

Study: Migrating birds didn't spread flu

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A large flock of migrating birds

European scientists say despite predictions migrating birds would spread avian flu across Europe this spring, studies indicate that did not occur.

Health officials around the world voiced fears during the winter that migratory birds that flew south to Africa last fall would spread the deadly virus into Europe during their return this spring.

The fact that hasn't occurred is a significant finding for Europe, since it's much simpler to monitor a virus on farms than in the wild, The New York Times reported Thursday.

In thousands of samples collected in Africa this winter, not one bird was found carry the avian virus, scientists told the newspaper.

The number of European bird flu cases has declined sharply since

February, when dozens of new infections were reported daily. The last case was discovered April 28 in a grebe in Denmark, along with a falcon in Germany and a few swans in France, the Paris-based World Organization for Animal Health reported.

Many European nations responding to the good news are lifting restrictions intended to protect domestic poultry from infected wild birds.

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