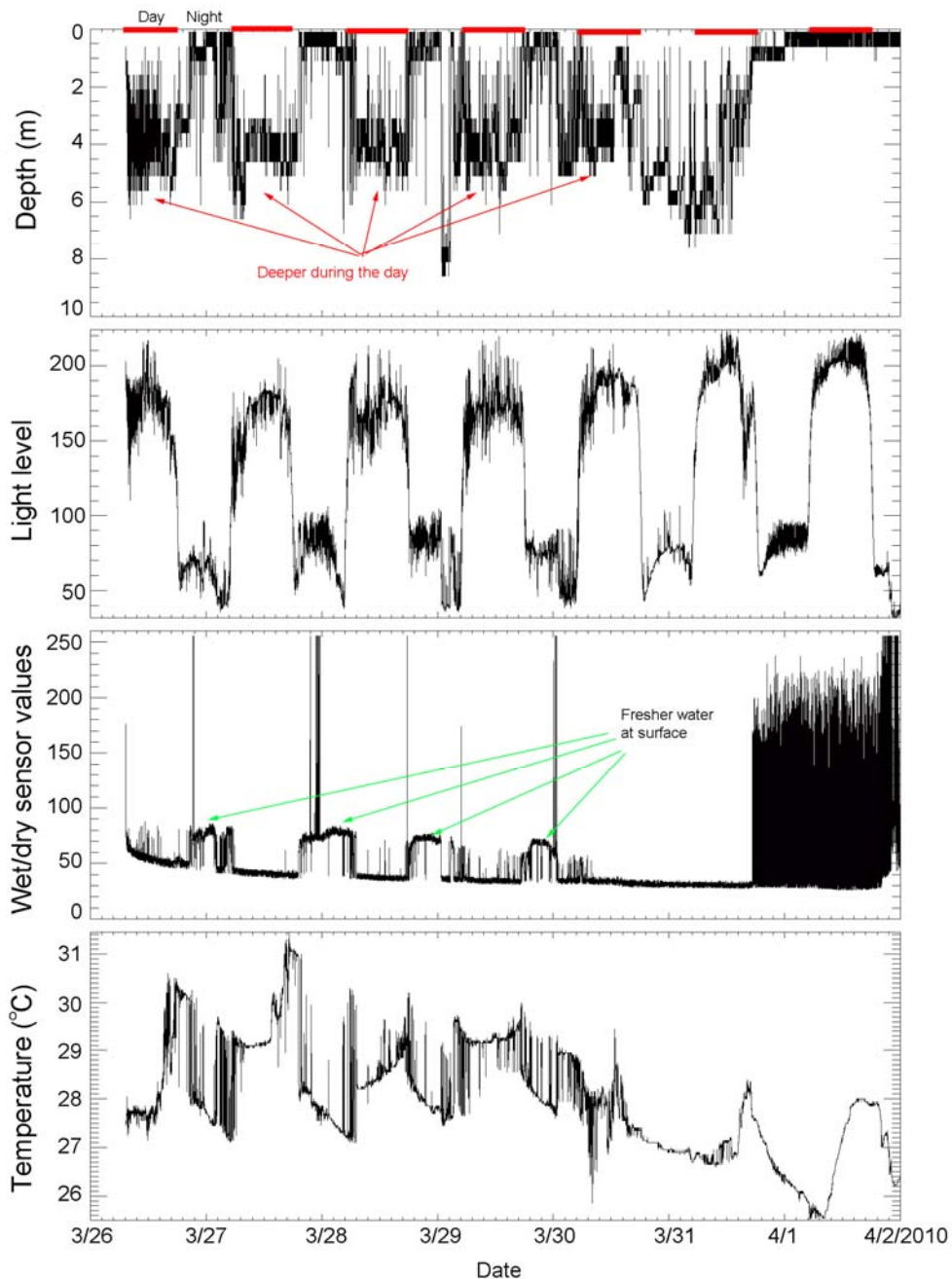


Preliminary results of Belize Tarpon tags

Tarpon 133 showed a distinct diel movement pattern for the first 4 days after release. It stayed mostly at 4-5 m (13-16 ft) depth during the day and mostly at surface (less than 1 m) during the night (Figure 1 top panel). The wet/dry sensor data (3rd panel) indicated that the surface water was much fresher than the bottom water. If the salt wedge only occurs in the river, this clearly put the tarpon in the river for the first 4 days. On April 30, the tarpon moved out of the river as indicated by the wet/dry sensor data (no change in salinity as tarpon move up and down). Unfortunately, the tag was detached from the tarpon on April 31, mostly likely due to shallow insert during the tagging process.



Tarpon 141 did not show any diel pattern of movement during the 17 days. It stayed mostly at depth ranging from 4 to 7 m during the first 2 days. Then, for next 3 days, it moved to deeper water mostly ranging from 10 to 13 m. The tarpon did surface frequently during these days and the wet/dry sensor data indicated fresher water at surface. On April 1, a cold front passed and the tarpon moved to the flat at the mouth of the river and stayed there for one day before heading back to the river. It stayed in the river next 6 days at depth mostly ranging from 6-12 m. On April 8, the tarpon moved out of the river into a shallow flat or a canal and stayed there for 4 days. Due to the shallow depth that the tarpon was in, it caused the onboard computer to think that the tag detached from fish so it automatically release the tag from the fish.

Despite the short duration of the two tags, they do provide us some valuable information about the tarpon movement in this system. And the other good news is that tag T138 is still on fish as of today.

