

WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

52/22



Original thinking... applied

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

INCIDENT NUMBER 52/22
PART OF STUDY FSGD-213
REGIONAL NUMBER W/22/16
OTHER REFERENCES 28-B0020-05-22
SENDER APHA Carmarthen VIC
LOCATION Rhydyfelin, Aberystwyth
Cardiganshire
GRID REFERENCE SN5978
INCIDENT DATE 28 April 2022
SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT trauma
DATE OF REPORT 18 August 2022

REPORTING OFFICER [REDACTED]
SIGNED : [REDACTED]

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1 tawny owl

COPIED TO

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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Samples received		Date received	Sample identifier
100719	tawny owl	26/5/22	APHA: 28-B0020-05-22
100719	tawny owl	26/5/22	APHA: 28-B0020-05-22
	tissues		

Summary of field data

A dead tawny owl was found in a gateway to a field. There appeared to be no obvious injuries to the owl. There had also been a dead buzzard found about 150m away in January 2022 (W/22/04-this was not sent for testing). The find was reported to Welsh Government and arrangements were made to deliver it to the APHA.

Summary of post mortem report

The owl was in a blue carrier bag inside a Wynnstay lambmaster feed bag, sealed with a cable tie, with a sender reference HLP - 012742 W /22/16 and a white label attached - W/22/16, Tawny Owl, specimen number I. Following negative Avian Influenza results, the examination revealed that this was a female in fair body condition and with moderate autolysis. There was discoloration of a large area of skin over the dorsal spine. There were fractures of proximal ribs, one on the right hand side and two on the left. There was a fracture of the proximal humerus with no associated haemorrhage or bruising. There was a blood clot adhered to the cranial liver and irregular lacerations of cranial liver. A small insect was present in the oropharynx, about 5 mm long. There was a large quantity of green pasty material in the gizzard, containing a long hollow tube containing faecal like contents, a 2cm long grub and multiple fine small bones. The intestinal contents were copious green paste. There was a large blood clot in the right lung and no recognisable lung tissue. Small blood clots were adhered to the left lung. There were blood clots adhered to the heart. Other organ systems examined were unremarkable. The endocrine system was not examined.

Analysis : metaldehyde & carb (LC) analysis suite

100719	stomach contents	no metaldehyde & carb (LC) detected	detection limit	0.004	mg/kg
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Analysis : rodenticide & chloralose analysis suite

100719	liver	bromadiolone	confirmed	0.00053	mg/kg
100719	liver	difenacoum	confirmed	0.00092	mg/kg

Conclusion

There were some findings on examination that were consistent with a natural cause of death, although some of the bone fractures may have occurred after death. However, laboratory analysis for some likely pesticides has been undertaken on the submitted samples. These tests have detected and confirmed a residue of difenacoum and bromadiolone in the liver of this tawny owl. However, the amounts found are consistent with background levels of exposure and are unlikely to have caused the death of this tawny owl. Therefore, it appears that the cause of death of this tawny owl is from a trauma injury as there were fractured ribs, lacerated liver and associated haemorrhage.

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