

Pathology Report

Submitter Ref.: H348	Date Sent: 10/09/2025	Accession No.: 65301
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To: [REDACTED]
Canterbury
Email:

Report Sent: 10/10/2025
Copy To:

Species: Cetacean		Breed: Hector's Dolphin	
Age: Adult		Sex: Female	
Owner:		Type: Post Mortem	
ID: H348		Prev. Accn.:	
Submitted:	At Risk:	Affected:	Dead:

History

Caught by trawler on [REDACTED] Air freighted to Palmerston North for necropsy.
The dolphin was received chilled and kept in chiller until date of necropsy.

Gross Findings

The dolphin was in good state of post mortem preservation (code 2). The dolphin was in excellent body condition, with rounded dorsal lumbar profile and flat neck profile. Blubber depths were 21mm dorsal, 16mm lateral, 23mm ventral. The standard length was 1420mm.

Recent lacerations of varying lengths were present on both sides of the body. Occasional lacerations had a wavy profile. There was a deep laceration through the trailing edge of the right flipper, causing an avulsion approximately 2cm wide along the length of the trailing edge, where it was still attached by a small amount of tissue at the end of the flipper. There were encircling lacerations and impressions to the snout, with two wide lacerations present on the dorsal surface. One of the encircling impressions around ventral surface of the mandible lined up with a nick to the upper lip and several broken mandibular teeth.

Rib impressions were present on both lungs. Both lungs were dark red, and the right lung lobe was significantly more congested and on incision oozed a large amount of turbid dark red fluid. There was no foam in the airways, and no ingesta was present in the airways or pharynx.

The intestinal lacteals had a minimal amount of visible chyle. The stomach contained large amounts of partially digested food with some fish flesh visible. There were no bubbles present in the peri-renal tissue or renal subcapsular space.

The dolphin was in late gestation, with a fully formed and well preserved foetus present in the left horn of the uterus. The standard length of the foetus was 550mm, and was female.

Diagnosis

Known bycatch

Comments

A full suite of fixed tissues has been collected for histology, and frozen tissues for routine molecular surveillance. A further report will be sent if there are any significant findings on histology, but this would be unexpected as the gross necropsy findings in this dolphin were typical of a healthy pregnant adult female that died due to entanglement in fishing gear.

Date: 16/09/2025	Pathologists: [REDACTED]
Students: [REDACTED]	