

## **COMPARISON OF TWO METHODS TO CONTROL CANDIDA FROM THE BLOWHOLE OF DOLPHINS: (1) MICROSCOPE VIEWING OF FRESH SAMPLES AND (2) CULTURES ON PETRI PLATES**

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Candida is something that we absolutely need to control with our dolphins. Samples from the blowhole were taken on a weekly basis from our dolphins, but I had some "difficulties" dealing with the analysis of these samples. Some veterinarians preferred to view a fresh sample under a microscope while others, those mainly working in labs, preferred to analyze only the culture growths on a Petri Plate. Each group of veterinarians would determine a treatment plan based on these methods but the results from these methods were not always identical. In order to compare the validity of both methods, blowhole samples were collected for 100 days from our 7 dolphins and were observed using both systems. This presentation will show the results.

## **ULTRASONIC BLUBBER DEPTH MONITORING AS A DOLPHIN HUSBANDRY TOOL**

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Regular healthy monitoring can greatly increase an animal care staff's ability to identify medical problems in dolphins before they become serious. The greater the number of effective, benign monitoring techniques in the caretaker's arsenal, the more complete the information available for health-related decisions. We have been monitoring the body condition of our dolphins on a weekly basis since January 1990, through the use of ultrasonic measurement of blubber depth. The dolphins make a side presentation, and allow the trainers to touch the Scanoprobe to their skin at a mid-lateral index location. We then relate the blubber depth measures to food intake and water temperature. Preliminary analyses suggest that (1) dolphins living under conditions of constant water temperature and food intake tend to maintain a constant blubber depth appropriate for that temperature, (2) the blubber of "thin" dolphins responds to changes in food intake more directly than does the blubber of "heavy" dolphins, and (3) decreases in blubber depth, especially when values fall below the norm for a given water temperature, may indicate health problems.