I had known then that we were going to see swordfish in the South Seas twice as big as this one, I might have saved my breath. But there are lots of things we do not know until they happen. Anyway when I got my bait in front of this marlin and he sheered off after it, I nearly had a fit. He refused to take it. We followed, and made careful approach to drag the bait again before him. He came to it and swam clear round it. We were

sure he would bite. He did not. Then I did have a fit.

My brother, R. C., struck a striped marlin off the *Cavallis* which gave perhaps the greatest surface exhibition I ever saw. This fish was one of the long slim ones, as marlins go, but he was so swift in his leaps that we could not train the cameras on him, and so strong that R. C. could just barely stay with him by running the launch full speed.

IT was bright sunlight, with just a ripple on the dark blue sea. The marlin blazed in the air, green on the back, striped across his silver-white sides. He cracked the water like pistol shots; he made every kind of a splash, from a thin cutting of spray to a great, angry boiling maelstrom. The beauty and wonder of such spectacular acrobatics must be seen to be believed and appreciated. Especially must the magnificent fury or fright of this tiger-species be seen. It cannot be adequately described. This marlin weighed 386 pounds, and comes next to my record (450) of 1926.



CAPTAIN L. D. MITCHELL

He is shown here with a 976-pound black marlin swordfish. This is the largest one caught during the 1926 season, and exceeds any caught on the last expedition