



Caring for Stranded Marine Animals

PRESS RELEASE: For Immediate Release

Contact: Dr. “Sea” Rogers Williams, Attending Veterinarian and Director of Science
Cell 508-627-5292, e-mail rwilliams@nmlc.org, web www.nmlc.org

National Marine Life Center Paper Published in Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine

Buzzards Bay, MA, July 22, 2012— The National Marine Life Center (NMLC) is pleased to announce the publication of a peer reviewed scientific paper, written by Dr. Charles Rogers Williams, in the field of wildlife rehabilitation, veterinary care, and the One Health initiative. The article, [Surgical Removal of an Abscess Associated with *Fusarium solani* from a Kemp’s Ridley Sea Turtle \(*Lepidochelys kempii*\)](#), appears in the latest edition of the Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine. Dr. Michele Sims, Dr. Lois Roth-Johnson, and Dr. Brian Wickes co-authored the study.

Case reports are important to NMLC’s veterinary program as the organization seeks to both provide help to stranded sea turtles and marine mammals and also give context to their work and support the larger initiative of “One Health.” “One Health” refers to the tenet that combines human health, veterinary medicine, and the health of the environment. We are all interconnected, and what affects any one aspect will also impact the others.

The peer reviewed scientific paper was based on an unlikely connection between an eye infection breakout in people and a sea turtle being treated at the National Marine Life Center. The cause of the infection that required surgery in this particular endangered sea turtle was also responsible for a 2005 outbreak of human eye infections due to contaminated contact lens cleaning solutions. This coincided with the time the turtle (nicknamed “Claw”) was being treated at NMLC.

“While our patients don’t wear contact lens and I don’t think the two were directly related, fungi—unlike many viruses—do not necessarily respect species boundaries. Fungi can infect both animals and humans, and can also be found in the environment,” said Dr. Williams, senior author, and NMLC’s attending veterinarian and director of science.

“It’s just a means of underscoring that even marine animal rehabilitation does not happen in a vacuum. Our primary mission is to provide aid and relieve suffering to stranding sea turtles and marine mammals, but our mission is also much greater. When animals strand, they are telling us something about their health and about the health of the environment. With each case, we have to listen and discover the deeper story,” stated Dr. Williams. “We also have a responsibility to disseminate what we learn at NMLC, and we do so through our web presence, weekly Case Rounds, presentations and posters, and, in the most formal way, through publication.” Dr. Williams added, “I was happy to get this study out there, but even happier to know we played a role in getting Claw back out into the wild where he belongs, and in good health.”

The National Marine Life Center is an independent, non-profit marine animal hospital, science, and education center located in Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts. Founded in 1995, NMLC’s main focus is to further the science and study of marine life and stress the importance of ocean and marine animal conservation. NMLC serves as a rehabilitation and release hospital for the treatment of stranded sea turtles and seals, with future plans to expand to treat dolphins, porpoises, and small whales. For more information about NMLC and its services, please visit: www.nmlc.org.

###