

WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

47/15



WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

INCIDENT NUMBER 47/15
PART OF STUDY FSGD-208
REGIONAL NUMBER W/15/23
OTHER REFERENCES 28-B208-06-15
SENDER VLA Carmarthen
LOCATION Cowbridge
Glamorgan
GRID REFERENCE ST0173
INCIDENT DATE 14 May 2015
SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT unknown
DATE OF REPORT 17 August 2015

REPORTING OFFICER [REDACTED]

SIGNED : ... [REDACTED]

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1 barn owl

COPIED TO [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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Samples received		Date received	Sample Identifier
98078	barn owl	24/6/15	28-B0208-06-15 item: 1 x Barn Owl
98078	barn owl	24/6/15	28-B0208-06-15 item: 1 x Barn Owl
98078	barn owl tissues	24/6/15	28-B0208-06-15 item: 1 x Barn Owl

Summary of field data

A dead barn owl was found in the middle of a field in a market garden. The owl was reported to the Welsh Government and by the time it was collected it had been scavenged by a buzzard. Electricity wires were present in the field where it was found but not near where the bird was found. Rodenticides have been used in a polytunnel recently due to a rat problem but it is unknown what type of rodenticide was used.

Summary of post mortem report

A barn owl, weight 160g with a moderate degree of autolysis was submitted for post mortem. The feathers were in good condition and the chest and abdominal walls were missing (scavenged). The pectoral and thigh muscles were missing (scavenged) and there was no other apparent skeletal trauma. The contents of the peritoneal cavity (including the entire alimentary tract, cardio pulmonary system, kidneys, genitals and lymphoreticular system) were missing (presumed scavenged). There was numerous, dormant (or dead) 1-2mm long maggots in the carcass. The brain was not examined.

Analysis : chloralose

98078	muscle	no chloralose detected	detection limit	0.7	mg/kg
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Analysis : rodenticide analysis suite

98078	muscle	bromadiolone	confirmed	0.0001	mg/kg
98078	muscle	difenacoum	confirmed	0.0002	mg/kg

Conclusion

It was suspected that this barn owl had been poisoned. The post-mortem was compromised by scavenging, but some muscle tissue was available for analysis and limited testing has been completed on this. Therefore, laboratory analyses for some likely agricultural chemicals have been completed and a very small residue of bromadiolone and difenacoum was detected and confirmed. This confirms exposure to these pesticides, rather than the cause of death of the barn owl, which remains uncertain.