The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston

DIVISION OF SURGICAL PATHOLOGY

2.180 John Sealy Hospital, E-88
Galveston, Texas 77550
(409) 761-2853
(409) 761-4676 (FAX)

Ramon L. Sanchez, M.D., Director
Daniel F. Cowan, M.D.
William K. Gourley, M.D.
Dhruv Kumar, M.D.
L. Clarke Stout, Jr., M.D.

December 7, 1992

Graham Worthy, Ph.D
Texas Marine Mammal Stranding Network
4700 Avenue U
Galveston, Texas 77551

RE: Tursiops GA 436

Dear Dr. Worthy:

This will report to you my findings in the case of the Tursiops referenced above. My opinion is based on the gross autopsy examination and study of histologic slides prepared from the tissues. A summary of the gross autopsy findings is attached. A detailed description of the histopathology is available.

The findings in this animal at gross examination were very few. The pleura was opacified, and the myocardium was mottled. Microscopically, we have another story.

Both lungs showed a remarkable proliferation of vessels, mainly small blood vessels. There is also the same sort of proliferation in lymph nodes and focally in the stomach wall. This is a very unusual condition, which we have seen in another animal, PA 292. It was reported recently in a stranded Tursiops in Florida under the name "lymphangiomyomatosis" by Rawson et al in the Journal of Wildlife Diseases, 28:323-325, 1992. They were unable to attribute it to any particular cause, although they speculated on a relationship to very low testosterone levels.

There are changes in the heart that I would attribute to the physiological stress of stranding. Post-mortem growth of bacteria and a little gas formation preclude ay really subtle interpretation.

I would attribute death in this animal to natural causes. She should have been having respiratory difficulties with these lungs. There is no evidence of human interaction.

Sincerely,

Dowan

Daniel F. Cowan, M.D.
Professor of Pathology

GA 436 Tursiops truncatus female. 255 cm. 202.7 Kg body weight
Tooth age 24 (GLG)

Collected 21 March 1992 from Dirty Pelican Pier, .2 nm east: 2.2 nm west of High Island cut off.
Code 2, fresh

External examination: Many rake marks, especially dorsum, caudal to the fin. Ulceration on the head, just caudal to the blowhole.

Internal examination: The most striking change is a whitish opacification of the pleural of both lungs. Normally the lung tissue can be seen through the pleura. In this animal it cannot. There is a blotchy, dark mottling of the left ventricular myocardium.

All other organs are grossly normal, except for the pituitary gland, (pars anterior) which shows several whitish nodules, up to 4 mm in diameter.