

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

rwilliams@nmlc.org

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 7th, 2009

Rounds Notes

14: 34-36(2009)

Clinical Update: Patty one step forward, one hind leg dragging us back



Actually Patty is doing well, the hypemia continues to resolve from the right eye (the left is fine now) and she is visual but still eats only when presented with food on a tong (a rare occurrence in the wild), she is passing fecal material and the use of the right hind leg is improved but still not ready for the wild. We have not palpated nor do we see radiographic evidence of egg formation yet and we don't know if Patty will forgo egg formation due to the trauma sustained early in the season. It is however time to shed some keratin and if possible put on some mild yearly gain in weight, but I'd be content with no loss. The last vertebral scute is 'peeling' and has some minimal hemorrhage if

manipulated so we will continue with antibiotics. There is some yellow discoloration of the marginal scutes and we'll try to get Patty out-side to do some basking.

The husbandry set-up is designed to promote optimal health and healing:
We have a basking area 8-12 hrs a day with heat-lamp. Temperature is in the hi 70's or low 80's. Two UV-B lamps without glass are on-line 12 hrs a day (bulbs are less than 6 mo. old). A fresh water pool is available as well as 5 min. fresh water soaks three times a week. The salinity has been raised to 28ppt, and a new crushed coral substrate should buffer the pH, provide better 'footing', and if desired, provide something for Patty to munch on (personally I prefer popcorn).



The blood work shows a decreasing trend in tissue enzymes which is good, but a slight increase in uric acid which will be monitored. We have also added some Cod Liver Oil to Patty's diet to boost the vitamin A level, along with the ReptoMin® sticks we hide in the food. Live food has so far failed to spark her interest, but there are only so many places the small crabs (de-clawed of course) can hide.

Thus, we will continue to monitor Patty's shell, vision, and hind limb function. Some of the shell problems may be due to the initial lower salinity, need for seasonal growth, or late manifestation of the cold thermal injury that got Patty into this predicament in the first place. Either way she is still far from passing a release evaluation, but if her strength continues to improve we may try another "swim test" next week.

	date	May 27, 2009	Jul 1, 2009
	time		
	lab	IDEXX	IDEXX
	doctor	Williams	Williams
	tech	Brian	Roger
ALKP	U/L	50	63
ALT	U/L	20	5
AST	U/L	626	321
CK	U/L	4318	1354
LDH	U/L	12538	7879
ALB	g/dl	0.6	0.6
TP	g/dl	1.5	1.9
GLOB	g/dl	0.9	1.3
CHOL	mg/dl	28	70
GLU	mg/dl	88	85
Ca	mg/dl	9	10.3
PHOS	mg/dl	2.3	3.5
K	mEq/L	3	5.0
Na	mEq/L	138	145
A/G		0.7	0.5
URIC	mg/dl	1.1	2.1



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

Red-bellies growing, growing, . . . not gone yet

Several of the second batch of '09 red-bellies are still not at the 85 cm SCL requirement, but all are growing and eating, and, well you know. We are on track for a late summer release.

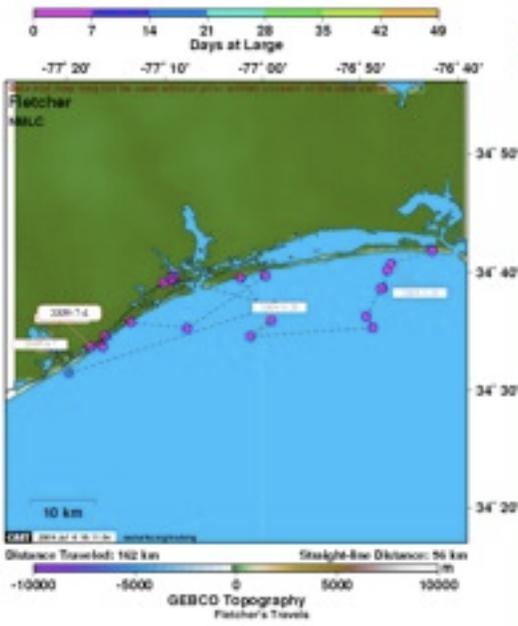
Critters . . .

The Critter Tank is Open

Crabs, shrimp, sea stars, etc. . . the critter tank is open and we'll be monitoring the water quality to allow the new tank to 'set-up' as we follow the nitrogen cycle. Best to add hardy new critters in small numbers as the biological filtration set's up to do it's work. A good first fish is a scup, tatau, or cunner.



Two lady crabs we collected but died shortly after, most of the other inverts are doing well, the sea star and the ribbed mussels seem to be getting along very nicely, they are almost inseparable.



Where in the World:

Fletcher's Travels

Fletcher's tag continues to work well, but no major movements to follow. Fletch seems to be tucked nicely just off the coast in an area of North Carolina that is supposed to be lovely this time of year.

C. Rogers Williams VMD

Sea Rogers Williams VMD
attending veterinarian and director of science



ebski, Don Lewis , Bridget Dunnigan, Brian Moore, Joanne Nicholson, Julie Seligmann.]