

WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

93/24



Original thinking... applied

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

INCIDENT NUMBER 93/24
PART OF STUDY WIIS23
REGIONAL NUMBER W/24/17
OTHER REFERENCES 28-M0086-07-24
SENDER APHA Carmarthen VIC
LOCATION Cardigan
Cardiganshire
GRID REFERENCE SN2046
INCIDENT DATE 20 July 2024
SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT unknown
DATE OF REPORT 23 January 2025

REPORTING OFFICER [REDACTED]

SIGNED [REDACTED]

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1 badger

COPIED TO

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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| Samples received | | Date received | Sample identifier |
|------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| 101628 | badger | 29/10/24 | APHA ref: 28-M0086-07-24 |
| 101628 | badger tissues | 29/10/24 | APHA ref: 28-M0086-07-24 |

Summary of field data

A badger was found dead near a badger sett, with no signs of injury. This is the second badger found dead at the sett; the first one was found five weeks previously, albeit too decomposed for acceptance onto the WIIS. Both badgers were thought to be juveniles. A neighbour had been voicing concerns over badgers eating their produce, leading to suspicions these badgers may have been poisoned. This is a rural area surrounded by arable farmland, with several farms and associated farm buildings nearby. Some small pockets of woodland in the area as well as fields of solar panels.

Summary of post mortem report

One female badger weighing 2.8kg in poor body condition with severe autolysis was submitted for post-mortem examination. There were multiple maggots over the whole carcass and the hair was peeling from the skin. Both eyes were absent. The omentum was adhered to the body wall. There was an increased volume of red peritoneal fluid. A central lower incisor was absent and remaining incisor teeth were loose. There were multiple maggots in the gums surrounding the teeth. The rostral tongue was absent. There was a small volume of dark brown liquid in the stomach and a few strands of fibre - likely grass. Small intestinal and large intestinal content was dark brown/black tar-like pasty material. The spleen was enlarged. The right side of the brain was absent and only a small amount of liquified tissue remained from the left side of the brain. Other organ systems examined were unremarkable. The juvenile badger had not recently eaten; intestinal content was abnormally thick and tarry. The head had likely been scavenged and there were multiple maggots round the head and in the mouth. There were adhesions between the omentum and body wall, but due to severe autolysis, it was difficult to assess the significance of this finding. The excess peritoneal fluid could have been secondary to autolysis or due to peritonitis. Other more subtle pathology may have been masked by autolysis and this may also limit histological examination.

Analysis : chloralose-alpha

| | | | | | |
|--------|-------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| 101628 | liver | no chloralose-alpha detected | detection limit | 0.002 | mg/kg |
|--------|-------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|

Analysis : metaldehyde & carb (LC) analysis suite

| | | | | | |
|--------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------|-------|
| 101628 | stomach contents | no metaldehyde & carb (LC) detected | detection limit | 0.05 | mg/kg |
|--------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------|-------|

Analysis : organophosphate analysis suite

| | | | | | |
|--------|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---|-------|
| 101628 | stomach contents | no organophosphate detected | detection limit | 3 | mg/kg |
|--------|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---|-------|

Analysis : rodenticide analysis suite

| | | | | | |
|--------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| 101628 | liver | no rodenticide detected | detection limit | 0.001 | mg/kg |
|--------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|

Conclusion

It was suspected that this badger had been poisoned, given that this was the second badger found dead on the sett over a short period of time. The first badger found was not submitted for analysis. Laboratory analysis for a range of likely pesticides has been undertaken on the submitted samples from the second badger. However, no residues from the compound groups tested for were found. The cause of death of this badger remains uncertain.