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Published  
02/12/2020

# National Disease Control Centre

## Avian Influenza Update

Number 15 of 2020

## Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in wild birds in Ireland

- On 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Ireland confirmed two further cases of **Avian Influenza virus subtype H5N8 in wild birds** in a Mute swan, *Cygnus olor* in Co. Monaghan and a Peregrine falcon, *Falco peregrinus* in Co. Cork. Pathogenicity results are pending.
- These cases are in addition to the wild bird cases of H5N8 confirmed earlier in November in counties Limerick (Peregrine falcon, *Falco peregrinus*), Monaghan (Mute swan, *Cygnus olor*) and Mayo (Curlew, *Numenius arquata*) (see Figure 1 below for all locations).
- There have been no outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in poultry in Ireland this year to date.
- DAFM have introduced regulations under the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013 requiring flock keepers to apply stringent bio-security measures for poultry and other captive birds as a precautionary measure against Avian Influenza, as well as a ban on the assembly of birds (Please see separate guidance note for further information).

**The importance of biosecurity in poultry flocks at this time cannot be overstated. This applies to ALL flocks, irrespective of size.**



Figure 1. Map of confirmed cases of HPAI N5N8 in wild birds in Ireland in 2020

- 📍 Limerick – Peregrine falcon
- 📍 Monaghan – Mute swan #1
- 📍 Mayo - curlew
- 📍 Cork – Peregrine falcon
- 📍 Monaghan – Mute swan #2

## Risk to Ireland regarding HPAI H5N8

- The disease is **highly contagious for birds**.
- The risk to Irish poultry flocks from Avian Influenza has increased following the confirmation of H5N8 in five wild birds in Ireland.
- The disease poses **no food safety risk for consumers**. Properly cooked poultry and poultry products, including eggs are safe to eat.
- **Strict biosecurity measures are needed** to prevent the introduction of AI into poultry and captive bird flocks.
- Flock owners should **remain vigilant for any signs of disease** in their flocks, and report any disease suspicion to their nearest [Regional Veterinary Office](#).
- **Members of the public are advised not to handle sick or dead wild birds. Please report sick or dead wild birds to the local Regional Veterinary Office or contact the DAFM disease hotline on 1850 200456.**

## What can poultry owners do to reduce the risk of avian influenza?

1. **Be vigilant-** Monitor your birds carefully for any clinical signs of disease. If in doubt contact your veterinary practitioner for advice. Signs of avian influenza include:

- Death/high mortalities in a flock
- Depression/lethargy
- Loss of appetite
- Respiratory distress such as gaping beak, coughing, sneezing, gurgling, rattling
- Blue discolouration of combs, wattles, neck and throat
- Diarrhoea
- Reduced egg production or no egg production

2. **Increase Biosecurity (Please see separate guidelines for further information)**

### Personnel and Visitors

- Wear disposable or dedicated outer clothing when in contact with your birds
- Wear boots that can be disinfected, disposable gloves and wash hands after contact with poultry
- Only allow essential personnel access to your birds.

### Buildings and Equipment

- Regularly clean and disinfect hard surfaces such as paths and walkways
- Provide clean boot washing and disinfection facilities at all entrances/exits and ensure that people use them
- Clean and disinfect any vehicles or equipment that comes into contact with the birds after use
- Have suitable pest control in place.

## Wild Birds

- Minimise access to the flock by wild birds
- Feed and water birds inside or at least under cover
- Clean up any waste feed in outdoor areas frequently  
Consider using netting or wild bird decoys or deterrents to keep wild birds away from poultry areas.

## Management

- Keep ducks and geese separate to other poultry species if possible
- Register your birds with DAFM so you can receive vital information in the event of an increased risk.

## Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in the EU and UK

The UK has confirmed HPAI H5N8 in three poultry flocks (Leicestershire, Herefordshire and Cheshire)

The UK has reported 7 outbreaks of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds involving 3 mute swans in Derry, 5 wild black swans in Devon, a group of 5 wild birds in Gloucestershire, and a Canadian goose in Devon. There have also been 3 outbreaks of HPAI H5N1 in unspecified wild birds in Poole, Essex and Cambridgeshire.

HPAI H5N8 has also been confirmed in an outbreak in captive birds in Gloucestershire.

There have been outbreaks of HPAI H5N8 in poultry in several European Union countries.

On 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Belgium reported an outbreak of H5N5 in poultry in West Flanders. This is the first incidence of HPAI in Belgium in 2020.

Please see tables below for details of all poultry outbreaks.

### HPAI H5N8 outbreaks in poultry

Country	Number of Outbreaks	Date of First outbreak	Date of most recent outbreak	Categories of Poultry
Poland	34	31/12/2020	2/12/2020	Commercial flocks, geese, turkey broilers, etc.
Romania	2	14/01/2020	17/01/2020	Hens
The Netherlands	6	29/10/2020	22/11/2020	Poultry
Germany	15	07/02/2020	1/12/2020	Backyard (4), Breeding Turkeys (2), Fattening Turkeys(2), Laying Hens (4), fattening geese (3)
United Kingdom	4	02/11/2020	29/11/2020	Fattening turkeys, Laying Hens, broiler breeders, Theme park farm
Denmark	1	16/11/2020	16/11/2020	Commercial flock
France	8	16/11/2020	25/11/2020	Commercial pet stores
Croatia	1	21/11/2020	21/11/2020	Fattening turkeys

## HPAI H5N5 cases in poultry

Country	Number of Outbreaks	Date of First outbreak	Date of most recent outbreak	Categories of Poultry
Belgium	1	25/11/2020	25/11/2020	Poultry

## HPAI H5N8 cases in wild birds

*AI H5N8 has been found in a large number of wild birds throughout Europe in the species listed in the table*

Countries	Species
France, Germany The Netherlands Poland, United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Belgium, Italy, Slovenia, Sweden, Norway	northern goshawk, white-tailed sea eagle, peregrine falcon, common kestrel, cormorant, Brent goose, greylag goose, barnacle goose, cane goose, bean goose, pink-footed goose, curlew, mallard, teal, gulls, European buzzard, short eared owl, kestrel, European widgeons, mute swans, eagle owl, crane, oystercatcher, Canada goose, common eider, Eurasian sparrowhawk, shelduck, Gadwall (duck), magpie, common moorhen, tawny owl, common coot, curlew sandpiper

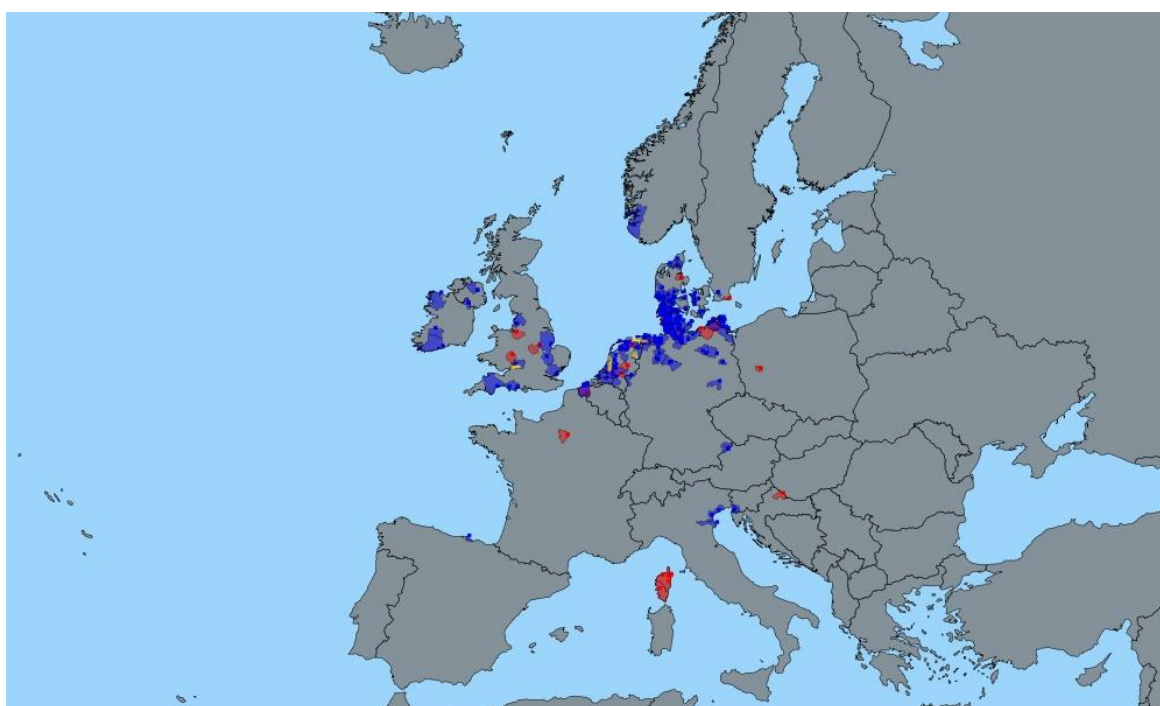


Figure 4: HPAI wild bird cases (blue) and HPAI outbreaks in poultry (red) and captive birds (yellow) from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 to date (ADNS)

## List of wild birds to be targeted for AI surveillance (H5 HPAI) in Ireland

Based on passive surveillance data 2005-2017, produced by EFSA\* and amended by NPWS.

Family	Sub Family tribe or genus	Species Common name used in Ireland and scientific name
<b>Ducks geese and swans</b> (anatidae)	Diving ducks (Aythyini)	Tufted duck ( <i>Aythya fuligula</i> )
		Greater scaup ( <i>Aythya marila</i> )
		Pochard ( <i>Aythya ferina</i> )
	Dabbling ducks (Anatinae)	Pintail ( <i>Anas acuta</i> )
		Widgeon ( <i>Anas penelope</i> )
		Gadwall ( <i>Anas strepera</i> )
		Mallard ( <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> )
		Teal ( <i>Anas crecca</i> )
	Seaducks (Mergini)	Goosander ( <i>Mergus merganser</i> )
		Goldeneye ( <i>Bucephala clangula</i> )
		Smew ( <i>Mergus albellus</i> )
		Eider ( <i>Somateria mollissima</i> )
	Shelducks (Tadorninae)	Shelduck ( <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> )
		Egyptian goose ( <i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i> )**
	True Geese	Greylag goose ( <i>Anser anser</i> )
		Canada Goose ( <i>Branta canadensis</i> )**
		Pink-footed Goose ( <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> )
		Brent goose ( <i>Branta bernicla</i> )
		White-fronted Goose ( <i>Anser albifrons</i> )
		Bean Goose ( <i>Anser fabalis</i> )
	Swans ( <i>Cygnus</i> )	Black Swan ( <i>Cygnus atratus</i> )**
		Whooper Swan ( <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> )
		Mute Swan ( <i>Cygnus olor</i> )
<b>Grebes</b> (Podicipedidae)		Black-necked Grebe ( <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i> )
		Great Crested Grebe ( <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> )
		Little Grebe ( <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> )

<b>Hérons</b> (Ardeidae)		Little Egret ( <i>Egretta garzetta</i> )
		Grey Heron ( <i>Ardea cinerea</i> )
		Great White Egret ( <i>Egretta alba</i> )
<b>Cormorants and shags</b> (Phalacrocoracidae)		Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> )
<b>Raptors</b> (Accipitridae, Falconidae, Strigidae)		White-tailed eagle ( <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> )
		Goshawk ( <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> )
		Buzzard ( <i>Buteo buteo</i> )
		Peregrine falcon ( <i>Falco peregrinus</i> )
		Rough-legged buzzard ( <i>Buteo lagopus</i> )**
		Eurasian Eagle-owl ( <i>Bubo bubo</i> )**
<b>Sandpipers</b> (Scolopacidae)		Green Sandpiper ( <i>Tringa ochropus</i> )
		Curlew ( <i>Numenius arquata</i> )
<b>Gulls, Terns and allies</b> (Lardiae)		Great Black-backed Gull ( <i>Larus marinus</i> )
		Herring Gull ( <i>Larus argentatus</i> )
		Common Gull ( <i>Larus canus</i> )
		Black-headed gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> )
<b>Corvids</b> (Corvidae)		Magpie ( <i>Pica pica</i> )
<b>Thrushes</b> (Turdidae)		Fieldfare ( <i>Turdus pilaris</i> )

\* European Food Safety Association

\*\* Feral birds or escapees that may occur in the wild in Ireland

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## Further information for poultry owners and stakeholder groups

Fact sheets giving biosecurity advice for each of the main poultry categories are available at the following link:

[https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian\\_influenza/clinicalsignsandleaflets/](https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian_influenza/clinicalsignsandleaflets/)

To register a poultry flock please see:

[https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian\\_influenza/poultryregistration/](https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian_influenza/poultryregistration/)

RVO contact details [Regional Veterinary Office](#) .

List of target species of wild birds for AI surveillance

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/animalhealthwelfare/diseasecontrols/avianinfluenzabirdflu/informationonwildbirds/ListOfWildBirdSpeciesForTargetedAIsurveillance170118.pdf>

European Commission [https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/avian-influenza\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/avian-influenza_en)

## DAFM Contingency Planning for Avian influenza

DAFM has well established early warning systems and contingency measures in place for avian influenza. A summary of these measures can be found at:

[https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian\\_influenza/legislationcontingencyplanning/](https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/avian_influenza/legislationcontingencyplanning/)

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**02/12/2020**