

New mass death of birds in Sweden

January 5 2011



Swedish rescue chief Christer Olofsson holds a dead bird on January 5 in Falköping. In a week that saw unexplained massive bird deaths in the southern United States, up to 100 birds were found lying in a snow-covered street in Sweden, officials said.

In a week that saw unexplained massive [bird deaths in the southern United States](#), up to 100 birds were found lying in a snow-covered street in Sweden Wednesday, officials said.

"Most were dead," Christer Olofsson of rescue services in the southwestern town of Falköping said of the 50 to 100 jackdaw birds, a type of crow.

[Ornithologist](#) Anders Wirdheim said the find was surprising.

"This is unusual," he told tabloid Aftonbladet, which posted online a

reader's photo of dozens of black birds littering a snow-covered road.

"They are probably jackdaws. They spend the winter in large [flocks](#). If they are exposed to disturbances, they can become so stressed that they fly themselves to death," he said.

Olofsson told AFP the birds were first spotted around midnight by a police patrol, and that five had been taken in for analysis.

Olov Andersson of the National Veterinary Institute told news agency TT the carcasses would be analysed and that bacterial and viral tests, including for [swine flu](#), would be performed.

The Falkoeping incident comes after two unexplained mass bird deaths in the United States.

On Tuesday, officials in Louisiana said 500 birds were discovered dead, shortly after thousands of birds were discovered dead in neighbouring Arkansas.

Arkansas officials said preliminary testing showed no signs of disease in the dead birds and that they died of "acute physical trauma."

US officials said possibly New Year's Eve fireworks had provoked the birds to take flight in the dark, and that due to poor night vision they may have died after bumping into houses, trees and other birds in their fright.

Swedish rescue services told media Wednesday fireworks had been heard in the area where the [birds](#) were found.

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