

DERMOCHELYS CORIACEA (Leatherback Sea Turtle). **STRANDING.** To date, only two strandings of *Dermochelys coriacea* are known from the Belgian coast. The first one took place in December 1988 (Van Gompel 1989. De Strandvlo 9:102). The second was reported by Haelters and Kerckhof (1999. De Strandvlo 19:30–39). This specimen (total straight-line length ca. 170 cm) was cut in two sub-equal parts, most probably by a ship's propeller. The two parts were found a few km apart (off De Haan in trawler nets and on Wenduine beach) on 10 and 11 September 1998. Its skeleton is registered as IRSNB 15129. A third case, here reported, occurred on 19 December 2000, at Mariakerke (Ostend). The still-alive but dying male specimen (carapace curved length 157 cm, total length 194 cm, weight 369 kg), stranded in the evening, was brought to the Blankenberge Sea Life Center where it died during the night. An external examination revealed numerous deep cutaneous lacerations on the ventral and lateral sides of the animal. The internal examination revealed subcutaneous muscular hematomas and muscular degeneration, internally of the cutaneous lacerations. Evidence of focal hepatic necrosis and acute fibrinous peritonitis was also observed. The hepatic lesion and the peritonitis probably both occurred as a consequence of the cutaneous lacerations. The digestive tract was empty. The injuries, from which the animal eventually died, can be attributed to the impact of a ship or a ship's propeller. Mouldings of the whole specimen and its mouth were made by Zephyr Co. (Wellem, Belgium). Cast and skeleton are in the collections of the IRSNB (IRSNB 15516). The heart and samples for histopathology are kept at the Pathology Department of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the Université de Liège. Some *Stomatolepas dermochelys* (Crustacea: Cirripedia) were collected from this animal and the one stranded in 1998 and are deposited in the collections of the IRSNB.

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