



Guidelines for Microchip Transponder Sites in Zoo, Exotic Pet, and Wildlife Species

Introduction

This document summarises the guidelines for microchip transponder sites in animals. The guidelines are for informational use only. They are not exhaustive. Other methods may occasionally be applicable.

Table 1 – the views of the Council of the British Veterinary Zoological Society

Animal Type	Placement
FISH	Midline, anterior to dorsal fin.
AMPHIBIA	Lymphatic cavity, dorsal lymph sac.
REPTILES	
Chelonians	Primarily subcutaneously in left hind leg. Intramuscularly in thin-skinned species. Subcutaneously in tarsal area in giant species.
Crocodylians	Primarily cranial to nuchal cluster. Craniolateral tail in hatchlings of smaller species when chipped within a few days of birth (eg. CITES species).
Lizards	Primarily lateral aspect of left femoral area, over quadriceps muscle. Subcutaneously on caudal half of left flank if too small or legs too skinny or absent.
Snakes	Left flank, cranial to cloaca. NB: <i>It is recommended that tissue glue is placed over the needle entry site in all reptiles.</i>
BIRDS	Left pectoral muscle. Pipping muscle in ostriches. Subcutaneously at base of neck in penguins.
MAMMALS	Subcutaneously in left mid-neck in large species. Between scapulae in medium and small species.



Primates	Back of hand (metacarpal) or foot (metatarsal) if animal trained to present them through cage bars.
Elephants	Behind left ear.
Equids	In nuchal ligament.

Table 2 – Global implantation site recommendations for different classes of vertebrates (CBSG News, 1991)

All transponders should be inserted on the animal's left side when applicable.

Animal Type	Placement
FISH	Large (>30cm): left base of dorsal fin. Small (<30cm): coelomic cavity.
AMPHIBIA	Lymphatic cavity. NB: <i>It is recommended that tissue glue is placed over the needle entry site.</i>
REPTILES	
Chelonians	Left hind limb socket.
Crocodylians	Cranial to nuchal cluster.
Lizards	Large (>12.5cm snout to vent): left inguinal region. Small (<12.5cm snout to vent): intercoelomic cavity.
Snakes	Nape of neck.
BIRDS	Large (>1.5kg and/or long-legged): dorsally at juncture of neck and body. Medium to small (<1.5kg): left pectoral muscle.
All Psittaciformes	Left pectoral muscle.



All New and Old World vultures	Base of neck.
All other Falconiformes	Left pectoral muscle.
MAMMALS	<i>Size measurement is distance between back bone and shoulder blade of adult mammal.</i> Large (>17cm): behind left ear, at base. Medium to small (<17cm): between shoulder blade, left of centre.
Elephants	Main caudal fold parallel to tail.
Hyrax	Intralumbar.
Loris	Intralumbar.

References

- *Newsletter of the Captive Breeding Specialist Group, Species Survival Commission, World Conservation Union, 1991. CBSG News. 2(3), p.7.*