



Rounds Notes is a monthly report from Sea Rogers Williams VMD, the views expressed are not necessarily that of the National Marine Life Center. Information in Rounds Notes should be considered confidential and used solely to benefit the health of aquatic animals everywhere.

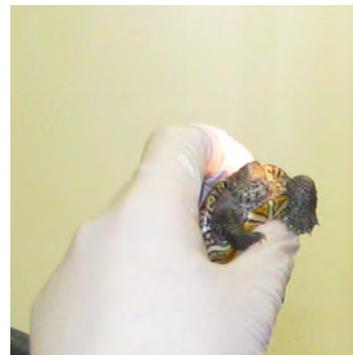
June 18, 2009

*Rounds Notes 11: 28-29(2009)*

## Headlines News: Back to the wild

The four diamondback terrapins that hatched too late for survival last winter are large enough to survive in the wild and have been cleared for release. This emergency head-start has resulted in 100% survival of the four hatchling under our care. The terrapins had an average of over 800% increase in weight and over 130% increase in straight carapace length during their stay.

The success of head-start programs with many reptile species has been well established and so we have high hopes for these little terrapins once they have been returned to their natural habitat.

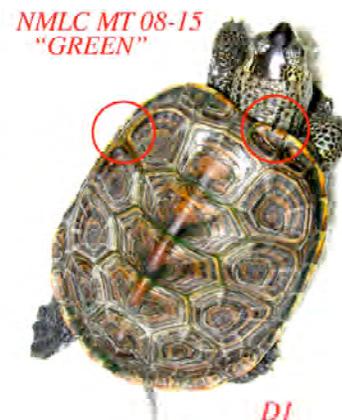


The diamond-backs were marked with a marginal scute notching procedure at Rounds.

The scutes to be marked are cleaned of algae and identified. A small volume of 2% lidocaine (0.01cc in this case) is injected into the areas to be marked and 5 minutes is allowed for the effect to take hold, the areas are cleaned again with betadine which is allowed to soak on the skin for 5 minutes after which time is removed with alcohol.

A veterinary high-speed dental drill with a sterile bit for each patient is used to create the notch. The area is cleaned and the notch covered with a oil-based triple antibiotic ointment.

Good luck. The wild identifications are D1 (aka- Mr Green Jeans) D2 (aka Blueberry) D3 (Blackie) and D4 (Brownie).



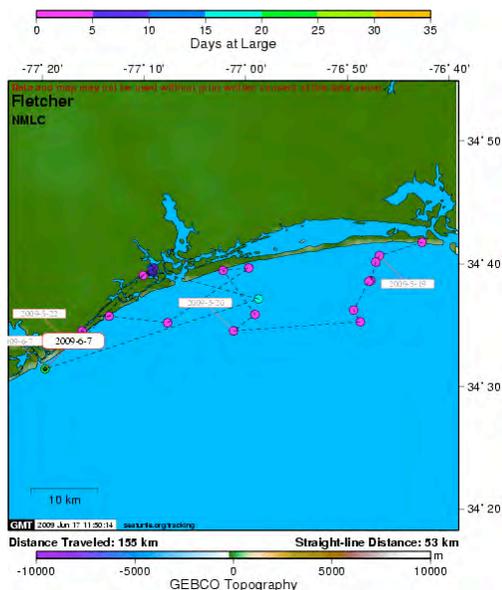
## Cooters

The six new cooters are gaining weight and size but none are at the 85mm SCL min required for release. Two of the terrapins had blood collected and analyzed for ionized calcium levels to see if advanced metabolic bone disease is the cause of their relatively slow growth. While no published normals for ionized calcium were found, an excellent review of the hematology of red-bellied cooters is available (Innis et al, 2007) and ionized calcium may be roughly half the total calcium in animals with normal serum protein. So at 1.49 and 1.64 mmol/L respectively and a “normal” total calcium of around 2.5 mmol/L (Innis et al, 2007) these two should be ok, also the values are consistent with some vitamin D activation for calcium absorption. Glucose and electrolytes were normal and the cooters were well oxygenated. While we have only have the cooters for two weeks all six cooters show growth in all five parameters (weight, straight carapace length, maximum carapace width, plastron length, and maximum depth) measured.

At their current growth #204 will be ready to go in July, but our smallest cooter (#196) has the slowest rate (SCL max @ 0.1mm/day) and will not be at sufficient size until the end of September, which is getting late in the season for a release, but if we can boost this animals growth rate (goal rate of 0.2 mm/day) we can get on track for an August release for all. We’ll keep a close eye on them.

## Sea Turtles at Large

Fletcher has emerged from the river and is back in the ocean but hugging the coast, but it appears this general area has everything Fletcher needs, and I’d don’t see why it shouldn’t.



#192

date	Jun 16, 2009
time	9:56 AM
operator	Joanne Williams
doctor	
Glu mg/dl	92
Na mmol/L	129
K mmol/L	4.5
TCO2 mmol/L	17
iCa mmol/L	1.49
Hct %PCV	22
Hb calc g/dl	7.5
at 37°C	
pH	7.201
PCO2 mmHg	40.7
PO2 mmHg	94
HCO3 mmol/L	15.9
BEecf mmol/L	-12
sO2 calc %	95

Lymph contaminated sample, not corrected for temperature.



*Cheryl Williams VMD*

Sea Rogers Williams VMD  
Attending Veterinarian & Director of Science

[STAFF: Kathy Zagzebski, Don Lewis, Bridget Dunnigan, Brian Moore, Joanne Nicholson, Julie Seligmann.]