

**Institute of Veterinary, Animal and Biomedical Sciences
Massey University**

PATHOLOGY REPORT

Status: Pending

Date:

Type: Mortality

<p>Submitter</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Department of Conservation</p>	<p>Submission Details</p> <p>Lab. Case/Spec ID: 43855</p> <p>Date Submitted:</p> <p>Date Received: 07/08/2009</p> <p>Previous Case ID:</p> <p>WMD Case/Spec ID: 4878/1</p>
<p>Animal Details</p> <p>Animal Name: W09-11Ch</p> <p>Species: <i>Cephalorhynchus hectori hectori</i></p> <p>Common Name: Hector's Dolphin</p> <p>Sex Class: Unknown</p> <p>Age Class: Unknown</p> <p>Date Died:</p>	<p>Epidemiology</p> <p>Number Dead: 1</p> <p>Number at Risk:</p> <p>Number Sick:</p> <p>Number Submitted: 1</p>

DIAGNOSIS

Open - insufficient information to make definitive diagnosis

COMMENTS

The marks on the head look like they were made by a piece of rope or twine. From the tissues there is no way of telling, however, if these were made after death, for example by the person who removed and transported the head. The fracture of the mandible occurred after death, so could also have been sustained during removal of the head.

The fact that this dolphin was found with a fish in its mouth indicates that death probably occurred suddenly, and not as a result of a chronic illness for example. This type of finding is consistent with deaths due to predation, as well as those due to incidental capture in fishing gear. Questioning of the person who found this dolphin may help clarify some aspects of this (for example, were there any major wounds consistent with predation) although it is unlikely that we will be able to definitively rule in or out a bycatch-related death.

ANIMAL HISTORY

Recovered beachcast 1km east of the Waikoau river, Te Waewae Bay on Monday 3 August 2009. Was found by a member of the public, who removed the head and transported it back to DoC. The dolphin was found with the tail end of a fish in its mouth.

GROSS PATHOLOGY

The head (complete with fish) was received frozen. There were three linear impressions on the skin of the head: one on the right side of the face and two ventrally. Each mark consisted of a long linear impression flanked by short perpendicular indentations (suggestive of rope or twine marks). None were associated with haemorrhage or bruising. There were no obvious linear impressions over the snout, although a significant portion of the skin in this area had sloughed. There were two irregular incisions/wounds along the edge of the left mandible, both of which had haemorrhagic margins. There was bruising of the soft tissue in the intermandibular space, the top of the skull and the right lateral aspect of the snout along the mandible. The right mandible was fractured into multiple fragments, but there was no associated blood clot (indicating that this occurred after death).

