

Avian influenza confirmed in several Florida wild bird species, state says

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Federal scientists have confirmed cases of an infectious avian flu strain in several species of Florida birds, the state announced Tuesday.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission said it is investigating bird mortalities in Brevard, Indian River and Volusia counties that are believed to be caused by "Highly Pathogenic Avian

Influenza." The agency was notified of the presence of the disease by the National Veterinary Services Laboratory, according to an FWC statement released Monday.

The species impacted include the lesser scaup, black vulture "and other species," the FWC said.

The agency said there is low risk of transmission to humans "and, to date, there have been no known human infections in North America."

The strain, H5 2.3.4.4, has been documented in the United States since 2021, and it was detected in hunter-harvested blue-winged teal in Palm Beach County in January.

The FWC urged people not to handle sick or dead wildlife and to prohibit the contact of domestic birds with wild [birds](#). All bird deaths should be reported to the FWC so the agency can conduct an investigation, the agency said.

H5N1 is not treatable and is easily transmitted in [wild birds](#), so some wild bird rehab facilities may not be accepting animals at this time, the FWC said.

The agency is working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Wildlife Services, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, University of Florida, National Wildlife Health Center, Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, Florida Department of Health, and wildlife rehabilitators to investigate the recent deaths associated with the strain.

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