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CAUSES OF ADMISSION AND OUTCOMES OF LONG EARED OWL (ASIO OTUS) AND TAWNY OWL (STRIX ALUCO) IN WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTRES IN ITALY [View project](#)

NATIONAL MONITORING PROGRAMME OF LONG-EARED OWL AND TAWNY OWL CASUALTIES

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In Italy there are a hundred wildlife rescue centres that each year hospitalise 500 to 2000 animals, mostly belonging to class Aves (birds). Data from the rescue centres, that are not currently collected in a common national database, may provide useful information about each species. The aim of this study, which will continue in the upcoming years, is to collect data about admissions, risk factors and outcome of two major avian species hospitalised in Italian wildlife rescue centres: long-eared owl (*Asio otus*) and tawny owl (*Strix aluco*). Data were collected from January 2010 to February 2012 using an online form. The study population included 270 birds from 10 rescue centres. Tawny owl was the most frequently hospitalised species, reflecting Italian population consistency. Long-eared owl was mostly hospitalised as an adult, while tawny owls were more often picked up as chicks. Possible explanation for this phenomenon could be that *Asio otus* is a migratory species whose activity expose shifting adults to a greater risk of trauma. . As to be expected by the breeding seasons pulli of both species were mainly collected on May. Adults were submitted to rescue centres all over the year. Hospitalisation causes differed between age classes. For both species adults were prone to traumatic injuries (mostly collisions against vehicles, windows or wires). Chicks were collected as fallen nestlings, only seldom they suffered from traumatic injuries, predation wounds or starvation. Summarised the most frequent causes of hospitalisation were trauma for *Asio otus* and collection of pulli for *Strix aluco*. Mortality rate in case of trauma was 71.4% for long-eared owl and 39.7% for barn owl. Mortality rate for fallen nestlings was 13.6% for *Asio otus* and 11.7% for *Strix aluco*. . Relationships between outcome, species, age at admission and cause of hospitalisation were investigated.