

LAKE METROPARKS

Kevin P. Clinton Wildlife Center

Avian Influenza Information Sheet

What is Avian Influenza?

In January 2022, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) confirmed detections of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI H5) in several states. Positive HPAI cases involved wild free-ranging birds (ducks, geese, gulls, swans), backyard flocks and commercial flocks (chicken, quail, turkey). Avian flu is contagious to other species of birds and is believed to be spread by wild migrating birds.

As of March 2022, HPAI has been confirmed in several counties in Ohio, including those neighboring Lake County.

What is Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza?

All viruses are classified as either high or low pathogenicity. Pathogenicity is based on the ability of the virus to produce disease. High pathogenicity has the potential to be more contagious and spread rapidly.

How is HPAI spread?

Symptoms of the current HPAI strains are not always obvious and can be carried asymptotically (showing no symptoms) in select species of migratory waterfowl. The virus is shed through droppings or nasal discharge of an infected bird. The environment (soil, dust) is then contaminated with the virus. HPAI virus is extremely contagious and can be spread to susceptible wild birds (e.g. raptors), those in captivity or housed outdoors and can cause severe disease and death.

People can carry the virus on porous materials, such as shoes, clothes, equipment and vehicles. Lake Metroparks Kevin P. Clinton Wildlife Center appreciates your cooperation by stepping through our disinfecting footbaths before entering the animal yard. We are taking every measure to ensure the safety of our resident birds.

Does it affect people?

Yes, it can, but it is rare. A person tested positive for avian influenza in April 2022 in Colorado. Human infections can happen when enough virus gets into a person's eyes, nose, or mouth, or is inhaled. Infected birds shed H5N1 viruses in their saliva, mucous and feces.

As a reminder, people should avoid contact with poultry that appear ill or are dead and avoid contact with equipment and surfaces that appear to be contaminated with feces from wild or domestic birds. If you must handle wild birds or sick or dead poultry, minimize direct contact by wearing gloves and wash your hands with soap and water after touching birds.

What should I do if I think I found a sick bird?

The Kevin P. Clinton Wildlife Center is not currently accepting ANY birds for rehabilitation. If you have questions, please call the Lake Metroparks **Wildlife Hotline at 440-256-1404 x2131**.

Sick birds or unusual bird deaths in one location should be reported to the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Division of Animal Health at 1-614-728-6220.

If you notice sick or dead wild birds, report it to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife at 1-800-WILDLIFE or go to wildohio.gov.

For more information:

ODNR Division of Wildlife: <https://ohiodnr.gov/discover-and-learn/safety-conservation/wildlife-management/wildlife-disease/avian-flu>

Ohio Department of Agriculture: <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/animal/>

Centers for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu

World Health Organization: http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/avian_influenza/en/



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