



Australian Government
Parks Australia



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NATIONAL PARK

H5 BIRD FLU FACT SHEET

Hunters and egg harvesters

This information applies only to Traditional Owners and park communities who have approval to hunt and harvest in Parks Australia's national parks for non-commercial purposes like food, ceremonial or traditional cultural practices.

What is H5 bird flu?

A harmful virus, known as H5 bird flu, has come to Australia. We need to keep an eye out for it.

H5 bird flu can make birds and sometimes other animals very sick and cause them to die. It can also make people sick, but this is rare.

So far, H5 bird flu has only affected birds and mammals, not other types of animals like reptiles, fish and amphibians (such as frogs).

People who hunt birds or other animals, collect eggs, handle wildlife, or come into contact with sick or dead birds should be extra careful.

What NOT to do

Don't touch or harvest sick birds or other animals.

- Do not hunt, collect, butcher, or eat birds or their eggs if they appear sick, or you are not sure how they have died, or are found in areas where there are sick or dead birds.
- This includes bird poop or feathers in the area. Don't let your dog or other pets sniff or touch them either.
- H5 bird flu can sometimes infect other animals like cats, pigs and foxes. Do not touch or harvest sick or dead animals, especially if found near bird colonies or wetlands.

If you're hunting wild birds or other animals, there are things you can do to reduce the risk of becoming unwell

- Wear disposable gloves if available when handling or butchering harvested birds or other animals.
- Wash hands really well with soap and water immediately after handling birds, eggs or other hunted animals. If hands look otherwise clean, alcohol-based hand rub (sanitiser) can be used as an alternative to soap and water.

- Avoid touching your face until your hands are clean.
- De-feather and butcher birds outdoors or in a well-ventilated area.
- Prevent pets or other animals from sniffing or eating carcass, innards or feathers.
- Clean knives, boards, containers, and other equipment used for butchering animals thoroughly after use.

If you're collecting eggs

- Wash your hands really well afterwards with soap and water.
- Don't eat, drink, or touch your face **until your hands are clean.**
- Don't take eggs if there are sick or dead birds in the area.

Cooking safely

Meat and eggs from healthy animals are safe to eat when handled, prepared, and cooked properly.

- Make sure eggs and wild game are cooked **well and all the way through.**
- Use **different knives and boards** for raw meat and cooked food.
- Wash your hands really well with soap and water after touching eggs and raw meat.
- Always clean tools and surfaces before and after cooking.



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What to do if you see sick birds or mammals

You can help keep Country strong by reporting signs of bird flu and sharing this information with others.

If you see sick or dead birds or other animals, do not touch them.

- **AVOID** contact and keep your distance
- **RECORD** the date, time, and location, and take photos if it is safe to do so.
- **REPORT** multiple sick or dead birds or other animals to a Kakadu National Park ranger or the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

What to do if you have been exposed to bird flu

If you handled a sick or dead bird or animal, eggs, droppings, feathers, or body fluids:

- Wash thoroughly with soap and water.
- Monitor yourself for symptoms for 10 days.
- Call your healthcare professional (e.g. GP, nurse, Aboriginal Health Worker) if you develop:
 - fever
 - cough
 - sore throat
 - runny nose
 - trouble breathing
 - conjunctivitis (red eyes).

Vaccination

Getting an annual **flu vaccination** is important. Although it won't prevent bird flu, it plays a very important role.

Getting an annual **flu vaccination** is recommended for all people 6 months and older. The annual flu vaccine does not protect against bird flu, but prevents people getting sick with both seasonal flu and bird flu at the same time.

For more information

Visit

birdflu.gov.au

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