

WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

26/24



Original thinking... applied

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

INCIDENT NUMBER 26/24
PART OF STUDY WIIS23
REGIONAL NUMBER W/24/03
OTHER REFERENCES 28-B0146-02-24
SENDER APHA Carmarthen VIC
LOCATION Denbigh
Denbighshire
GRID REFERENCE SJ0566
INCIDENT DATE 18 February 2024
SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT starvation
DATE OF REPORT 3 June 2024

REPORTING OFFICER [REDACTED]

SIGNED [REDACTED]

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1 peregrine

COPIED TO

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Samples received

Samples received	Date received	Sample identifier
101303 peregrine	22/3/24	APHA ref: 28-B0146-02-24
101303 peregrine tissues	22/3/24	APHA ref: 28-B0146-02-24

Summary of field data

A peregrine falcon was observed acting unusually - sitting outside a shop in an urban area, and not flying away. A local bird rescuer was called in and they were able to pick the bird up without a struggle. Later that evening the bird became agitated and behaved differently. An appointment was made for a vet to treat the peregrine the following day, but the bird was found dead in the morning. The peregrine had a silver leg ring (GV84787). The carcass was stored frozen, before being transported to the APHA for post-mortem. This is an urban area surrounded by residential properties, with some arable fields and small pockets of woodland nearby.

Summary of post mortem report

One female peregrine of unknown weight in emaciated body condition with moderate autolysis was submitted dead for post-mortem examination. Brain, cloacal and oro-pharyngeal swabs were taken for AI testing, no Influenza A viral RNA was detected. The rostral half of the upper beak was missing on right side and entire beak was missing on upper left side with some reddening of underlying tissues in nasal cavity on right side. The tip of the lower beak also missing. The crop and proventriculus were empty. The gizzard contained a firm ball of black, fibrous plant material. The small intestinal content was thick grey liquid proximally and thick black liquid distally. The large intestine contained thick black semi-formed content. There was red watery fluid around the heart. All other organ systems were unremarkable. The endocrine system was not examined. The most significant findings at postmortem were emaciation, with dark intestinal contents which can be indicative of starvation, and a severely damaged beak. It is not possible to say when the beak damage occurred but if it occurred before death, it will have affected the bird's ability to eat and may have resulted in death due to starvation in this case.

Analysis : rodenticide & chloralose analysis suite

101303	liver	brodifacoum	confirmed	0.013	mg/kg
101303	liver	bromadiolone	confirmed	0.0037	mg/kg

Conclusion

It was suspected that this peregrine had been poisoned, given its unusual behaviour before death. The post-mortem observation indicated the bird was emaciated, with a damaged beak. The post-mortem could not indicate if the peregrine's beak had been damaged before or after death. If the bird's beak had been damaged before death, it may have affected the peregrine's ability to eat, thus leading to its emaciated condition. Laboratory analysis for a chloralose and anti-coagulant rodenticides only was undertaken on the submitted samples. These tests have detected and confirmed small residues of bromadiolone and brodifacoum in the liver of this peregrine. Given the size of these residues, they are consistent with background exposure only. Given the emaciated condition of the bird reported on the post-mortem, cause of death of this peregrine is most likely from starvation.