



DIVISION OF SURGICAL PATHOLOGY

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December 7, 1992

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

RE: Tursiops PA 229

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.

This animal had been bitten by sharks. While one of the bite wounds was very fresh, others were not. There was also a form of hepatitis, and there is diffuse myocardial fibrosis. Also, we recovered half a dozen buckshot from the blubber just behind the blowhole. This was an old event. You could not see an entry wound from the surface. The shot was completely encapsulated in fibrous tissue. The extensive skin lesions had many of the very large protozoa I have mentioned to you before. I don't have a name for them.

Although tooth age is not available to me at this time, I think that this must be an elderly animal. There are many signs of wear and tear, and I found no evidence of active follicles in the ovary.

I would attribute death in this animal to natural causes. There is no evidence of recent human interaction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Cowan".

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

Dolphin autopsy

Thursday, October 18 1991

PA 229

Tursiops truncatus, female, mature 247 cm long, weight 148 kg.

Recovered approx 200 yd south of Bob Hall Pier at Padre Bali Park. Nueces County. (This animal was known to L. May as a Port Aransas dolphin)

External: Very many eruptive ulcerating necrotic lesions on the skin, especially anterior to the fin. These have irregular or geographic outlines, and some seem to overlie old white linear scars. The centers of the lesions are necrotic and the edges raised. The necrotic zones average 2-3 mm deep, and tend to be bordered by brown zones 4-5 mm wide. A "satellite" brown focus 3 mm wide is adjacent to but separate from a large lesion.

Many ulcerating lesions on the margins of the mouth. Large shark bite with loss of blubber on abdomen. Two other shark bites on dorsum, aft of the fin. In one, the tooth cuts are discolored, the other clean, suggesting recent injury. Around eruptive lesions blubber is brown and soft suggesting abscess. Many deep rakes and scores, mostly healing. Half of the right fluke is missing. Healed over.

Six buckshot embedded in the blubber just aft of the blowhole. Well healed, old event. Cannot identify entry sites from the surface. Many marks, scars and ulcerating lesions in the head area however.

Lymph nodes in prescapular, position, anterior (ventral) to sternomastoid muscle wnl. Nodes above the muscle are large and edematous, and maybe with necrosis.

Internal: Tissues remarkably well preserved. No gas formation.

Lungs well aerated, with sparse small surface nodules. No sign of consolidation. Trachea and bronchi are full of brown foam. No worms found.

Heart normal exterior. No depressed scar. However, patch of fibrosis in the left lateral wall of LV about half way from apex to base. Vessels widely patent. No other heart findings. Valves all WNL.

Liver: Surface heavily reticulated, but unremarkable interior. Bile ducts normal and free of flukes.

Spleen in normal location, with an accessory spleen embedded within the pancreas, under the pancreatic capsule. Another mass, grossly a spherical accessory spleen near the head of the pancreas, but separate from all organs. Gritty, bloody interior.

Pancreas completely normal.

Stomach: no parasites on gross. Contents washed out and saved. Several small stellate ulcers in the squamous portion: glandular portion WNL. Intestine grossly normal.

Adrenals normal. Left cut across, right longitudinal.

Kidneys both WNL. Bladder WNL

Ovaries small, w multiple corpora on both. Right has a cyst. Right saved to sample. Uterus, vagina WNL.

Mammary glands large, ducts normal with no gross secretion. No parasites.

Brain removed intact. No external lesions. Cord from fused cervical spine segment saved.