

Diet composition of green turtle juveniles with fibropapilloma in a feeding area of Villa Clara, Cuba

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Distribution and environmental quality of development areas of marine turtles' juveniles are still little known worldwide and within the Cuban archipelago. There are also no recent studies on Chelonia mydas' diet in Cuba and it is unknown what juveniles consume within the Cuban platform and if fibropapilloma disease could affect their feeding behavior. Therefore, the objectives of this work were to determine the elements present in the diet of green turtle juveniles in a feeding area north of the Cuban platform and compare its frequency of occurrence in samples of stomach contents and feces. To this end, a micro-histological analysis of the digestive content (stomach and feces) of animals with fibropapilloma that were found stranded in the protected area "Lanzanillo-Pajonal-Fragoso" on the north coast of Villa Clara. The correspondence between the elements found in the diet and their availability in the habitat, makes it impossible to determine if the turtles have preference between *Thalassia testudinum* and *Syringodium filiforme*. However, there is a greater proportion of *Halodule wrightii* in the diet with respect to its availability in the area, suggesting an apparent preference for this species of seagrass. The presence of *Chondria caribensis* in the diet of juveniles in Villa Clara, correspond with its abundance as an epiphyte in the seagrass beds of the area suggesting that *C. mydas* may adopt opportunistic behavior when a resource occurs at high densities on a local scale