

FREEZE-MARKING EXPERIMENTATION WITH JUVENILE GREEN TURTLES

On 14 April 1981, William Gilmartin and George Balazs carried out a freeze-marking study with four juvenile green turtles being reared under contract at Sea Life Park. These turtles were originally obtained as hatchlings at French Frigate Shoals in September 1980.

The freeze-marking instrument utilized was a copper rod with a contact point measuring approximately 5 mm in diameter. The coolant was liquid nitrogen. After immersion in the coolant for several minutes, the point of the rod was firmly placed against a lateral scute of the carapace. Each of the lateral scutes on all four turtles received a trial mark ranging from 4 to 32 seconds of contact. A total of 32 trial marks was applied (8 lateral scutes per turtle x 4 turtles). The location of the trial mark on each scute, duration of contact, carapace lengths, and tag numbers are presented in the following diagrams. The turtles will be examined at one week intervals to determine extent and duration of depigmentation.

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