

WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

98/05

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT



CENTRAL SCIENCE
LABORATORY

INCIDENT NUMBER 98/05
PART OF STUDY PGD-200
REGIONAL NUMBER W/05/23
OTHER REFERENCES 29/B112/09/05
SENDER VLA Aberystwyth

LOCATION Dolgellau
Merioneth

GRID REFERENCE



INCIDENT DATE 18 September 2005

SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT trauma

DATE OF REPORT 22 December 2005

REPORTING OFFICER



SIGNED :

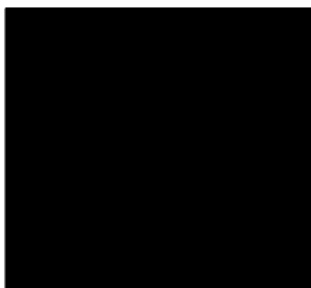


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NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

2 buzzard

COPIED TO



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Samples received			Date received	Sample identifier
59536	buzzard	maggots	23/9/05	spec ref 1 (pots labelled A)
59536	buzzard	tissues	23/9/05	spec ref 1 (pots labelled A)
59537	buzzard	maggots	23/9/05	spec ref 2 (pots labelled B)
59537	buzzard	tissues	23/9/05	spec ref 2 (pots labelled B)

Summary of field data

Two dead buzzards were found lying side by side near low-voltage power lines. A member of the public was out walking when she found the birds, they were lying side by side behind the wall of a chapel. She collected the birds and took them home before reporting the incident to the local police. A police officer visited her house and examined the birds; there were no real signs of trauma, although one bird had injured a wing. The incident was reported to the Welsh assembly, who collected the carcasses and delivered them to the VLA the next day. A site visit was conducted, some feathers were seen under an electricity pole next to the wall of the chapel, but nothing further suspicious was found. It was possible the birds had flown into the power lines overhead, but it was thought strange that two birds should be found in one place together like this. This is a rural area at the edge of a small village. There are mountains and an estuary, and some sheep and cattle farming. There are no known game interests.

Summary of post mortem report

Two buzzards were submitted, they had no identification, and sex could not be determined due to advanced autolysis and maggot damage. Buzzard A weighed 797g, buzzard B weighed 986g. Both were well muscled and feathered, but were too autolysed to assess the fat-coverage. Buzzard A had skin damage to the abdomen, buzzard B had skin damage to the right elbow; it was impossible to determine if this damage had been pre or post-mortem. The subcutaneous tissue of both birds had been invaded by an enormous number of maggots, up to 0.7mm long. There was possibly some haemorrhage around the lungs of buzzard A. The maggots in the body cavities of both birds had damaged the organs, including the alimentary tract. Buzzard A had an unidentifiable grey material in the gizzard, and buzzard B had an unidentifiable pale material in the crop and gizzard; there were also some fine white hairs/fibres in the gizzard. The spleen appeared to be enlarged in buzzard B. The cause of death was not apparent, and poisoning could therefore not be ruled out.

Analysis : carbamate (LC) analysis suite

59537	stomach contents	no carbamate (LC) detected	detection limit	0.1	mg/kg
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Analysis : chloralose-alpha

59537	kidney	no chloralose-alpha detected	detection limit	0.3	mg/kg
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Analysis : organophosphate analysis suite

59537	stomach contents	no organophosphate detected	detection limit	0.3	mg/kg
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Analysis : rodenticide analysis suite

59536	liver	difenacoum	confirmed	0.028	mg/kg
59537	liver	difenacoum	confirmed	0.025	mg/kg

Conclusion

It was suspected that these buzzards had been poisoned. Laboratory analysis for a range of likely pesticides has been undertaken on the submitted samples. However, no significant residues from the compound groups tested for were found, but small residues of difenacoum were noted in both birds. Given these results and the location these birds were found in, it is possible that they died from traumatic injuries.