

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 has been identified in a dead mute swan in Fife, Scotland, reported on 23 December. Since the start of the new season for recording cases of HPAI (since 1 October 2024) there had been only six cases detected with the virus in Scotland, and all had been of the H5N5 strain.

This new case is our first detection of HPAI H5N1 in wild birds since 26 November 2023.

Defra have put in place a regional Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) in parts of East of England in response to a number of cases of HPAI H5N1 detected in poultry and captive birds in that area. The zone introduced a legal requirement for all bird keepers to follow strict biosecurity measures to help safeguard animal and public health.

Nationally, the risk of incursion of highly pathogenic avian influenza HPAI H5 infection to wild birds has been increased to **very high**. The risk of poultry and captive bird exposure to HPAI H5 across Great Britain has been increased to **high** where biosecurity is sub-optimal, and **medium** where stringent biosecurity measures are applied.

With regard to these developments **we strongly encourage all bird keepers to review their biosecurity**.

Areas at particular **risk from flooding**, along with **feed storage areas which wild birds are able to access**, represent significant risk pathways.

Flooding at your premises or in fields nearby can attract wild birds, thereby increasing the risk of notifiable avian disease.

Flood water can be contaminated (with wild bird infectious material), which can get into poultry houses or onto range areas.

Follow some [top tips](#) and [steps](#) you can take now.

Keepers of poultry and other captive birds in Scotland are advised to remain vigilant for [signs of the disease](#) and are reminded that any suspicion of disease in Scotland must be reported immediately to the local Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) [Field Services Office](#). It is a legal requirement to do so. Sign up to the APHA [animal disease alerts subscription service](#) to keep up to date with the latest news.

Wild Birds

If you find at the same place at the same time:

- **a single** dead bird of prey, swan, goose, duck or gull
- **five or more** dead wild birds of any other species

we encourage you to report them to [GB dead wild bird monitoring scheme operated by Defra](#). (Alternatively, you can phone the GB phone helpline: 03459 33 55 77. If you wish to submit a report without providing contact details, then the telephone helpline should be used. You must be 18 or over to use this service to report dead wild birds.)

The risk to the general public's health from avian influenza is still "very low", and is considered "low" for people with intensive exposure to infected birds. Food Standards Scotland advise that avian influenzas pose a very low food safety risk for consumers.

The Scottish Kept Bird Register (SKBR)

Since 1 September 2024, all bird keepers – even those who keep a single bird – are legally required to register their bird(s) location(s) on the new Scottish Kept Bird Register (SKBR). A link to the Scottish Kept Bird Register system and associated email address and telephone helpline number is available at www.gov.scot/register-your-birds.

The registration requirement does not apply to birds on the premises that belong to the order *psittaciformes* (parrot family, including budgerigars) or *passeriformes* (perching birds, including jays and finches), which have no outdoor access and are housed within a fully enclosed structure.