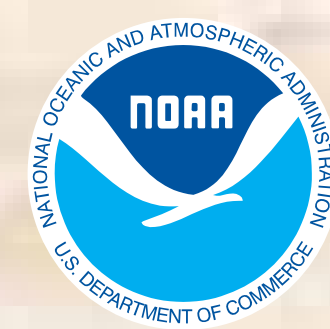
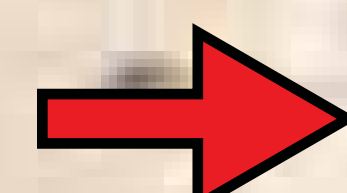


AN EFFECTIVE AND SAFE TECHNIQUE TO PIT TAG HATCHLING GREEN TURTLES CAPTIVE BRED AT SEA LIFE PARK HAWAII

George Balazs, Robert Morris, DVM, and Jeffrey Pawloski



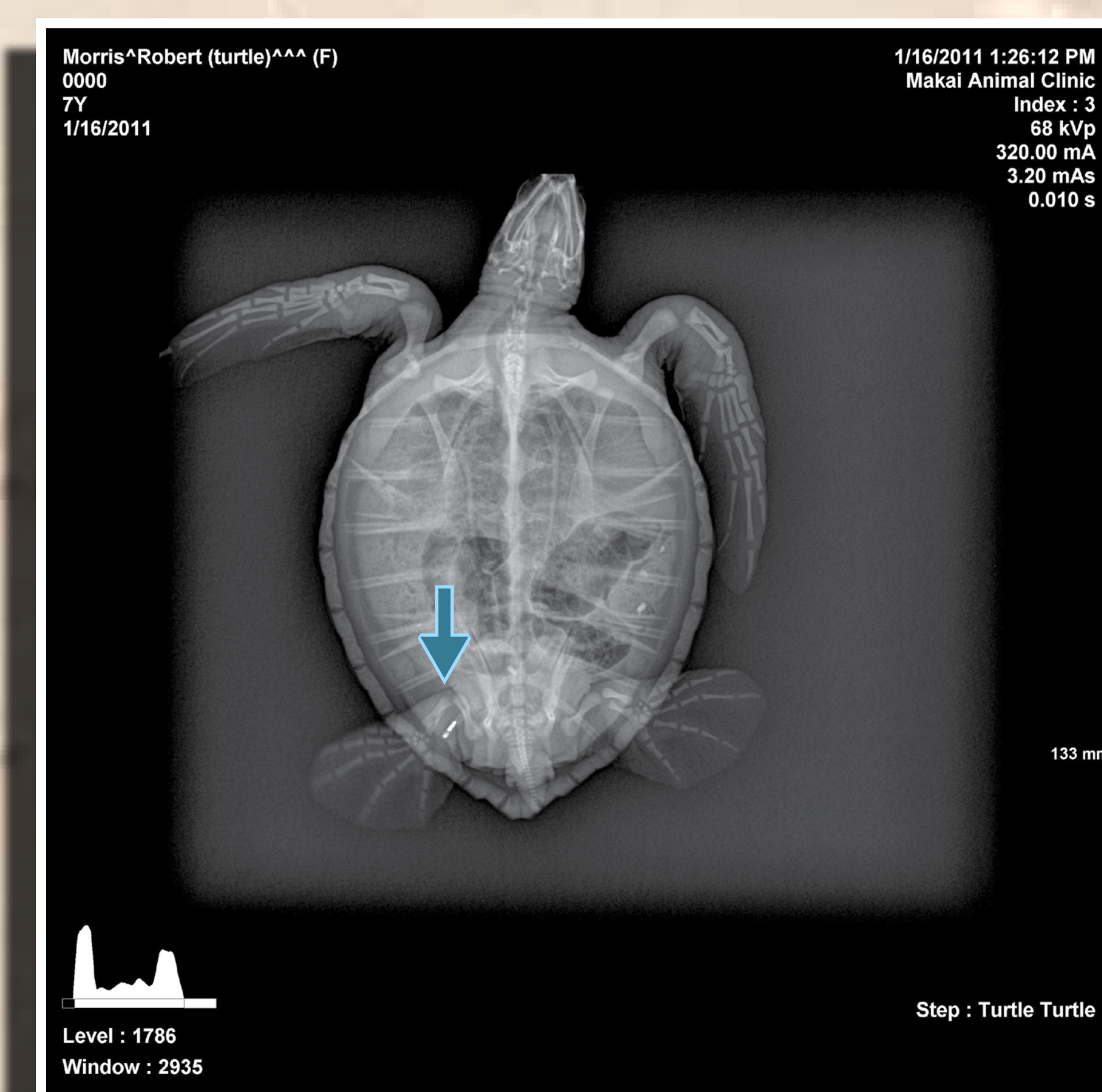
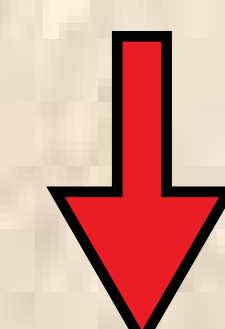
Wipe dorsal surface of left hind flipper with alcohol swab.



Inject 0.02 cc of 1% Lidocaine into subcutaneous soft tissue of dorsal left hind flipper. Wait 10 minutes. Use a new needle for each turtle.



Using a presterilized TX1406L applicator, insert the needle 12-15 mm under skin of the dorsal left hind flipper at an oblique angle.

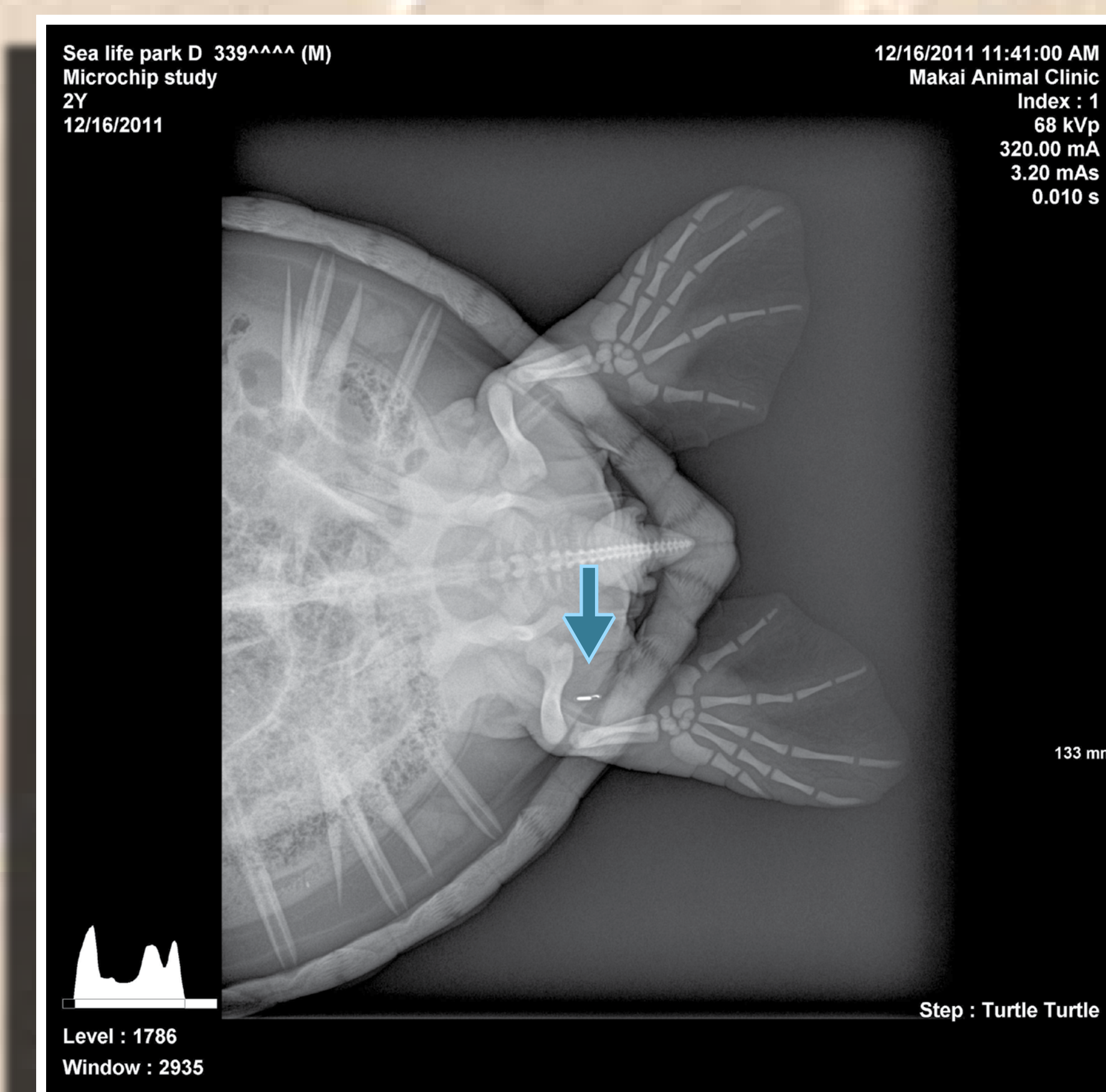
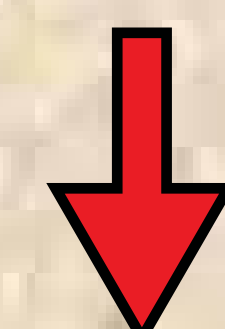


Digital X-ray showing Pit tag placement in left hind flipper of an 18 cm 5-month old green turtle tagged as a day-old hatchling.

An effective, safe, and humane technique has been developed, evaluated, approved, and utilized to microchip hatchling green turtles born and released into the wild by Sea Life Park Hawaii. Since 1976, Sea Life Park has released over 13,000 hatchling Hawaiian-stock green turtles as a conservation and research effort secondary to the Park's principal objective of educational outreach focused on their captive breeding display lagoon and nesting beach. From 2010-2012, 866 hatchlings born at Sea Life Park have been Pit tagged with the Destron Sterilized TX1460L 11 x 2 mm microchip using the one-time use applicator system. Fifteen hatchlings each year have been retained for captive rearing comparative evaluation of health, growth rates, tag retention, and any movement of the microchip as shown through X-ray imaging. Turtles have been reared up to 40 cm for 2.5 years with no negative effects. Pit tags are inserted into soft proximal tissue of the dorsal left hind flipper after injecting 1% Lidocaine HCL USP pain block. The puncture at the tag injection site is sealed using a drop of Vetbond 3M Tissue Adhesive. The hind flipper Pit tagging of juvenile-to-adult wild-captured green turtles in the Hawaiian Islands has been carried out since 1995 with significant success and safety, extremely low tag loss, and no movement of the tag within the flipper. Photographic illustrations with step-by-step descriptions of the hatchling Pit tagging technique are presented in this poster. Latex gloves are worn to reduce human hazard from needle stick.



About 5mm of the needle's length will remain outside the skin when inserted the partial distance of 12-15 mm. Insert the Pit tag using the slider on the injection handle mechanism.



Digital X-ray showing Pit tag placement in left hind flipper of 36 cm 16-month old green turtle tagged as a day-old hatchling.



Apply one drop of Vetbond 3M tissue adhesive to the puncture to seal the site. Allow 10 minutes for adhesive to dry before seawater immersion.