

Rounds

Animal Health
Department

Medical Rounds

"medicine for all"



Caring for Stranded Marine Animals

NATIONAL
MARINE
L I F E
CENTER

Notes

Veterinary Research
Department

Under the microscope

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Rounds Notes is a report on the health of animals at the National Marine Life Center from Sea Rogers Williams VMD for the staff, volunteers, and community of the center including professionals involved the captive care of similar species, the views expressed are not necessarily that of NMLC. Information in Rounds Notes should be considered confidential and used solely to benefit the health of aquatic animals everywhere.

February 11, 2010

Rounds Notes

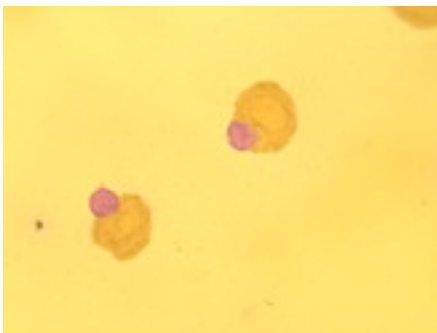
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Headlines News: Shell Game

Pseudoshell continues to revel its self



More necrotic (dead) dermal bone scutes have been removed as the pseudoshell develops and pushes the dead tissue away from the skin, or in some cases punches straight through the dead bone. Once the bony plate is loose, water and bacteria are trapped, and the pieces must be removed, being careful not to remove a piece that would avulse and expose ulcerated pseudoshell or worse the coelom or lungs below. A small blister on the pseudoshell was aseptically aspirated and the fluid cultured, but the cytology was not inflammatory and I hope that this lesion is sterile.



An ultrasound was also performed to evaluate the urinary bladder and the physical exam finding that the left renal tissue area seems bigger than the right. The bladder was again large, but now that we know what we're looking at, it makes for sense and is an excellent acoustic window for the kidneys and other coelomic structures. The renal tissue appears slightly cystic and is not well defined on the ultrasound, however, both sides were similar. No reproductive structures or developing eggs were seen. The B-mode echocardiography feature allows for the very accurate measure of heart rate (45 bpm) and the heart had good contractility, vascular structures deep in the coelom were well

perfused. It is somewhat frustrating to see these large vessels pulse when getting a peripheral blood sample is so hard to collect.



We are planing to continue to the current treatment, antibiotics (enrofloxacin PO 10 mg/kg q5d), topical shell treatments (muciprin and SSD) and supportive care. Patty's appetite seems to vary but has been very good lately and her weight is stable. It seems clear at

this point we will likely loose the entire carapace to avascular necrosis secondary to the thermal injury (she froze solid) but signs of new carapace growth are not yet evident.



Terrapins, Cooters, and Turtles, oh my . . . :

byline



The diamondback terrapins are just about to turn the corner into standard head-start rehabilitation. I feel these hatchling are all in critical care until they are eating, pooping, and reliably gaining weight. The smallest of the terrapins (#8) gave us quite a scare when he almost turned belly up in a feeding tank that was too warm (careful with that temperature control, do not use the touch test but a thermometer is necessary to match their tank water temperature when feeding). He made a fine recovery thankfully, and once he gets to 5.0g we can shift to feeding 6 days a week instead of daily. All the turtles are eating thawed frozen brine and other appropriate items.

Cooters are cooters and once they get their growth on, they tend to thrive here, soon we'll be talking about slowing this growth to maintain better bone structure and overall metabolic health over fast growth.

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