

The Raptor Center (TRC)
University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine
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November 2, 2022

Dear falconer,



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

THE RAPTOR CENTER

Since early 2022, there has been a large outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in wildlife, peaking at different times throughout the United States and Canada. HPAI is easily spread, highly infectious, and causes severe, fatal disease in poultry and wild birds; raptors are especially susceptible to this disease. Falconers have been reaching out to TRC for information, so we decided to share the information more broadly. In order to protect your falconry bird from possible exposure to HPAI this hunting season, consider implementing the following precautions:

- **Monitor the number of HPAI positive detections in your area.** The higher the number of detections, the higher the risk your bird may be exposed during hunting.
 - You can monitor [wild bird detections](#), as well as [domestic poultry detections](#) on the USGS APHIS website, or on your state's department of agriculture website. We also routinely share HPAI detections in our wild raptor patients on our [website](#).
- **Consider not hunting waterfowl this season.**
 - Waterfowl such as ducks are commonly infected but do not always become sick from this virus. A duck that appears healthy may still be harboring HPAI.
 - Raptors do not need to ingest the meat to become infected. HPAI is very contagious. Virus that is on the surface of a bird may be enough to infect a raptor.
 - Do not feed hunter-harvested waterfowl to your birds.
 - Freezing does not effectively kill the virus.
- Hunting upland game birds and mammals likely has a lower risk of HPAI exposure, though the risk is not zero.
- **Avoid hunting near wetlands or areas where migrating waterfowl congregate.**
- **If you trap a new wild bird, quarantine that bird for 10-14 days after acquisition, and test the bird for avian influenza if you are able.**
 - House separately from other birds with a solid barrier between individuals.
 - Have dedicated feeding and handling equipment for the new bird.
 - Care for the new bird last.
- **If one of your birds becomes ill, quarantine the bird immediately and contact your veterinarian.**

Preventing exposure is the most effective way to prevent HPAI infection in your raptor. There is currently no avian influenza vaccine available in the United States.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dana Franzen-Klein, DVM, MS, Medical Director
Lori Arent, MS, Assistant Director and Master Falconer
Dr. Victoria Hall, DVM, MS, DACVPM, Executive Director
Dr. Patrick Redig, DVM, PhD, Co-Founder, Master Falconer, NAFA Medical Editor