

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

INCIDENT NUMBER 24/20
PART OF STUDY FSGD-211
REGIONAL NUMBER W/20/02
OTHER REFERENCES 28/B0154/02/20
SENDER VLA Carmarthen
LOCATION Criccieth
Caernarfonshire
GRID REFERENCE SH5137
INCIDENT DATE 24 February 2020
SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT trauma
DATE OF REPORT 17 June 2020

REPORTING OFFICER

SIGNED :

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

15 starling

COPIED TO

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Samples received			Date received	Sample identifier
99839	starling		13/3/20	28-B0154-02-20 : 4 starlings
99839	starling	tissues	13/3/20	28-B0154-02-20 : 4 starlings
99840	starling		13/3/20	28-B0154-02-20 : 5 starlings
99840	starling	tissues	13/3/20	28-B0154-02-20 : 5 starlings

Summary of field data

A number of dead starlings have been found on a coastal path. The caller emailed some photos to the RSPB and some of the birds have been scavenged, but those that haven't all have their bills open. This finding was considered unusual and so Welsh Government were contacted. There were 15 starlings collected by the Police and they were later stored in a freezer at Welsh Government. Arrangements were made to collect the carcasses and deliver them to the APHA.

Summary of post mortem report

Nine starlings were received for post-mortem in two signed evidence bags NRW0050947 (birds 1-4) and NRW0050945 (birds 5-9). The carcasses were maintained frozen until they could be thawed and examined. Starling 1 was 100g weight and the ventral neck was missing, lung scavenged and large amount of haemorrhage over left pectoral and left thorax. Starling 2 was 100g and haemorrhage in the trachea and fractured cranial lumbar spine. Starling 3, weight not recorded very autolytic. Head and neck missing. Both femurs fractured. Starling 4, weight not recorded ventral neck skin and left pectoral missing. Haemorrhage over right pectoral muscle, axilla and flank and haemorrhage within thorax. Starling 5, was 101g and haemorrhage over left thorax and haemorrhage within thorax. Starling 6, weight not recorded and fractured right tibiotarsus just above intertarsal joint. Starling 7, weight not recorded and ventral neck skin missing. Fractures of pelvis. Right scapula penetrating through skin and fractured. Starling 8, weight not recorded and ventral neck skin missing and skin missing dorsal lumbar spine. Fracture of lumbar spine and left femur. Starling 9, weight not recorded and ventral neck skin missing. Fracture of right femur. The gizzards contained light green-brown fibrous material and invertebrate remains. The age was not known and the sex not recorded. All were moderately autolytic apart from No 3 which was considered severely autolytic. All appeared in good condition and had been feeding recently with well-developed pectoral muscles.

Analysis : chloralose analysis suite

99840	kidney	no chloralose detected	detection limit	0.02	mg/kg
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Analysis : metaldehyde & carb (LC) analysis suite

99839	stomach contents	no metaldehyde & carb (LC) detected	detection limit	0.6	mg/kg
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Analysis : organophosphate analysis suite

99840	stomach contents	no organophosphate detected	detection limit	0.4	mg/kg
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Analysis : rodenticide analysis suite

99840	liver	brodifacoum	confirmed	0.00035	mg/kg
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Conclusion

Although there were traumatic injuries noted in these starlings, it was considered possible that they had also been exposed to a pesticide. Laboratory analysis for some likely pesticides has been undertaken on the submitted samples. These tests have detected and confirmed a very small residue of brodifacoum in a pooled sample of liver from the starlings. However, the amount found is consistent with exposure only and it is unlikely to have contributed to the death of the starlings. Therefore, all the starlings had evidence of traumatic injury, such as fractures and haemorrhage and so this likely was the cause of their death.