

## Pathology Report

Submitter Ref.: H338	Date Sent: 19/11/2024	Accession No.: 64208
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To: [REDACTED]  
Department of Conservation  
Kaikoura

Report Sent: 17/12/2024

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Species: Cetacean	Breed: Hector's Dolphin	
Age: Adult	Sex: Female	
Owner:		Type: Post Mortem
ID: H338		Prev. Accn.:
Submitted:	At Risk:	Affected: Dead:

### History

Caught at sea [REDACTED]. Frozen prior to transport to Massey for necropsy.

### Gross Findings

This female dolphin was in excellent body condition and in a good state of post mortem preservation (code 2) aside from expected freeze-thaw artefact.

The standard length was 1.370m and the dolphin weighed 54.7kg. Blubber depths were 25mm dorsal, 19mm lateral and 22mm ventral. The abdominal cavity was distended.

There was minor scavenging around the left eye. There were encircling impressions over the snout, extending deeper to become lacerations over the dorsum of the snout. There were numerous small nicks on the lip margins, the leading edges of the pectoral flippers and the leading edges of the tail fluke, where they formed parallel encircling lacerations. A large tearing wound was present in the left axilla. Several skin thickness lacerations were present on the flat surface of the tail fluke, and there was a single nick on the dorsal-most point of the edge of the dorsal fin.

The mammary gland was small, with no milk.

The lungs were dark red and congested bilaterally, with multiple circular pale foci (aerated lung) on the pleural surface and cut surfaces. Rib impressions were apparent bilaterally. The stomach contained a large amount of muddy greyish material admixed with partially digested fish flesh and bones (intact weight = 1.7kg). The lacteals were prominent and white (chyle). There were no air bubbles in or around the kidneys.

The left uterine horn contained a well developed 635mm long female fetus, which weighed 4.2kg. The right ovary was smooth, and the left had a large corpus luteum.

### Histopathology

Histology was consistent with a healthy pregnant female who died due to entrapment in fishing gear.

### Diagnosis

Known bycatch

### Comments

This was a healthy pregnant female dolphin who died due to accidental capture in a net. There were several features which are consistent with our previous findings in known bycaught animals: encircling linear impressions and lacerations (suggestive of a set net), good body condition, recently ingested prey in the stomach and chyle (white lymphatic fluid) in the intestinal lymphatics.

Date: 16/12/2024	Pathologists: [REDACTED]
Students:	