WILDLIFE INCIDENT UNIT

WILDLIFE INCIDENT REPORT

74/13

The Food & Environment Research Agency

INCIDENT NUMBER	74/13
PART OF STUDY	FSGD-190
REGIONAL NUMBER	W/13/14
OTHER REFERENCES	29/B0022/05/13
SENDER	VLA Aberystwyth
LOCATION	Fairbourne Merioneth
GRID REFERENCE	[redacted]
INCIDENT DATE	7 May 2013
SUSPECTED CAUSE OF INCIDENT	background residue
DATE OF REPORT	16 September 2013
REPORTING OFFICER	[redacted]
SIGNED :	[redacted]

NUMBERS AND SPECIES INVOLVED

1	buzzard
1	crow

COPIED TO [redacted] [redacted]

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Samples received			Date received	Sample identifier
96906	buzzard		23/7/13	29/B022/05/13 : (crow & buzzard) in one bag
96906	buzzard	tissues	23/7/13	29/B022/05/13 : (crow & buzzard) in one bag
96907	crow		23/7/13	29/B022/05/13 : (crow & buzzard) in one bag
96907	crow	tissues	23/7/13	29/B022/05/13 : (crow & buzzard) in one bag

Summary of field data

A dead buzzard has been found. There was also a dead crow not too far away and it appeared that the buzzard had been dead for a longer time than the crow. The buzzard was found in a stream and the crow was found about 50m away in a field by a track. The bird carcases were retrieved by the finder and stored in a cool place and were collected the following morning. The buzzard carcase was semi-desiccated and there were numerous black beetles with orange markings among the feathers.

Summary of post mortem report

A buzzard and a crow were submitted for post-mortem and there were no leg rings noted. The buzzard was of unknown sex, 570g and severe autolysis and well feathered; it was probably poorly muscled, but this was difficult to assess due to desiccation. The stomach was almost empty containing only a few small fragments of unidentifiable material. The lungs were too shrivelled to allow assessment and the spleen was not found. The endocrine system was not examined. The abdominal cavity, cardiovascular, and urinary systems were unremarkable, as far as could be assessed. Deterioration of the carcase impeded diagnosis, but no fractures were found. The crow was a female, 537g , good body condition, well feathered, muscled and fairly mild autolysis. Muscles in the posterior aspect of the upper left leg were dark red. There were small fat deposits in the abdominal cavity. The gizzard contained food material including several whole grains. The ovary contained only small ovules. The endocrine system was not examined. The abdominal cavity and respiratory, cardiovascular, lymphoreticular, urinary and nervous systems were unremarkable. The crow died in good bodily condition. The muscles of the left hind leg appeared bruised, but no wound or fracture was found and the injury did not appear sufficiently severe to have caused death.

Analysis : carbamate (LC) analysis suite

96907	gizzard contents	no carbamate (LC) detected	detection limit	0.1	mg/kg

Analysis : chloralose

96906	kidney	no chloralose detected	detection limit	0.4	mg/kg
96907	kidney	no chloralose detected	detection limit	0.5	mg/kg

Analysis : organophosphate analysis suite

96907	gizzard contents	no organophosphate detected	detection limit	3	mg/kg

Analysis : rodenticide analysis suite

96906	liver	difenacoum	confirmed	0.0044	mg/kg
96906	liver	bromadiolone	confirmed	0.00021	mg/kg
96907	liver	no rodenticide detected	detection limit	0.0003	mg/kg

Conclusion

It was suspected that these birds had been poisoned. Laboratory analysis for a range of likely pesticides has been undertaken on the submitted samples. These tests detected and confirmed residues of difenacoum and bromadiolone only in the liver of the buzzard. The residues found are considered to be consistent with exposure only. Therefore, the cause of death of these birds remains uncertain.