WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT 34/24

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

Original thinking... applied

INCIDENT NUMBER 34/24

PART OF STUDY WIIS23

REGIONAL NUMBER W/24/08

OTHER REFERENCES 28-B0055-04-24

SENDER APHA Carmarthen VIC

LOCATION Aberystwyth
Cardiganshire

GRID REFERENCE SN5982

INCIDENT DATE 6 April 2024

SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT trauma

DATE OF REPORT 17 July 2024

REPORTING OFFICER [redacted]

SIGNED [redacted]

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1 goshawk

COPIED TO

[redacted]

[redacted]

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Samples received			Date received	Sample identifier
101365	goshawk		24/4/24	APHA ref 28-B55-04-24
101365	goshawk	tissues	24/4/24	APHA ref 28-B55-04-24

Summary of field data

A goshawk was found dead in woodland. There were no signs of injury on the goshawk. The carcase was stored frozen before being transported to an APHA lab for post-mortem. The carcase was found in a wooded area on the outskirts of a large town, with residential properties, a golf course nearby and some farmland with farm buildings nearby.

Summary of post mortem report

One male goshawk of unknown weight in good body condition with moderate autolysis was submitted dead for post-mortem examination. Brain, cloacal and oral swabs were taken for AI testing, no Influenza A viral RNA was detected. There was haemorrhaging of subcutaneous tissue over dorsum at the base of neck/cranial thorax. There was a complete fracture of the vertebral column at the level of the thoracic inlet and haemorrhage into muscles surrounding the fracture site and bruising over the sternum and cranium. There were fly eggs inside the oropharynx. The proventriculus and the gizzard were full of soft black and grey content and there was a large volume of grey-pink creamy liquid content in the small and large intestines. There was blood-tinged liquid in trachea and blood clots in cranial thoracic cavity. All other organ systems examined were unremarkable. The endocrine system was not examined. This adult male goshawk had a complete fracture of the spine together with other findings consistent with trauma which would have resulted in death of the bird.

Analysis : rodenticide & chloralose analysis suite

101365	difethialone	confirmed	0.002	mg/kg
101365	difenacoum	confirmed	0.014	mg/kg
101365	brodifacoum	confirmed	0.034	mg/kg
101365	bromadiolone	confirmed	0.037	mg/kg

Conclusion

It was initially suspected that this goshawk had been poisoned. Post-mortem observations indicated a spinal fracture and therefore trauma as cause of death. Therefore, laboratory analysis for a chloralose and a range of anti-coagulant rodenticides only has been undertaken on the submitted samples. These tests have detected and confirmed small residues of brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difethialone and difenacoum in the liver of this goshawk, but the amounts are consistent with background exposure levels only. Given these results, and the post-mortem observations, it appears that this goshawk died from a traumatic injury.

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