

Institute of Veterinary, Animal and Biomedical Sciences

PATHOLOGY REPORT

Submitter's Ref.:	Date Sent: 27/11/2017	Accession No.: 55298
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TO:

Department of Conservation- Buller
Greymouth

Species: Cetacean (1)	Sex: Male	Age: Neonate	Breed: Hector's Dolphin
ID: H266	At Risk:	Affected: 1	Dead: 1
Owner:		Prev. Accn.:	Type: Post Mortem

HISTORY

Two-to-three Hector's Dolphin seen offshore afternoon of 25/11/2017. Calf found dead on beach afternoon of 26/11/2017.

GROSS FINDINGS

The calf weighed 7.0kg and was in a fairly good state of preservation and slightly reduced body condition.

Total length: 700mm

Upper jaw to origin of dorsal fin: 475mm

Upper jaw to genital slit: 420mm

Upper jaw to front insertion of flipper: 210mm

Length of flipper (ext) 150mm (int): 120mm

Flipper width: 55mm

Tail fluke width: 215mm

Length of gape: 110mm

Dorsal fin height: 60mm

Axillary girth: 410mm

Length of genital slit: 50mm

Dorsal blubber thickness: 9mm Lateral: 9mm Ventral: 11mm

Thyroid weight: 1.5 grams (0.021% of body weight or 0.21 grams/kg of body weight)

The left eye was absent and there were ragged linear epidermal defects and reddening of the periocular soft tissue (likely perimortem scavenging).

Foetal folds were present along the right side of the thorax and abdomen, marginal papillae were present along the lateral and rostral aspects of the tongue while rostral hairs along the rostrum were absent.

The umbilicus was still slightly opened (i.e. not fully closed with scar tissue) but the urachus/bladder, umbilical vein and both umbilical arteries appeared within normal gross limits.

The chambers of the stomach were devoid of ingesta, including milk. Segments of the intestine contained small amounts of pasty dark green material while the colon/rectum contained a moderate amount of similar material.

The liver was diffusely tan, soft, with slightly rounded margins and an enhanced reticular pattern. No fluid was noted in the trachea and no fluid oozed from the cut surface of the lung parenchyma.

No other abnormalities were noted on gross post mortem.

PROVISIONAL DIAGNOSIS

Likely maternal separation

COMMENTS

This was a neonatal male Hector's Dolphin. There were no indications of either sharp or blunt force trauma and despite being on the slightly skinny side, there were no obvious gross indications of any underlying disease such as an umbilical infection or congenital birth (including heart) defects.

The lack of milk in the stomach and the pale soft liver (possibly an indication of lipid or glycogen mobilisation as an energy source due to lack of nutrition) could indicate the animal hasn't feed in sometime so this could be a case of maternal separation. This can result in death due to hypoglycaemia and hypothermia, as younger animals cannot regulate their blood sugar and body temperature very well compared to adults, especially when they have not fed for a period of time.

File Nos.:

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Pathologist:

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