

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 October 2020 17:03
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: WIIS W2018 - Golden eagle post mortem results

[REDACTED]

There is no problem with you telling anyone, our intention is not to keep it a secret. I have briefed the Minister and [REDACTED] sent through details to you and [REDACTED] as there is evidence of persecution.

We only usually inform the original reporter of the actual cause of death, they don't generally get the full PM sent to them. We do this across WIIS as it keeps it simple – we deal with pets as well as wildlife. In addition APHA do not release bodies following PM. We explain that to people when they submit animals.

We aren't planning any proactive comms with this unless the Ministers office come back to us requesting it.

Thank you
Speak soon
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 October 2020 15:30
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: WIIS W2018 - Golden eagle post mortem results

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] shared with [REDACTED] the APHA post-mortem results of the escaped (but very much at large for nine years) Golden Eagle in Powys. Good to know that it was a natural death, but we were concerned by the final line: it had been the subject of attempted persecution previously but that this would not be provided in the feedback to the finders of the body.

I'd be interested in your thoughts about holding back that information, not specifically from the finders but from the public record, given that the PM was done by a public body. While it may not have been the cause of death, the pellet is part of the bird's story, and I am concerned that not putting that on record risks Welsh Government being accused of trying to cover it up were it ever to become known later. Given the level of public/media interest in the bird's death at the time, I would have thought it may be wiser to release a statement proactively. It could be used to reinforce Lesley Griffith's passion for raptors (even though this was not a wild bird) and her determination to root out persecution? I'm particularly conscious of this right now given the active discussion about Golden Eagle reintroductions in Wales.

If you'd like to talk it through, I'd be very happy to chat. Obviously, we feel in a slightly awkward position now that we know because if it were ever to become public, you might assume that we are the source!

Best wishes

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 06 October 2020 12:14
To: [Redacted]
Subject: WIIS W2018 - Golden eagle post mortem results

Hello

APHA have carried out a very thorough post mortem on the golden eagle which is why it has taken longer than usual to get the results. The PM included histology of the brain which did not add any further information.

The results are that the golden eagle died as a result of systemic aspergillosis.

At post-mortem examination the bird was emaciated and there were extensive, multiple white plaques throughout the whole carcass. *Aspergillus fumigatus* was cultured from multiple sites and histopathology confirmed systemic aspergillosis.

Radiographs of the carcass demonstrated 2 small circular radio-opaque foreign bodies. One metal pellet (about 2mm diameter) was located subcutaneously two-thirds of the way down the right tibia. The metal pellet was encapsulated within a thin membrane, suggesting the bird was not shot recently and presence of the pellet is unlikely to have contributed to the death of this bird. The other circular radio-opaque foreign body was not located. Testing for lead showed background exposure only.

Aspergillosis is the most common fungal mycosis in birds. *Aspergillus fumigatus* is a ubiquitous opportunistic organism and factors impairing the birds' immunity can predispose to disease. No underlying immunocompromising factors were detected on testing. There were extensive, chronic lesions throughout the carcass likely resulting in reduced feed intake, ill-thrift and dehydration and ultimately death.

I will be letting [REDACTED] know the results of the PM but I will leave out the section about the shot. It is evidence that the bird was a target of persecution at some point but not a cause of death.

We will not be sending tissues for toxicology analysis.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

