

DIAGNOSTIC CASE REPORT

U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY-BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL WILDLIFE HEALTH CENTER-HONOLULU FIELD STATION
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Case Number: 21293

Submitter Name:

Mr. George Balazs
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration
2570 Dole St
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
United States

Species submitted (n):

Turtle: Green (1)

Location:	Makai Pier	DateCollected:	6/28/2009
Area:	Honolulu	DateSubmitted:	7/7/2009
State:	Hawaii	DateReceived:	7/7/2009
Country:	United States	DateExamined:	7/7/2009

SPECIMENS SUBMITTED: Carcass-Frozen

History: This turtle was found with missing head and front flippers at Makai Pier. Person reporting turtle saw a monk seal interacting with a green turtle ca. 1 mile north of the site and believes this particular turtle was the same one.

Findings: Accession 1-green turtle immature male in fair body condition. This animal was missing both front flippers, the left rear flipper and the head. There was also bleeding in deep skeletal muscle and clotted blood near the stomach wall. The nature of the trauma indicated maceration of skeletal muscle with absence of evidence of classical shark-induced trauma such as jagged clean cuts of flesh and parallel scrape marks on the carapace.

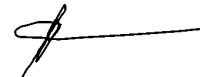
Final diagnosis: Accession 1-Trauma-Predation.

Comments: Gross lesions pointed to predator-induced trauma as cause of death. The nature of the lesions were not compatible with shark bite as evidenced by lack of clean lines of severance of tissues, lack of parallel scrape marks on the carapace, and lack of parallel scrapes on bones. The appearance of the tissues were more akin to a maceration-type action that would be effected by a large mammal (dog, seal). The fact this was a benthic non-nesting turtle and the absence of dogs in the immediate area argues against a dog being responsible for this trauma. The immediate history of seal-turtle interaction surrounding this death would implicate monk seal predation as the most likely cause of death.

Management:

Report Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 7/21/2009 **Necropy report:** Enclosed

Copies of this report sent to:



If you have questions regarding this case, contact Thierry M. Work MS, DVM, MPVM at 808-792-9520. Include above Case Number. Diagnostic findings may not be used for publication without the pathologist's knowledge and consent.

NOTE: Information in this report supersedes any information from previous reports regarding this case

**NATIONAL WILDLIFE HEALTH CENTER
NECROPSY REPORT**

Submitter Name:

Mr. George Balazs
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration
2570 Dole St
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
United States

Case: 21293
Accession: 1
Date Collected: 6/28/2009
Date Examined: 7/7/2009
Prosector: T. M. Work
Pathologist: T. M. Work

Signalment-Morphometrics-History

CONDITION: (Fair) POSTMORTEM: (Excellent) EUTHANASIA: (Not euthanized)
TAG TYPE: (Reference Number) TAG NO.: (062809)
SPECIES: (Turtle: Green) AGE: (Immature) SEX: (Male)
MORPHOMETRICS: Weight carcass (9.6 kg), Straight carapace length (41.6 cm).
COLLECTION-SITE: (Makai Pier) AREA: (Honolulu) STATE: (Hawaii) COUNTRY: (United States)
HISTORY: This turtle was found with missing head and front flippers at Makai Pier. Person reporting turtle saw a monk seal interacting with a green turtle ca. 1 mile north of the site and believes this particular turtle was the same one.

External/Internal

EXTERNAL: The head, both front and the left rear flipper are missing. The right humerus is present, however the left humerus is disarticulated and missing. Several (1-4) non parallel rake marks are on the shaft of the right humerus. The flesh surrounding the head and flipper wounds is macerated, and clumps of flesh are adherent on surrounding skin and carapace. Parallel scrapes on the carapace are not evident.

INTERNAL: Pectoral muscles appear adequate. Diffusely, there is hemorrhage within the skeletal muscles surrounding both coracoids. Lumps of clotted blood are on the serosal surface of the crop and stomach.

PRELIMINARY DIAGNOSIS: Trauma-predator.

Samples

SECIMENS RECEIVED: Carcass-Frozen.

Laboratory Results

COMMENTS: Gross lesions pointed to predator-induced trauma as cause of death. The nature of the lesions were not compatible with shark bite as evidenced by lack of clean lines of severance of tissues, lack of parallel scrape marks on the carapace, and lack of parallel scrapes on bones. The appearance of the tissues were more akin to a maceration-type action that would be effected by a large mammal (dog, seal). The fact this was a benthic non-nesting turtle and the absence of dogs in the immediate area argues against a dog being responsible for this trauma. The immediate history of seal-turtle interaction surrounding this death would implicate monk seal predation as the most likely cause of death.

Final Diagnosis (in order of importance)

Diagnosis	Topog	Morpho	Etiol	Funct	Dis	Link
1. Trauma-Predation	(T10050)	(M10000)	(E49230)	()	()	()

Diagnostic findings may not be published without the knowledge and consent of the pathologist.

Milt Code: (Trauma)