

O797/Y

(Formerly)

O797/Y

DESTRUCTION OF BIRDS OF PREY

CONNECTED FILES.

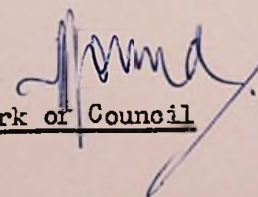
NUMBER

1065

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 2/66 OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HELD ON
THE 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th APRIL 1966.

24. DESTRUCTION OF BIRDS OF PREY BY POISONING

The Hon. Mr. S. Miller referred to losses sustained by the farming industry as a result of turkey buzzards and caranchos preying on young lambs and Council advised that enquiries be made through the Colonial Office regarding the use of strychnine for this purpose. It was noted that no immediate action to authorise the use of poisoned bait was required but that an effort would be made to clear the matter up before the next lambing season.


Clerk of Council

F. I. ref: 1093/F

C. O. ref:

~~105a~~
~~106~~ 2

SAVING TELEGRAM.

From: The Officer Administering the Government of the Falkland Islands.

To: The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Date: 25th April, 1966.

No. 68 SAVING. COLONY

Local sheep farmers have represented that a local practice of laying strychnine as a poison bait for birds of prey may result in the deaths of many lambs. It is suggested that those birds which have not been killed off may carry sufficient of the poison in their system to poison the lambs they attack.

I shall be obliged for any advice and data your Agricultural advisers may be able to give on this subject.

GOVERNOR

~~KW 1046~~
~~E 105~~

TB

3
Reply at ~~108~~

BU 30/7/66

mail

Commonwealth Bureau of Animal Health

at the

Central Veterinary Laboratory
New Haw, Weybridge, Surrey
England

Director :
M. CRAWFORD, M.R.C.V.S.
Consultant Director :
H. I. FIELD, M.Sc., M.R.C.V.S.

Publications:
THE VETERINARY BULLETIN
INDEX VETERINARIUS

Telephone : BYFLEET 42876

3rd June, 1966.

MC/PW.

F.S.T. /

- 6 JUN 1966

REGISTRY

Dear Mr. Sugg,

(2) This is in reply to your FST 51/1/01 of the
2nd June.

Birds are highly susceptible to strychnine poisoning. I do not know the lethal dose for birds of prey but for the domestic fowl it is 2 mg. per kilogram body weight and one might presume it would be of the same order for birds of prey. The lethal dose for a sheep is of the order of 50 mg.

Strychnine is very rapidly oxidized in the liver and eliminated from the body, generally within 10 hours. A bird of prey which ingested a non-fatal dose would very rapidly eliminate it from its system. The risk therefore of such a bird attacking a lamb and conveying to the lamb a lethal dose of strychnine is remote and can be ignored.

I would imagine that in the Falklands some lambs have been dying after showing symptoms which resemble those of strychnine poisoning and this has given rise to the hypothesis that birds of prey may be responsible.

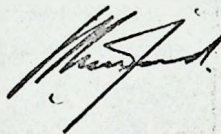
The disease tetanus occurs in lambs in many parts of the world and the symptoms can readily be confused with those of strychnine poisoning. This might be the answer. If so the infection of the lambs with the tetanus organism is most likely to occur (a) when the tails of the lambs are docked, (b) when the lambs are castrated or (c) via the unhealed umbilicus shortly after birth. Outbreaks of tetanus in lambs have occurred when the lambs have been castrated by using rubber rings. Is this method of castration used in the Falklands?

Another, less common, disease of lambs with symptoms resembling those of strychnine poisoning is encephalitis caused by Escherichia coli. This occurs in young lambs kept in dirty lambing pens the organism entering the lamb's body via the umbilicus. Prevention is by antiseptic treatment of the umbilicus for example by painting it with Tincture of Iodine as soon as the lamb is born.

Continued ...

I shall be very interested to know if a solution
to the problem is found.

Yours sincerely,



M. Crawford.

A. St. J. Sugg, Esq.,
The Colonial Office,
Great Smith Street,
London, S.W.1.

~~167~~ 3

Saving

From the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

To the Officer Administering the Government of FALKLAND ISLANDS

Date 10 JUN 1966

No. 58 Saving



~~105~~ 2 Your savingram No. 68.

Suspected Poisoning of Lambs

a

I attach a copy of a letter received from the Commonwealth Bureau of Animal Health in answer to your enquiry.

Possibly you would write direct to them if you do find a solution to the problem?

SECR.

~~1097~~
49

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF ANIMAL HEALTH
AT THE
CENTRAL VETERINARY LABORATORY
NEW HAW, WEYBRIDGE, SURREY.

3rd June, 1966.

Dear Mr. Sugg,

This is in reply to your VET 51/1/OL of the
2nd June.

2. Birds are highly susceptible to strychnine poisoning. I do not know the lethal dose for birds of prey but for the domestic fowl it is 2 mg. per kilogram body weight and one might presume it would be of the same order for birds of prey. The lethal dose for a sheep is of the order of 50 mg.

3. Strychnine is very rapidly oxidized in the liver and eliminated from the body, generally within 10 hours. A bird of prey which ingested a non-fatal dose would very rapidly eliminate it from its system. The risk therefore of such a bird attacking a lamb and conveying to the lamb a lethal dose of strychnine is remote and can be ignored.

4. I would imagine that in the Falklands some lambs have been dying after showing symptoms which resemble those of strychnine poisoning and this has given rise to the hypothesis that birds of prey may be responsible.

5. The disease tetanus occurs in lambs in many parts of the world and the symptoms can readily be confused with those of strychnine poisoning. This might be the answer. If so the infection of the lambs with the tetanus organism is most likely to occur (a) when the tails of the lambs are docked, (b) when the lambs are castrated or (c) via the unhealed umbilicus shortly after birth. Outbreaks of tetanus in lambs have occurred when the lambs have been castrated by using rubber rings. Is this method of castration used in the Falklands?

6. Another, less common, disease of lambs with symptoms resembling those of strychnine poisoning is encephalitis caused by Escherichia coli. This occurs in young lambs kept in dirty lambing pens the organism entering the lamb's body via the umbilicus. Prevention is by antiseptic treatment of the umbilicus for example by painting it with Tincture of Iodine as soon as the lamb is born.

7. I shall be very interested to know if a solution to the problem is found.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgt.) M. Crawford

Mr. St. G. Sugg, Esq.,
The Colonial Office,
Great Smith Street,
London, S.W.1.

~~109~~ 4

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref: 1093/F.

10th August, 1966

MEMORANDUM NO. 68/66 FOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Destruction of Birds of Prey by Poisoning.

At Meeting No. 2/66 in April 1966, the attention of Council was drawn by the Honourable Mr. S. Miller to losses by the farming industry as a result of turkey buzzards and caranchos preying on young lambs, and Council advised that enquiries be made through the Colonial Office regarding the use of strychnine as a means of eliminating birds of prey.

1094a A letter of advice has now been received through the Colonial Office from the Commonwealth Bureau of Animal Health at the Central Veterinary Laboratory, Weybridge. The writer had not been made aware of the extent to which turkey buzzards and caranchos attack lambs and therefore the reply is not in fact a direct answer to the question it was intended should be asked. However, it includes some interesting facts and is attached for information of members.

In view of the approach of the lambing season, it will be necessary for a decision to be taken on this matter at the August meeting of Council.

L. G. ...
ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY

TM

CONFIDENTIAL

BUX 27.866

Issued 12/8/66.

JA

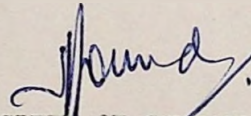
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EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 9/66 OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HELD ON
THE 30th AND 31st AUGUST AND 1st SEPTEMBER 1966.

0797/Y

11. DESTRUCTION OF BIRDS OF PREY (68/66)

Having studied the letter received through the Colonial Office from the Commonwealth Bureau of Animal Health at the Central Veterinary Laboratory, Council advised that permission be given to the Manager of Roy Cove to use strychnine as a means of eliminating birds of prey on condition that all reasonable precautions are taken to prevent the poison being spread by other birds or animals devouring the bodies of the dead birds and that neighbouring farms be duly warned in advance.


CLERK OF COUNCIL

14th October,

66

Dear Sir,

I refer to your request for permission to poison birds of prey on your farm with strychnine and confirm that permission for this action is granted on condition that all reasonable precautions are taken to prevent the poison being spread by other birds or animals devouring the bodies of the dead birds and that neighbouring farms be duly warned in advance.

Yours faithfully,

H.L. Bound

COLONIAL SECRETARY

The Manager,
ROY COVE.

P9