

Pathology Report

Submitter Ref.: H270	Date Sent: 23/03/2018	Accession No.: 55663
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To: Marlborough

Report Sent: 28/03/2018

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Species: Cetacean	Breed: Hector's Dolphin		
Age: Subadult	Sex: Male		
Owner: Department of Conservation			Type: Post Mortem
ID: H270			Prev. Accn.:
Submitted:	At Risk:	Affected:	Dead:

History

Found floating in Queen Charlotte Sound.

Gross Findings

This young male dolphin presented chilled, in a reasonable state of preservation, with moderate skin slippage and loss affecting predominantly the tail stock. There were no lacerations on the leading edge of any fins or flippers, and no skin impressions were present. The dolphin was in slightly poor body condition, with a moderately prominent 'neck'. Blubber depth was 15mm dorsal; 11mm lateral and 16mm ventral. The blubber was discoloured green (decomposition). There was no subcutaneous bruising.

Marginal papillae were present on the tongue. The thoracic and abdominal cavities contained a small amount (less than 100ml per cavity) of red watery fluid. The lungs were mottled dark red/pink, and had numerous scattered small gritty granulomas. Moderate numbers of lungworms were present within smaller airways. No froth or fluid was present.

The stomach contained a compact mass composed of huge numbers of very fine (presumed) fish bones. Intestinal contents distal to this were normal, and although the material in the stomach was firm enough to suggest impaction, there was no evidence of obstruction. A tubular mass of presumed fish flesh and bones distended the oesophagus (likely regurgitated). The left adrenal gland had a slightly roughened serosal surface. The testes were immature (each 7g with epididymis; 6g without; left 54 x 17mm; right 52 x 15mm).

Histopathology

Histology summary:

Lungs: severe, multifocal to coalescing necrotising and granulomatous pneumonia with intralesional nematode larvae

Thoracic lymph node: moderate multifocal granulomatous lymphadenitis

Diagnosis

1. Severe parasitic pneumonia
2. Impacted stomach contents

Comments

This young dolphin was in sub-optimal body condition, and had severe pneumonia caused by lungworm. In addition, he had a compacted bolus of what appeared to be fine fish bones in his stomach. While either one of these conditions alone is unlikely to have directly caused his death, it is possible that the combined effects were serious enough to be fatal.

Date: 28/03/2018	Pathologists:
Students:	