



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southwest Fisheries Center
Honolulu Laboratory
P. O. Box 3830
Honolulu, Hawaii 96812

NECROPSY REPORT 13 July 1984 F/SWC2:GHB

Specimen identification: Chelonia mydas, green sea turtle

Carapace (upper 'shell) length: 76.7 cm (30 inches)

Source: Confiscated by the State Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement, 6/30/84; reportedly came from waters off Kaena Point, Oahu

Date and location of necropsy: 7/6/84 at the Waikiki Aquarium where it had been stored in a freezer since the morning of 7/1/84

Other participants: Noah Pekelo and Mike Coelho, State Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement; William Gilmartin, National Marine Fisheries Service

Findings:

The specimen showed almost no signs of decomposition internally or externally, indicating that it had died only several hours prior to freezing. Other than a small single puncture wound on the ventral surface of the neck, there were no other signs of external injury. The punctured area did not pass through any major blood vessels.

A thick internal layer of typical greenish fat was found to be present. The gastrointestinal tract was at least half full of food material (red and green benthic algae). These two findings suggest that the turtle had been actively feeding and was in a normal state of health.

Except for the lungs, all of the internal organs were judged to be healthy with no signs of disease, abnormality, or physical injury. The lungs alone showed massive rupture and hemorrhage. The cause could not be determined, but most likely resulted from some form of physical injury or trauma, rather than disease.

Photographs: Two dorsal views taken prior to the necropsy.

Samples retained: Right humerus, stomach contents, and depot fat; the excised carapace was retained for evidence by the State Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement.

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