

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.

July 24, 2009

Rounds Notes

16: 40-41 (2009)

Clinical Update: this keratin is killing me turtle shed less then pounds

Over the last month, Patty has developed a yellow discoloration to some of the vertebral scutes, the costal and associated marginal scutes, and some lesions on the plastron. This abnormal ecdysis (dysecdysis) is possibly a late manifestation of the thermal damage done to the scutes this spring. Water is being trapped under the keratin and this will lead to a bacterial or fungal infections of the epidermis or worse, the bone of the shell. The abnormal and dysfunctional keratin must be removed.

The keratin that is detached from the underline skin is dead and has no more feelings they our nails or hair, or a Paparazzi photographer getting pictures of some celebrities new hairdo, but some of the remnants of attachment are vital. To protect Patty from discomfort we administered pain control with a injection [buprenorphine 0.015 mg/kg IM] followed by a local block infiltrated under the keratin [0.2mg/kg 2% lidocaine, diluted]. After 20 minuets or so to allow the medications to sink in, the skin is prepared for debridement with a 5 min. betadyne scrub. The keratin is then removed with sharp dissection with fine surgical scissors and a scalpel. Particular attention is made to open any areas that have trapped fluid under the superficial keratin layer. After the procedure the scutes are





cleaned with chlorohexiderm, flushed, and coated with a thin layer of 1% silver sulfadiazine (SSD).

When basking Patty make sure the newly exposed areas are covered with SSD or zinc oxide to prevent a sunburn.

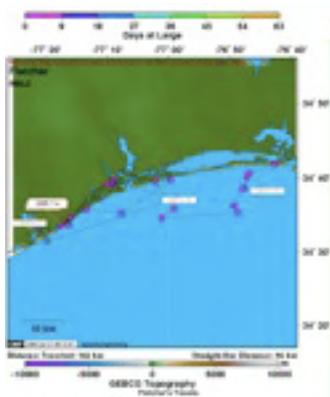
Additional similar procedures are anticipated until the progression of the condition is halted, all necrotic tissue is remove, and new growth initiated. Thanks for the VIN® consultations of Dr. Jim Wellehan ACZM, ACVM Microbiology for input on this case.

Terrapins, Cooters, and Turtles, oh my . . . : Got CuttleFish ?

Nothing beats a good hardy bite bones grow big and strong. As near their release size, their More flaking of keratin has been normal healthy epidermis below to see at least two the cooters excellent source of calcium. and we hope to get them back to



of cuttlefish bone to make your our held-back group of cooters growth has been remarkable. seen over the carapace with (unlike Patty). I was encouraged eating the cuttlefish as this is an Their carapace's all look good the wild soon.



Where in the World:

so far, so good, and steady as she goes

Fletch seems content to stay in once area for now.

C. Rogers Williams VMD

Sea Rogers Williams VMD
attending veterinarian and director of science

