

## A case of mastitis in a *Delphinapterus leucas*

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One of two female Belugas, imported from Churchill/Hudson Bay in the summer of 1969, showed an obvious enlargement of her left teat in the 14th year of her stay at Duisburg Zoo; the animal named Moby was collected as a so-called "blue" (with a body length of 290 cm) and did not change her colour to the pure bright white, which is typical for adult Belugas, as did the second female Allua and the male Ferdinand, which latter came to Duisburg in 1975 (Gewalt 1970, 1976).

Together with the thick edges of the surrounding skin folds the teat came out about 7 cm, similar to what can be seen on the pictures from Vancouver Public Aquarium in 1977 ("A Beluga is born"); further comparisons could possibly be made with the pregnancies which just led to the births of two baby Belugas in New York Aquarium/Coney Island. The teat development in female Belugas carrying suckling calves in the wild, which Gewalt inspected in fresh killed specimens near Churchill, was much less

conspicuous (Figure 1). We did hope that Moby was pregnant because of the teat enlargement and the quite voluminous abdomen at that time, notwithstanding the fact that normally both teats are enlarged. But she gave no birth, and therefore a pseudo-pregnancy was taken into consideration.

During the eighties Moby's left teat remained enlarged. An examination on 5 March, 1986, revealed a slight induration, but no fluid could be obtained. 20 ml of an oily solution (100 mg Procain Bencylpenicillin + 25 mg Neomycin sulfate + 5.000 IE Retinolpalmitate/ml) was administered in both cisterns. The left teat has not changed in appearance.

Since the spring of 1991, Moby's second teat has shown a rapid growth to nearly the size of the other already enlarged one, so that now there is almost a symmetry again (Figure 2). Sweeney and Ridgway (1975) found mastitis in several Bottlenose dolphins, one of which had a massive purulence from an

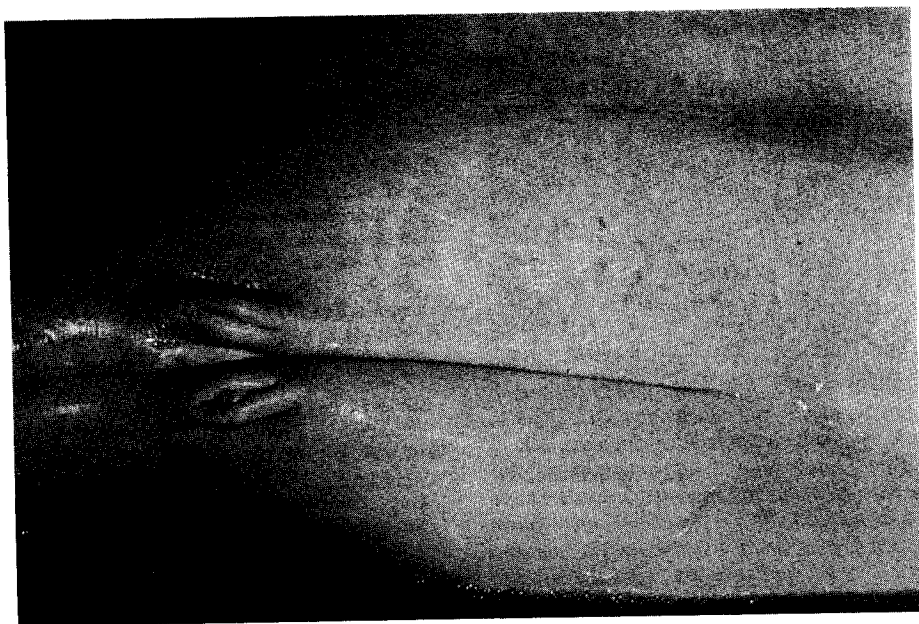
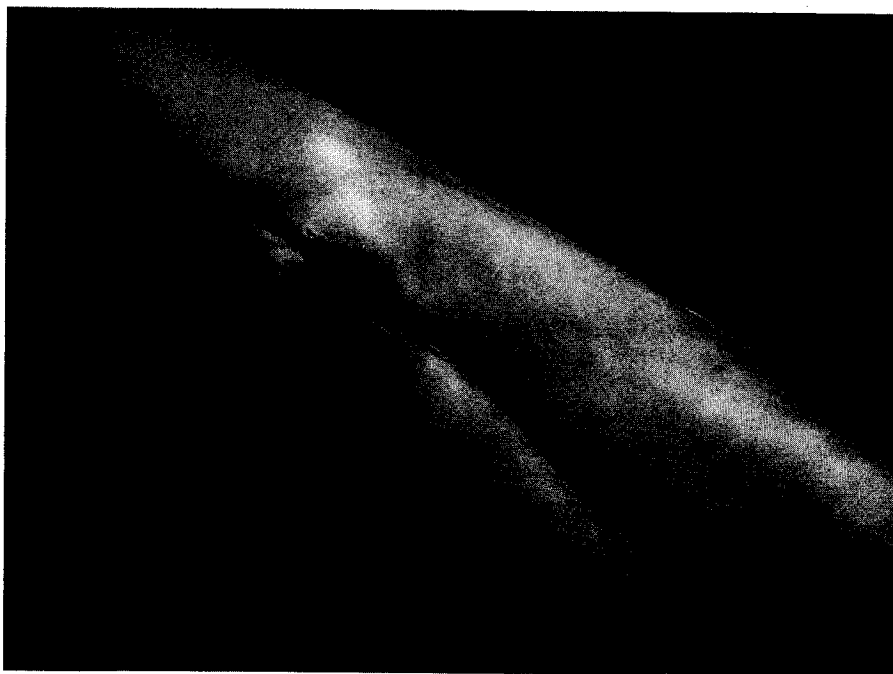
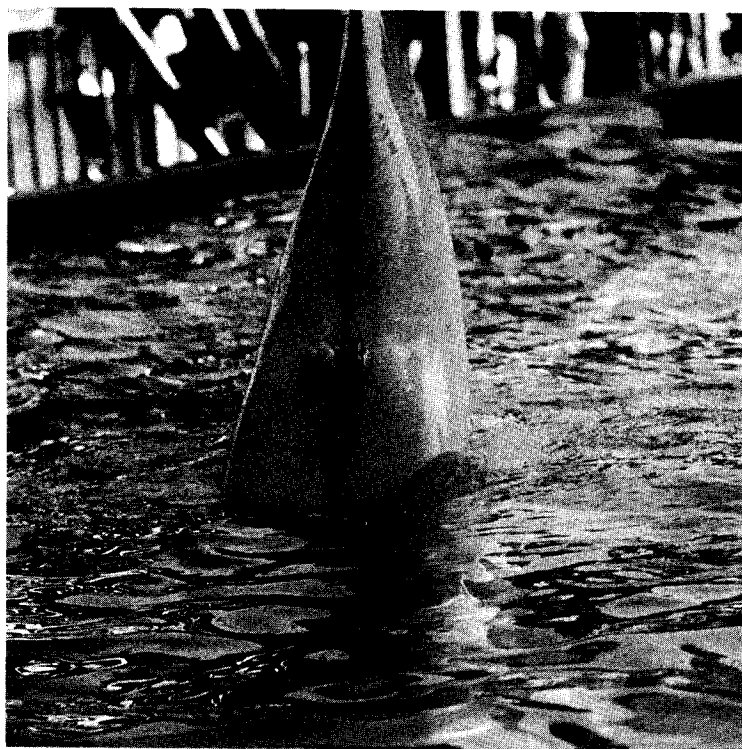


Figure 1. Ventral view on a lactating female, taken from the wild. Photograph Dr. W. Gewalt



**Figure 2.** Enlarged teats in the non-pregnant Beluga female Moby (summer 1991); in the background one Commerson's Dolphin. Photograph R. Reimann.



**Figure 3.** The a.m. specimen, photograph taken when making a "headstand". Photograph U. Schönfeld.

Edwardsiella tarda infection. Moby's chronic mastitis certainly does not affect her good body and health status up to now; she is still willing to cooperate with the trainers and shows nice behaviours. The animal is now about 25 years old, of which she has spent more than 22 years in Duisburg's Walarium.

#### References

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