



STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAII

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**DOH, DAB, DLNR INVESTIGATE POSSIBLE AVIAN FLU CASE
IN WATERFOWL**

25-122

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 14, 2025

HONOLULU – Three state agencies are on alert after laboratory testing identified a presumptive case of avian influenza on Friday in an ailing duck that was found earlier in the week at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Preliminary testing of the bird revealed an unconfirmed result of the H5 subtype of influenza A virus. Confirmation and further characterization are pending an analysis by the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL).

At this time, the risk of infection to humans is considered low.

H5N1 influenza A is highly infectious among wild birds and poultry and has caused outbreaks in animals, with one type infecting dairy cattle in the continental U.S. The virus, also known as Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) was first confirmed in Hawai'i in a backyard flock of birds in Central O'ahu in November 2024. Human infections remain rare and are primarily linked to direct animal exposure. The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH), Department of Agriculture & Biosecurity (DAB) and Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) are monitoring health reports, poultry farms and wild bird populations for any signs the virus has spread.

The duck was found by a UH student, who reported it to the Hawai'i Wildlife Center. The preliminary diagnosis came from tests conducted by the DOH State Laboratories Division. Those tests were sent to NVSL, which is expected to report results later this week or next week.

As Hawai'i enters migratory bird season, this latest case is a reminder that wild birds may carry diseases to the islands and the public should remain vigilant.

If you encounter sick or dead birds:

- Avoid touching or handling wild birds, especially waterfowl or shorebirds.
- To report multiple or unusual illnesses in poultry, livestock, or other wild birds or animals, contact Hawai'i Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (HDAB) Animal Industry Division at 808-483-7100, Monday to Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or 808-837-8092 during non-business hours and holidays.
Email: dabic@hawaii.gov.
- If you need to remove a dead wild bird from your property, wear disposable gloves or turn a plastic bag inside out to pick up the carcass. Place the bird in a second bag, seal it and dispose of it with your regular household trash. Wash your hands thoroughly and disinfect any clothing or shoes that may have come into contact with the bird. Monitor your health for any unusual symptoms afterward. For more information, visit:
<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs-hpai-dead-wild-bird.508.pdf>

About H5N1 / Avian Influenza:

- H5N1 is an avian influenza virus that primarily affects birds; human infections are rare but can occur under close contact with infected animals.
- The public risk in Hawai'i is low at this time and DOH does not recommend limiting outdoor activity.
- Routine influenza vaccines in humans do not protect against H5N1; the best prevention is avoiding contact with sick or dead birds.
- For more information on avian flu, its symptoms and how to protect yourself, visit https://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease_listing/avian-influenza/.

Seabird Fallout Season is here

Seabird fallout season (Sept. 15-Dec. 15) primarily affects young seabirds leaving their nesting burrows for the first time. The risk of these birds carrying H5N1 is very low. If you find a downed seabird, please help these young birds survive.

For more information, visit <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/wildlife/seabird-fallout-season/#response>.

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