



Avian Influenza Alert

November 30, 2022

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) has been detected in a wild bird in Kern County, as well as 36 other California counties.

[Avian Influenza \(AI\)](#), commonly called bird flu, is a disease found in some populations of wild waterfowl that can infect chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, ducks, geese and guinea fowl, as well as a wide variety of other domesticated and wild birds. Once AI is introduced into domestic avian populations, subsequent spread is normally caused by domestic bird-to-bird contact or through contact with contaminated people, feed or equipment.

Each year there is a flu season for birds just as there is for humans and, as with people, some forms of the flu are worse than others. AI viruses can be classified as either low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) or high pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) based on the severity of the illness they cause in poultry. Most AI strains are classified as LPAI and cause few clinical signs in infected birds. In contrast, HPAI causes a severe illness with a high mortality rate among infected birds.

AI viruses do not normally infect humans. However, sporadic human infections with these viruses have occurred.

Protective actions around birds:

- As a general precaution, whenever possible people should avoid direct contact with wild birds and observe them only from a distance.
- Wild birds can be infected with AI viruses even if they don't look sick.
- Avoid unprotected contact with domestic birds (poultry) that look sick or have died.
- Do not touch surfaces that may be contaminated with saliva, mucous, or feces from wild or domestic birds.

If you have come into contact with obviously sick or dead poultry, or surfaces contaminated by them and develop flu like symptoms within 10 days contact our office at 661-321-3000.

Residents are encouraged to report any unusual or suspicious sick or dead domestic, pet, or collection birds immediately via the CDFA Sick Bird Hotline at (866) 922-2473.

Report any unusual or suspicious wild bird deaths to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) online at www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Laboratories/Wildlife-Health/Monitoring/Mortality-Report.

Grounded in Health