

## NOCARDIOSIS IN FREE-RANGING CETACEANS FROM THE CENTRAL-EASTERN ATLANTIC OCEAN AND CONTIGUOUS MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Díaz-Santana P.<sup>1</sup>, Fernandez A.<sup>1</sup>, Díaz-Delgado J.<sup>1,2</sup>, Vela A.I.<sup>3,4</sup>, Domínguez L.<sup>3,4</sup>,  
Suárez-Santana C.<sup>1</sup>, Puig-Lozano R.<sup>1</sup>, Fernández-Maldonado C.<sup>5</sup>, Sierra E.<sup>1\*</sup>,  
Arbelo M.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Veterinary Histology and Pathology, Atlantic Center for Cetacean Research, University Institute of Animal Health and Food Hygiene (IUSA), Veterinary School, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, Spain. Pablo.diasantana@gmail.com; Antonio.fernandez@ulpgc.es; cristian.suarez@ulpgc.es;

raquelpuiglozano@gmail.com; eva.sierra@ulpgc.es; manuel.arbelo@ulpgc.es  
<sup>2</sup> TVMDL, Texas A&M, Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory, Amarillo, TX, United States.  
josue.diazdelgado@tvmdl.tamu.edu

<sup>3</sup> Centro de Vigilancia Sanitaria Veterinaria (VISAVET). Complutense University, Spain.  
avela@ucm.es; lucasdo@visavet.ucm.es;

<sup>4</sup> Department of Animal Health, Faculty of Veterinary, Complutense University of Madrid, Madrid, Spain.

<sup>5</sup> Seashore Environment and Fauna. Calle Sevilla, 4, Tarifa, 11380, Cádiz  
carogue38@hotmail.com1

**Abstract:** Characterization, description, and geographical location of harmful bacterial agents in cetaceans are important for population surveillance and health monitoring around the world. This research compiles the pathologic features of nocardiosis in five free-ranging delphinids from the Canary Islands and Andalusia. All examined animals showed a disseminated pattern of infection with characteristic suppurative to pyogranulomatous lesions with thromboembolism in two or more organs. The obtained results provide the first record of *N. otitidiscaviarum* in cetaceans, the first account of *N. farcinica* in free-ranging dolphins, and confirmation of nocardiosis in central eastern Atlantic Ocean.

**Key words:** Cetacean; nocardiosis; striped dolphin; bottlenose dolphin; Canary Islands; Andalusia; Spain

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