

Pathology Report

Submitter Ref.: H341	Date Sent: 05/12/2024	Accession No.: 64215
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To: [Redacted]
Westport
Email:

Report Sent: 18/12/2024
Copy To:

Species: Cetacean	Breed: Hector's Dolphin		
Age: Neonate	Sex: Female		
Owner:			Type: Post Mortem
ID:			Prev. Accn.:
Submitted:	At Risk:	Affected:	Dead:

Gross Findings

This calf was submitted frozen and was thawed before necropsy. The body was assessed as being in a poor state of preservation (code 3+), with extensive superficial scavenging over all body surfaces and loss of soft tissues of the oral cavity and head.

Blubber depths were 9mm dorsally; 10mm laterally; and 11mm ventrally. The body weighed 6.8kg and was 765mm in length.

The dorsal fin was not folded and fetal folds were not detectable (although scavenging damage would likely have obscured them). The teeth had not erupted.

The internal organs were extremely friable. The umbilicus was well healed and the lungs were well inflated. There was no meconium in the intestine. The stomach contained pink turbid fluid with numerous small white flecks throughout.

Diagnosis

Maternal separation

Comments

This calf had a well healed umbilicus which indicates that it had lived for at least a few weeks after birth. The measured blubber depths were quite low, suggesting that the calf was relying on metabolism of its body fat (i.e. wasn't receiving sufficient milk) and may have died due to the metabolic disturbances that result from starvation. As always, the underlying reasons for this are extremely difficult to investigate. We will process this calf's tissues for examination under the microscope to assess for disease processes, although the state of decomposition of the body organs means that this may not be conclusive.

Date: 18/12/2024	Pathologists: [Redacted]
Students:	