

# WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

## WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

164/20



Original thinking... applied

INCIDENT NUMBER 164/20  
PART OF STUDY FSGD-211  
REGIONAL NUMBER W/20/18  
OTHER REFERENCES 28-B0062-08-20  
SENDER APHA Carmarthen VIC  
LOCATION Abergwesyn, near Llanwrtyd  
Powys  
GRID REFERENCE SN8656  
INCIDENT DATE 6 August 2020  
SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT brodifacoum  
unspecified  
DATE OF REPORT 3 February 2021

REPORTING OFFICER

SIGNED : .....

### NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1 golden eagle

### COPIED TO

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted] [Redacted]  
[Redacted]

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Samples received			Date received	Sample identifier
100122	golden eagle		27/11/20	28/B0062/08/20
100122	golden eagle	tissues	27/11/20	28/B0062/08/20

## Summary of field data

A dead golden eagle was found by a walker and later reported to Welsh Government. The eagle was a captive bird that had escaped at three months old and has been living wild for the best part of 12 to 15 years. The carcass was passed on to a local contact and stored in a freezer and arrangements were made to deliver it to the APHA for an examination. The golden eagle has been the subject of filming over the past year and is part of the Iolo Williams series about the Cambrian Mountains. The episode which shows the golden eagle is due to air on BBC Wales in a few weeks (programme 4). The find was initially reported to the person involved in the filming and they would like to update the viewers on the fate of the eagle. It was agreed that they would state that the cause of this bird's death is being investigated by WIIS and that no further details will be given. The carcass was found along a stream that is close to a village.

## Summary of post mortem report

The golden eagle was 82cm long from head to tail tip and the wingspan was approximately 2m was submitted frozen. It had a blue ring on the right leg (number 466582A) and a silver ring on the left leg (TWZ 07-36Y), the rings were kept. It had a very prominent keel bone and very little muscle on the legs. The bird was a female of weight 3.1kg and in emaciated body condition with moderate autolysis. There was no subcutaneous fat and very little muscle mass. Multiple white plaques throughout the peritoneum, firm, circular 1-3mm diameter, some coalescing. There was a 1.5cm walled off cavity adjacent to the right abdominal airsac, thick walled containing a white firm mass of caseous material. There was a mat of fibre in the crop, mostly grass, small fragments of leaf and a fragment of possible bracken. The proventriculus and gizzard were a firm mass adhered to the body wall and encased in white proliferative layers. There was a mass of firm white caseous material in the gizzard. Small intestinal contents were green and pasty. Large intestinal contents were scant and green. The lungs and airsacs contained multiple white circular nodules throughout. There was scattered small white circular plaques in the right kidney. The ovary was very small. All other organ systems examined were unremarkable.

## Analysis : rodenticide & chloralose analysis suite

100122	liver	difenacoum	confirmed	0.036	mg/kg
100122	liver	brodifacoum	confirmed	0.19	mg/kg
100122	liver	bromadiolone	confirmed	0.07	mg/kg

## Conclusion

It was suspected that this golden eagle had been poisoned, although from the post-mortem a natural cause may account for the death. Therefore, laboratory analysis for a range of anticoagulant rodenticides and chloralose only was undertaken on the submitted samples. These tests have detected and confirmed a residue of brodifacoum and very small residues of bromadiolone and difenacoum in the liver of this golden eagle. There was no obvious sign of haemorrhage reported on post-mortem, but freezing and thawing may have obscured some changes. The post-mortem examination concluded that the bird was emaciated and there were extensive and multiple white plaques throughout the whole carcass with *Aspergillus fumigatus* cultured from multiple sites. Therefore, the cause of death was considered to be from systemic aspergillosis, but the brodifacoum residue is at a level that may also have contributed to the death of this golden eagle. This incident has been assigned to unspecified use at present, as the source of the brodifacoum is uncertain.

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