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4th June 2007

Post Mortem Report

On 31st May 2007 at approximately 9.40am, PC Tim Bonsor (2482) presented two dead badgers to me for post mortem examination.

Badger A:

A young male badger weighing 9.55kg. It was in good body condition but had been dead for at least 48 hours (Badger A 022)

Externally, there was evidence of early fly strike with large numbers of fly eggs present all over the body.

Radiographs (Badger A 002) revealed a linear indentation circumventing the neck which corresponded to visible contusions around the throat (Badger A 014). This was consistent with a ligature (conceivably a snare) having been placed around the throat prior to death.

There were also recent wounds to the pads (notably digit 3 left fore and main pad right fore) which were consistent with this animal having scabbled violently to try to get free prior to death (Badger A 017 and Badger A 018).

There were old bite wounds and scratch marks to the right fore leg which were most likely the result of conflict with other badgers.

There were also contusions to the gums just caudal to the upper canine teeth (Badger A 021) which were consistent with this badger having tried to bite at a hard thin object (such as a wire tether) prior to death.

Internally, there was evidence of mild decomposition. No abnormalities were found in the abdomen (Badger A 025).

The trachea exhibited significant bruising at the level corresponding to the position of the external skin indentation (Badger A 031). The upper trachea contained stomach contents (Badger A 034) and the bottom of the trachea contained bloody frothy mucous (Badger A 038). The lungs were already showing significant post mortem changes and no further abnormalities were detected in the chest cavity.

My opinion is that this animal died as the result of asphyxiation caused by a ligature placed around its neck, probably a snare.

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Badger B:

A young male badger weighing 9.95kg and in good body condition.

The body was very muddy and moderately decomposed. There was significant fly strike with large numbers of well developed maggots suggesting that the animal had been dead for several days.

There was a snare tightly encircling the neck, just behind the ears (Badger B 015).

There was a wound to the back of the head and crepitus associated with the skull (Badger B 028).

Due to the degree of decomposition, examination of the chest and abdominal cavities was unrewarding.

Radiographs revealed that, in addition to a snare being very tightly encircling the neck (Badger B 001 & Badger B 006 the animal had been shot in the back of the head causing the rear of the skull to be shattered (Badger B 004). The bullet had become fragmented within the cranium.

Three fragments were retrieved manually (Badger B 050).

The snare was cut away with bolt cutters and retained as Badger B 051 (photo Badger B snare 003).

Due to the degree of decomposition, it was not possible to determine if the animal had been alive at the time it was shot. However, the snare was so tight that it would almost certainly have died of asphyxiation at some point.



Badger A 017



Badger A 021



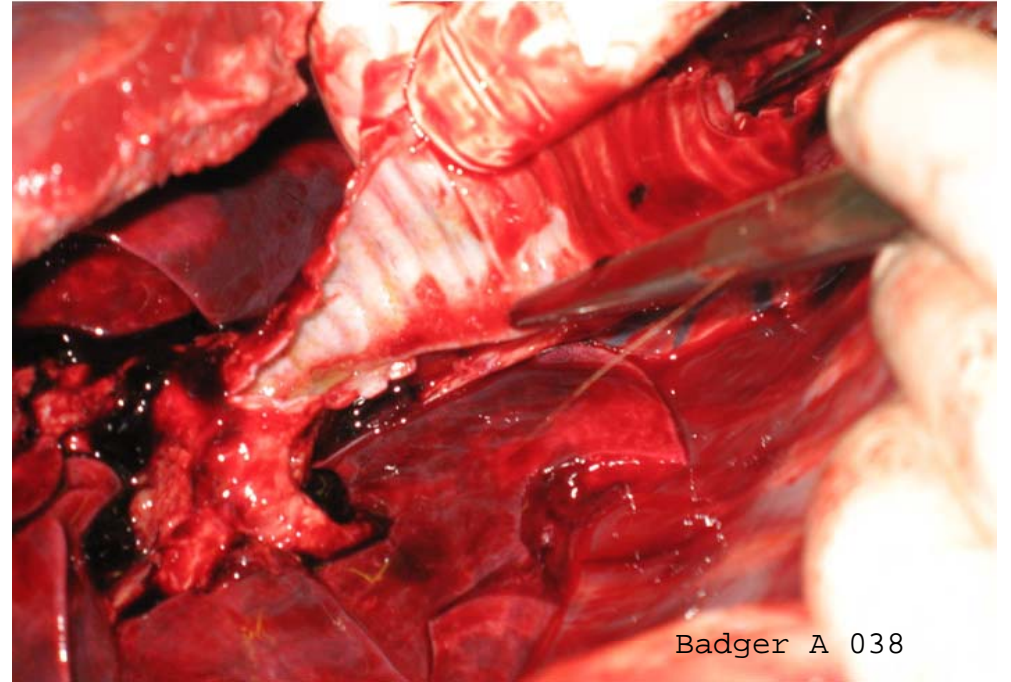
Badger A 014



Badger A 018



Badger A 025



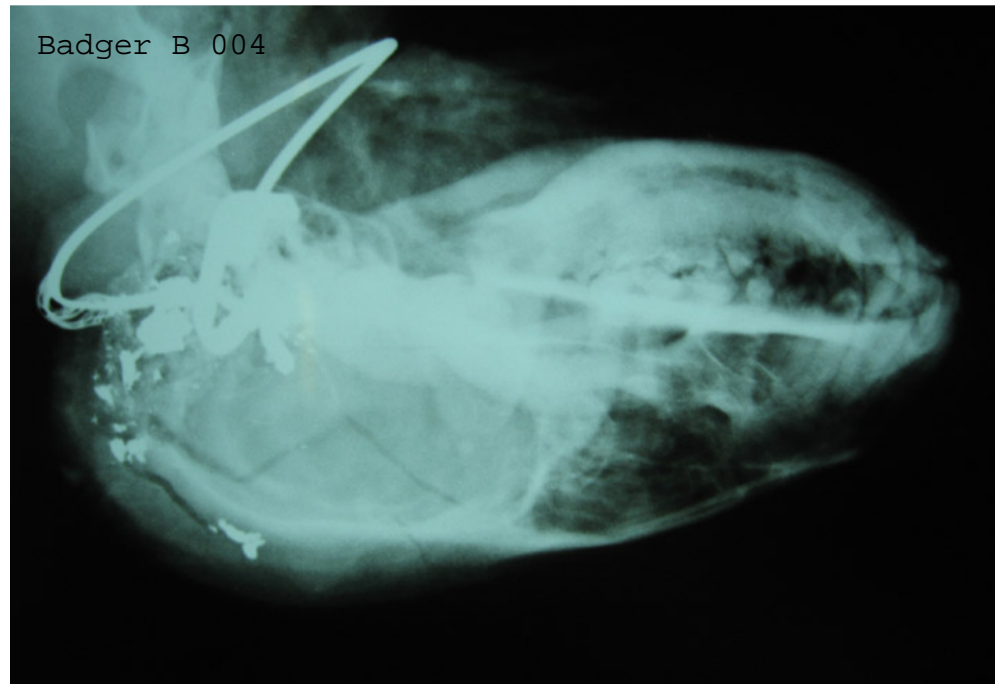
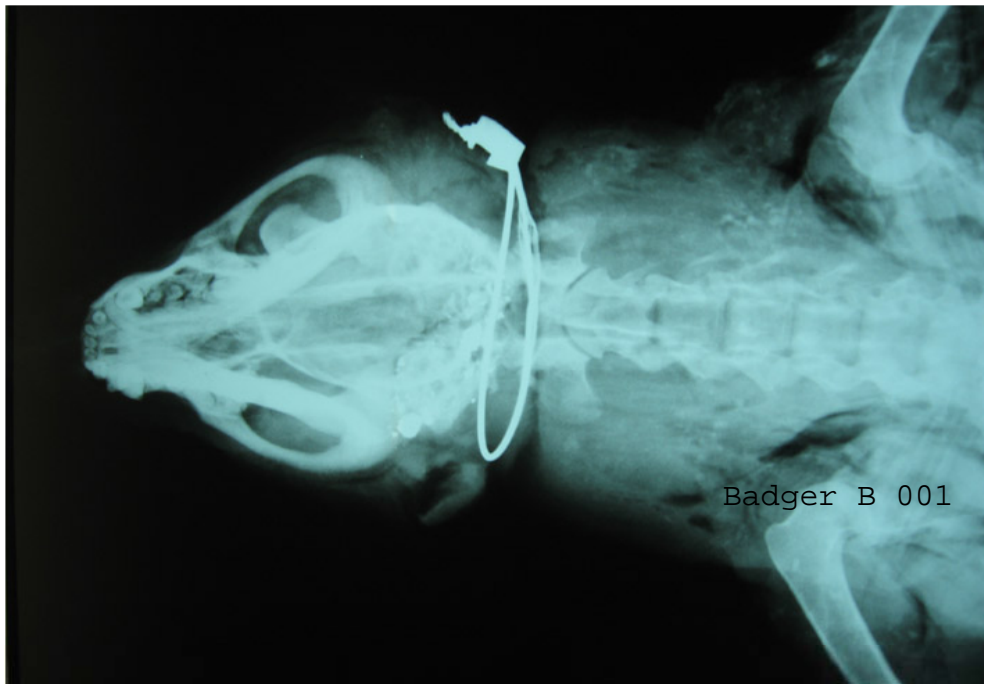
Badger A 038



Badger A 022



Badger A 031



Badger B 028



Badger B 015

Badger A 002

