

**ZC-14 Individual Animal Report Excerpted from:
2005 Ketten, D. R., Beaked Whale Necropsy Findings for Strandings in the
Bahamas, Puerto Rico, and Madeira, 1999-2002. WHOI
Technical Report WHOI-2005-09. pp. 1-38 at**

<http://www.whoi.edu/csi/images/WHOI-2005-09.pdf>

Specimen ID/sex: 14-Zc male 18 feet

Species: *Ziphius cavirostris*

Date of stranding: reported 20/03/00; presumed stranded 15/03/00

Location: Plane Crash Beach, G.B./26.35N/78.29W

Preliminary condition: Code 3-4/Dead-decaying

Analyses to date: field dissection

Tissue Dispositions: Bater unless otherwise noted

External meatus – formalin

Skin –frozen and DMSO

Blubber and parasite-formalin

Observations/other observers:

This animal was reported on the 20th after having been spotted in a fly-over by BMMS. All observations noted below were photo-documented. D.R. Ketten, C. Potter, N. Hauser, D. Nowacek, and H. Peckham attending.

Observations/Ketten/Cranial/Temporal regions:

The animal was severely decayed but flesh was largely intact. It was found lying on its left side, fully exposed, lying parallel to the tidal line, ventral surface seaward. The flesh was taut, oozing, and clearly distended by post-mortem decay processes. Relatively little scavenger activity had taken place, but there were multiple small fissures with mixed exudate spread over the exposed surface. Because of its advanced state of decay, the minimal personnel available, and coincident time constraints for flights to examine fresher material, only the most superficial cranial exam was performed. Dr. Bater arrived near the end of our preliminary exam and decided the tissue samples and observations listed below were sufficient. The disposition of this carcass is unknown to me at the time of this report.

Lateral diameter 41.5 cm.

Dorso-ventral diameter 69 cm.

Anterior insertion of right pectoral fin to mid pupil area of right eye 66 cm.

Anterior insertion of right pectoral fin to posterior limit of mouth 91 cm.

Mid-pupil point of eye to ventral field 37 cm.

Externally, the animal had moderate, diffuse patches of lividity. A dorso-ventral incision of approximately 15 cm was made on the right side posterior to the external meatus. The meatus was intact and unremarkable. The blubber in this area was heavily infested with parasitic lightly calcified cysts which superficially resembled those of *Phyllobothrium spp.*. These were photographed, and a 3 cm by 5 cm wedge of blubber with embedded cysts was excised and placed in formalin. There is a mild purpling throughout visible tissues and no evidence of discrete trauma sites. A second, orthogonal incision was made

along the jaw to expose the peribullar space and mandible. There was consistent, diffuse blood in the superficial soft tissues in the exposed areas. The right tympano-otic bones were palpated and visually inspected. No overt abnormalities were found. The mandible and peri-mandibular areas were unremarkable.

Findings:

Considering the advanced state of decomposition and cursory exam, little can be concluded about this whale. There is no overt evidence of profound blast trauma. Hemorrhagic areas are consistent with simple lividity and post-mortem decomposition.

Summary:

Advanced decomposition/Encysted subcutaneous parasites