WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT 81/22

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

Original thinking... applied

RESTRICTED

INCIDENT NUMBER 81/22

PART OF STUDY FSGD-213

REGIONAL NUMBER W/22/25

OTHER REFERENCES 28-B39&B40-08-22

SENDER APHA Carmarthen VIC

LOCATION Bridgend
Glamorgan

GRID REFERENCE [redacted]

INCIDENT DATE 2 August 2022

SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT bendiocarb abuse

DATE OF REPORT 15 November 2022

REPORTING OFFICER [redacted]

SIGNED : ..... [redacted]

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

2 buzzard
1 pigeon carcase (bait?)

COPIED TO

[redacted]

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Samples received			Date received	Sample identifier
100805	buzzard		23/8/22	28/B0039/08/22 : buzzard 1
100805	buzzard	tissues	23/8/22	28/B0039/08/22 : buzzard 1
100806	buzzard		23/8/22	28/B0039/08/22 : buzzard 2
100806	buzzard	tissues	23/8/22	28/B0039/08/22 : buzzard 2
100807	pigeon carcase (bait?)		23/8/22	28/B0040/08/22

Summary of field data

Two buzzards and a feral pigeon were found dead by a member of the public. The incident was originally posted to a social media page along with an image, but the post has since been taken down. The image showed two buzzards in close proximity to the dead feral pigeon. The pigeon looked to have been predated. One buzzard looked to be in good condition, but it was difficult to see the condition of the second buzzard as it was in vegetation. All three carcases were seized and bagged individually by a Wildlife Crime Officer and stored frozen at Police station facilities until transport could be arranged to take them to APHA. It was requested that the pigeon be treated like a bait. This is a semi-rural area with some arable land and residential properties nearby.

Summary of post mortem report

Two buzzards and a feral pigeon were submitted dead for post-mortem examination. Buzzard 1 was in an external bag with reference R01803612 and internal bag of R01803611 and buzzard 2 was in an external bag with reference R01803615 and internal bag of R01803608. The feral pigeon was received in two sealed clear plastic evidence bags; external bag no. R01803614 and internal bag no. NC00196912. Both buzzards were males of unknown weight in fair body condition with severe autolysis. Both buzzards had a prominent keel bone with some pectoral muscle present. Buzzard 1 had maggots present in the right inguinal region with skin loss extending from this area and over the ventral abdomen. The eyes had disintegrated. There was muscle damage from the stifle to the proximal right hindlimb due to maggots. There were feathers, tissues, bones, and a small amount of corn filled both the proventriculus and gizzard. Dark cream-coloured thick liquid was present in the small intestine. A scant amount of this same liquid was present in the large intestine. Dark mustard coloured liquid was present in the cloaca. Buzzard 2 had discoloured green skin that was peeling away from the ventral abdomen and proximal hind limbs. There were a few small insects on the skin surface in this area. The remains of what appeared to be from a bird and a small rodent filled both the proventriculus and gizzard. Dark yellow thick liquid content was present in the small intestine. Dark green thick liquid content was present in the large intestine and the cloaca. There was clotted blood present in the thoracic cavity overlying the left lung and air sacs. A few adhesions were present between the base of the heart and the pleura of the ventral thoracic wall. Haemorrhage was present throughout the left lung. The spleen appeared slightly enlarged. In both birds, all other organ systems examined were unremarkable. The endocrine systems were not examined. General observations of the pigeon show it was severely autolysed; the carcase was disintegrating and the head was missing. There were no wing clips identified. The whole carcase was submitted for testing as a possible poison bait.

Analysis : metaldehyde & carb (LC) analysis suite

100805	stomach contents	bendiocarb	confirmed	31	mg/kg
100806	stomach contents	bendiocarb	confirmed	75	mg/kg
100807		bendiocarb	confirmed	19000	µg
100807		carbofuran	confirmed	0.05	µg

Analysis : rodenticide & chloralose analysis suite

100805	liver	no rodenticide & chloralose detected	detection limit	0.03	mg/kg
100806	liver	difenacoum	confirmed	0.0023	mg/kg
100806	liver	brodifacoum	confirmed	0.0067	mg/kg

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Conclusion

Both these buzzards had eaten recently and this was a typical possible poisoning scenario. Laboratory analysis for a range of likely pesticides has been undertaken on all the submitted samples. These tests have detected and confirmed a residue of bendiocarb from the stomach content of both of these buzzards and in buzzard 1 the content consisted of lumps of brown coloured semi-digested material, fibrous paste, grains, feathers and bones (possibly parts of a wing) and in buzzard 2, it was lumps of relatively fresh red meat and some bones, with possible small rodent and mix of feathers, hair and a tail. There were also small residues of brodifacoum and difenacoum detected and confirmed in the liver of buzzard 2 only, but these were consistent with background exposure only. The poison bait was heavily predated, with the head missing, but wings and legs intact and a surface wash of this carcase confirmed a residue of bendiocarb, but there was also a small amount of carbofuran confirmed. It is likely that exposure to bendiocarb caused the death of these two buzzards and it appears that the source of this is from a pigeon carcase that had been intentionally laced with this pesticide. Therefore, this incident has been assigned to the abuse of bendiocarb, although contamination of this with carbofuran may have occurred during storage or preparation of the poison bait.

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