

WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

83/08



CENTRAL SCIENCE
LABORATORY

INCIDENT NUMBER 83/08
PART OF STUDY PGD-310
REGIONAL NUMBER W/08/19
OTHER REFERENCES 29/B098/06/08
SENDER VLA Aberystwyth
LOCATION Cwmbwyno, Aberystwyth
Cardiganshire
GRID REFERENCE SN7181
INCIDENT DATE 12 June 2008
SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT trauma
DATE OF REPORT 9 September 2008

REPORTING OFFICER

SIGNED :

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1 red kite

COPIED TO

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Samples received			Date received	Sample identifier
74731	red kite	tissues	2/7/08	29B0098/06/08 : Specimen no. 1
74744	red kite	tissues	2/7/08	29B0098/06/08 : Specimen no. 2 pellet sample only

Summary of field data

Two ill red kites were taken into a vets for treatment over two days. Both kites were prostrate and immobile, and were given supportive therapy. The second kite, which had been found with rancid meat in its talons, died three days after arrival. This bird and a pellet sample from the other red kite were available for analysis.

Summary of post mortem report

One red kite was submitted for post mortem. The bird was a male weighing 862g, was in good bodily condition and had undergone mild autolysis. The bird had pale conjunctivae and there was some blood clot in its mouth. The skin and subcutis were unremarkable and no wounds were found. The respiratory system was unremarkable although there was a very large volume of clotted blood in the thoracic and abdominal air sacs. The liver and kidneys were pale. There was animal/bird tissue in the crop and fat, feathers and nematode worms in the gizzard. There was no evidence of bleeding into the intestinal tract. The endocrine, reproductive, lymphoreticular, and nervous systems were all unremarkable. The bird was well muscled but there was evidence of bruising of the ventral abdominal wall which implies the bird had suffered some severe trauma. Blunt trauma seems likely as no wounds or projectiles were found. The map reference suggests proximity to an A road and to wind turbines.

Analysis : rodenticide analysis suite

74731	liver	difenacoum	confirmed	0.025	mg/kg
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Conclusion

Initially, it was suspected that this red kite had been poisoned. Although the post-mortem findings indicated a natural cause of death, laboratory analysis for a range of anticoagulant rodenticides has been undertaken on the submitted samples. These tests have detected and confirmed a residue of difenacoum in the liver of this bird. This result has confirmed that the red kite was exposed to difenacoum, but the principal cause of death was from severe, blunt trauma. This may have been caused by a road traffic accident or a collision with nearby wind turbines.