WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

1/25

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

Original thinking... applied

INCIDENT NUMBER 1/25

PART OF STUDY WIIS25

REGIONAL NUMBER W/24/28

OTHER REFERENCES 28-B0040-12-24

SENDER APHA Carmarthen VIC

LOCATION Pontypool
Monmouthshire

GRID REFERENCE SO2900

INCIDENT DATE 11 December 2024

SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT

DATE OF REPORT 2 April 2025

REPORTING OFFICER [redacted]

SIGNED : [redacted]

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1 goshawk

COPIED TO

[redacted]

Direct Phone Number 01904 462456

E-mail: wiis@fera.co.uk

Fera Science Ltd.
York Biotech Campus,
Sand Hutton, York, YO41 1LZ

www.fera.co.uk
T: +44 (0)300 100 0321
E: sales@fera.co.uk

Original thinking... applied

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

1/25

Original thinking... applied

Samples received			Date received	Sample identifier
101665	goshawk		6/1/25	APHA ref: 28-B0040-12-24
101665	goshawk	tissues	6/1/25	APHA ref: 28-B0040-12-24

Summary of field data

A goshawk was found dead with no sign of injury in a cemetery. The RSPB were informed but the carcase had already been collected and submitted to the APHA for disease testing before the RSPB could collect it. There were unconfirmed reports of goshawks in the area being shot/trapped on a gamebird estate nearby. This is an urban area surrounded by residential properties with a small pocket of woodland and arable fields.

Summary of post mortem report

One goshawk of unknown sex and weight in emaciated 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. There was no subcutaneous fat. The gizzard was empty and there was infrequent scant, pasty content within the intestines. Examination of all other organ systems was unremarkable. This adult goshawk was emaciated and contained virtually no GI tract content, suggesting it had not fed sufficiently for a considerable time. The report of death was made within days of a named storm and the location in which this bird was found fell within the affected 'red zone'. It is highly unlikely this bird would have been able to hunt during this time and may have already been close to the point of starvation. However, it is not possible to confirm the exact cause of death or the reasons as to why this bird became emaciated.

Analysis : rodenticide & chloralose analysis suite

101665	liver	difethialone	confirmed	0.004	mg/kg
101665	liver	difenacoum	confirmed	0.063	mg/kg
101665	liver	bromadiolone	confirmed	0.0078	mg/kg
101665	liver	brodifacoum	confirmed	0.18	mg/kg

Conclusion

This goshawk was in an emaciated condition. Laboratory analysis for chloralose and a range of anticoagulant rodenticides only has been undertaken on the submitted samples. These tests have detected and confirmed a residue of brodifacoum and small residues of difethialone, difenacoum and bromadiolone in the liver of this goshawk. The concentration of brodifacoum is higher than normally seen in goshawks, at a level often associated with poisoning. The difethialone, difenacoum and bromadiolone residues are consistent with background exposure only. The emaciated condition and difficulties in hunting during a significant storm likely contributed to the death of this goshawk. However, brodifacoum exposure may also have been a factor in the death of this goshawk, by affecting the goshawk's ability to hunt thus leading to its emaciated condition. Consequently, the incident has been assigned to an unspecified use of brodifacoum, with starvation as a secondary cause. The source of the brodifacoum is uncertain at present, although it may be from a rodent control treatment.

Fera Science Ltd.
York Biotech Campus,
Sand Hutton, York, YO41 1LZ

www.fera.co.uk
T: +44 (0)300 100 0321
E: sales@fera.co.uk

Original thinking... applied