

WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

14/11



The Food and Environment
Research Agency

INCIDENT NUMBER 14/11
PART OF STUDY FSGD-130
REGIONAL NUMBER W/11/02
OTHER REFERENCES 29/B0011/03/11
SENDER VLA Aberystwyth
LOCATION Dolwen, Aberfele
Denbighshire
GRID REFERENCE SH8914
INCIDENT DATE 1 March 2011
SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT starvation
DATE OF REPORT 2 June 2011

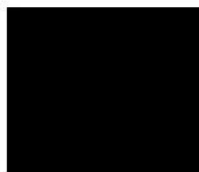
REPORTING OFFICER [REDACTED]

SIGNED : [REDACTED]

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1 barn owl

COPIED TO



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WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

14/11

Samples received		Date received	Sample identifier
89836	barn owl	14/3/11	29/B0011/03/11 :
89836	barn owl	14/3/11	29/B0011/03/11 :
	tissues		

Summary of field data

A barn owl was found in a farm yard. It was recumbent, but had no obvious signs of injury. The owl died soon after it was found and so it was submitted to the VLA for a post-mortem.

Summary of post mortem report

An adult, female barn owl with weight 205g and emaciated body condition and moderate autolysis was submitted for post-mortem. There was no external signs of trauma. The skin was tightly adherent to the carcass. The muscles were dark and there was no fat visible. The liver was black, autolysed and there was no visible lesions. There was no food present at any point in the alimentary tract. There was liquid black contents to the gizzard. The respiratory system was unremarkable. The heart contained a small volume of watery blood. There was no evidence of ovarian activity and other systems were unremarkable or not examined.

Analysis : rodenticide analysis suite

89836	liver	brodifacoum	confirmed	0.02	mg/kg
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Conclusion

Initially, it was suspected that this barn owl had been poisoned, but following the post-mortem a natural cause of death appeared more likely. Therefore, laboratory analysis for a range of anticoagulant rodenticides only has been undertaken on the submitted samples. These tests have detected and confirmed a small residue of brodifacoum in the liver of this barn owl and this is considered consistent with exposure only. Given this result and the findings on post-mortem, it appears likely that starvation accounts for the death of this barn owl.