

Updated Outbreak Assessment #8

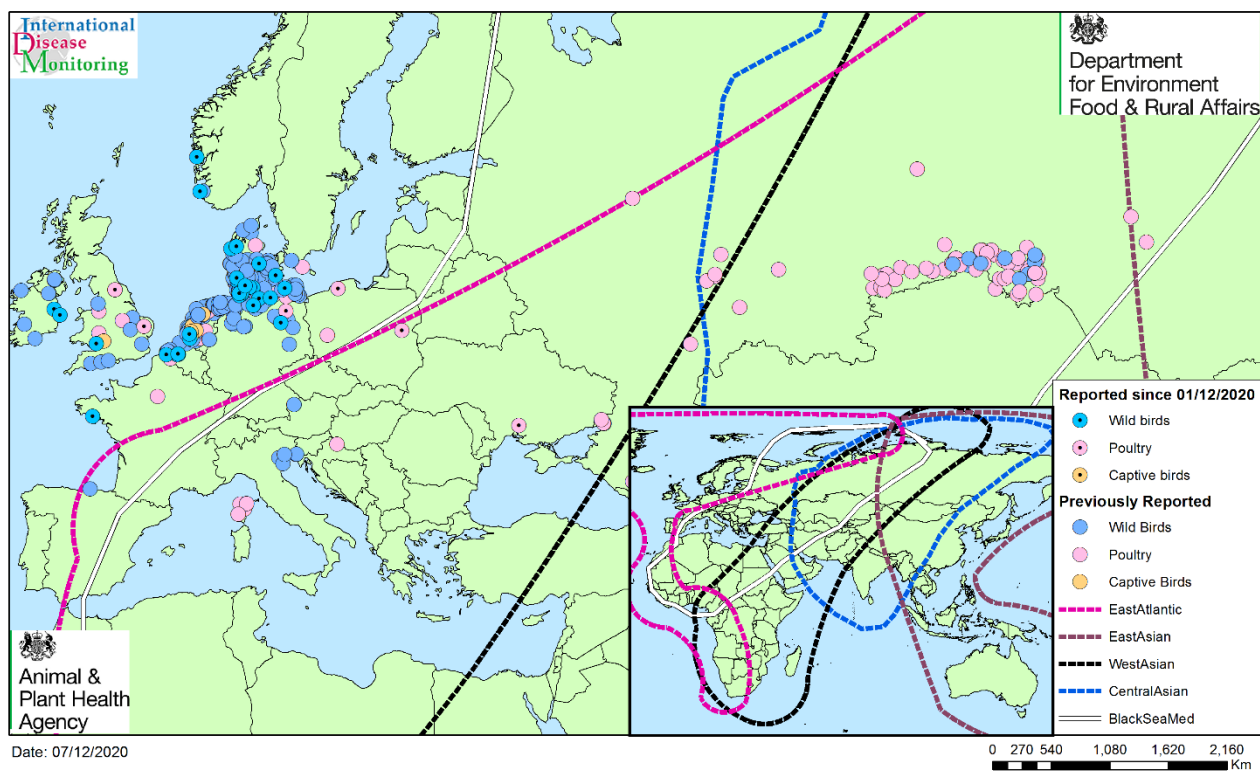
Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in the UK, and Europe

07 December 2020

Ref: VITT/1200 HPAI in the UK and Europe

Disease Report

Since our last report on 01 December, in the **United Kingdom** there have been three new outbreaks of HPAI H5N8 in poultry, and many reports of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds. Elsewhere in Europe, since 01 December, H5N8 has been reported: in poultry and captive birds in Germany, Netherlands, Poland, and Ukraine (H5), and in wild birds in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands and Norway.



Highly pathogenic avian influenza in Poultry, Captive and Wild birds
August - December 2020
Overlay: migratory bird flyways

Situation Assessment

In the **United Kingdom**, since our last report on 01 December, there have been three new reports of HPAI H5N8 in poultry and many new reports in wild birds.

On 29 November, HPAI H5N8 was confirmed at a turkey rearer premises near Northallerton, Hambleton, North Yorkshire. Since then, on 01 December, H5N8 was confirmed at a second premises near Northallerton, which also rears turkeys. On 03 December, further testing confirmed this to be HPAI H5N8. All poultry on the premises have been culled. 3km Protection Zones and 10km Surveillance Zones have been put in place around the infected premises.

On 04 December, HPAI H5N8 was confirmed in rearing turkeys at a premises near Attleborough, Breckland, Norfolk. Culling of all poultry on the premises is underway. A 3km Protection Zone and a 10km Surveillance Zone have been put in place around the infected premises.

On 05 December, HPAI H5N8 was confirmed in rearing turkeys at a premises near King's Lynn, Norfolk. Culling of all poultry on the premises is underway. A 3km Protection Zone and a 10km Surveillance Zone have been put in place.

On 06 December, following successful completion of disease control activities and surveillance within the zones, the Surveillance Zone declared on 27 November 2020 around the premises near Frodsham in Cheshire, has now been revoked. Local movement restrictions have now been removed, but the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone measures remain in place.

Table 1: Described in this, and previous reports, poultry and captive birds at the following sites have tested positive for HPAI H5N8:

Date HPAI H5N8 confirmed	Location, County	Description
3 November	near Frodsham, Cheshire	Broiler breeder rearer chickens
10 November	near Leominster, Herefordshire	Broiler breeder chickens
20 November	near Stroud, Gloucestershire	Captive birds
23 November	near Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire	Poultry and captive birds

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Date HPAI H5N8 confirmed	Location, County	Description
29 November	near Northallerton, Hambleton, North Yorkshire	Rearing turkeys
01 December	near Northallerton, Hambleton, North Yorkshire	Rearing turkeys
04 December	near Attleborough, Breckland, Norfolk	Rearing turkeys
05 December	near King's Lynn, Norfolk	Rearing turkeys

Table 2: Wild birds in England have tested positive for H5N8 as at 04 December 2020:

County and species	Total number of birds testing positive
ENGLAND	
Cambridgeshire	3
Lesser black backed gull (juvenile)	1
Mute swan	2
Cornwall	1
Buzzard	1
Devon	8
Black Swan	6
Mute swan	1
Sparrowhawk	1
Devon	2
Black swans	2
Dorset	71
Canada goose	1
Mute swan	3
mute swans	3
mute swans, Canada goose	38
mute swans, herring gulls, unspecified bird	26
Essex	1
Mute swan	1
Gloucestershire	15
Black Swan	1
Canada goose	6
greylag Goose	1

County and species	Total number of birds testing positive
greylag goose, Canada goose	2
Greylag Goose, Canada Goose	2
mute swans	3
Kent	1
Peregrine Falcon	1
Lancashire	2
Buzzard	1
Pink footed goose	1
Lincolnshire	8
Shelduck, wigeon, Brent goose, Canada goose, Greylag goose	8
Staffordshire	1
Mute swan	1
Suffolk	1
Mute swan	1
Warwickshire	1
kestrel	1
Grand Total	115

Since our last report on 01 December, and as at 04 December, in **Wales**, there have been two reports of HPAI H5 in 3 mute swans in Gwent (H5N5), and in a little grebe in Carmarthenshire (H5N8).

Since our last report on 01 December, there have been no new reports of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds in **Northern Ireland**.

Wild bird cases of HPAI are being reported to OIE and ADNS on a weekly basis. The map in our report (above) shows only the reports of disease that have been made to ADNS to date.

For further details, see the report (updated weekly) on findings of HPAI in wild birds in Great Britain, here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/avian-influenza-in-wild-birds>

HPAI H5N8 in Western Europe

Since 01 December, **Belgium** has reported HPAI H5 in a Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*), a Common Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*) and a Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) in East Flanders, and an Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*) in West Flanders.

Denmark has reported HPAI H5N8 in a Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*), a Common Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*), a European Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)

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and a Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*). These were in the municipalities of Vordingborg, Nordfyns, Holstebro and Ringkøbing-Skjern respectively.

France has reported HPAI H5 in a Brant Goose (*Branta bernicla*). This was found as part of a wildlife surveillance programme in Morbihan, in the north-west of France (in the department of Brittany).

In **Germany** one outbreak of HPAI H5N8 was reported in a premises of 28,000 laying hens, in the district of Mecklenburgische Seenplatte. In addition there were 18 reports of HPAI in wild birds. Of these, 13 were HPAI H5N8, one reported as HPAI H5N5, and the remaining four were HPAI H5. Species of wild bird included Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) (x6), Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*), Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) (x2), Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) (x2) a Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), an unspecified Crane and an unspecified Charadriidae. Geographically, the majority were north of the river Elbe, mainly in the districts of Dithmarschen, Nordfriesland, Rendsburg-Eckernförde, and Schleswig-Flensburg.

Ireland has reported another two cases of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds; a Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) in County Kildare, and a Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*) in County Wicklow.

In the **Netherlands**, HPAI H5N8 was reported in two separate incidents involving Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*). These were in the provinces of North and South Holland. Several (unspecified) captive birds also tested positive for HPAI H5N8. These were also in the province of South Holland.

In **Norway**, HPAI H5N8 was reported in one Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*), and in an unidentified gull. These were in the regions of Rogaland and Hordaland (Vestland) respectively. Both are in the coastal south-west of Norway. Norway's high risk area has been extended to include the area surrounding the identification of HPAI H5N8 in the gull.

In **Poland**, two outbreaks of HPAI H5N8 in poultry were reported. One was in a turkey broiler farm containing in excess of 117,000 birds – in Siedlecki county, east of Warsaw. The other, in the county of Slupski and near to the Baltic sea, was at a farm containing approximately 176,000 layer hens. All measures according to Council Directive 2005/94/EC have been implemented.

In **Ukraine**, there was one outbreak of HPAI H5 reported in a backyard premises in Mykolayiv Oblast, in the south of the country, and near to the Black Sea.

Since our last report on 01 December, there have been no new reports of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds in **Slovenia, Spain and Sweden**.

The situation is changing rapidly, and all these numbers and reports represent the official reports made to EU's Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS) at the time of writing.

Table 3: Current outbreaks of HPAI H5N8 in domestic poultry and captive birds, and cases in wild birds since September, as of 7 am on 07 December 2020, according to ADNS reporting. Please note that this is a rapidly changing picture, with new disease reports being made on a daily basis.

Country	Untyped	H5		H5N1	H5N5		H5N8			Total
	Wild Birds	Poultry	Wild Birds	Wild Birds	Poultry	Wild Birds	Captive Birds	Poultry	Wild Birds	
Belgium			4		1				7	12
Croatia								1		1
Denmark			5			2		1	57	65
France		5	1					3		9
Germany	1		10		1	12		11	330	365
Ireland									7	7
Italy			1						2	3
Netherlands		1		4		1	7	5	39	57
Norway									3	3
Poland								3		3
Slovenia									2	2
Spain									1	1
Sweden								1	2	3
Ukraine		1								1
United Kingdom			4				1	7	7	19
Total	1	7	25	4	2	15	9	30	457	550

Table 4: Reports of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds in Europe, by species since September, as of 7 am on 07 December 2020, according to ADNS reporting. Please note that this is a rapidly changing picture, with new disease reports being made on a daily basis.

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Species	BE	DE	DK	ES	FR	IE	IT	NL	NO	SE	SI	Count
Accipitridae (unidentified) (Accipitridae (incognita))		2										2
Common Buzzard (Buteo buteo)		18	8					3				29
Eurasian Sparrowhawk (Accipiter nisus)		1	1									2
White-tailed Eagle (Haliaeetus albicilla)		1										1
Barnacle Goose (Branta leucopsis)		139	32					7		1		179
Brant Goose (Branta bernicle)		2	1		1							4
Canada Goose (Branta canadensis)	1	2										3
Common Eider (Somateria mollissima)		1	1									2
Common Shelduck (Tadorna tadorna)												1
Egyptian Goose (Alopochen aegyptiaca)	1											1
Eurasian Teal (Anas crecca)		1					1	1				3
Eurasian Wigeon (Mareca penelope)		29	1				2	5				38
Gadwall (Mareca strepera)			1									1
Greater White-fronted Goose (Anser albifrons)	1	1	1					1				4

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Species	BE	DE	DK	ES	FR	IE	IT	NL	NO	SE	SI	Count
Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>)		64	3					11				78
Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>)		21	1				1	3				26
Mute Swan (<i>Cygnus olor</i>)	1	4				3		11			2	21
Pink-footed Goose (<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>)	1		1						2			4
Taiga Bean Goose (<i>Anser fabalis</i>)		4	1					2				7
Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>)						1						1
Charadriidae (unidentified) (<i>Charadriidae incognita</i>)		1										1
Common Wood Pigeon (<i>Columba palumbus</i>)	1											1
Eurasian Magpie (<i>Pica pica</i>)	1											1
Common Kestrel (<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>)		4										4
Peregrine Falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)		6	4	1		2				1		14
Crane (unidentified) (<i>Grus incognita</i>)		2										2
Eurasian Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)		1										1

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Species	BE	DE	DK	ES	FR	IE	IT	NL	NO	SE	SI	Count
Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>)		5	2									7
European Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>)	1	10	5									17
Great Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus marinus</i>)		3										3
Gull (unidentified) (<i>Larus (incognita)</i>)		15							1			16
Common Pheasant (<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>)			1									1
Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>)	1											1
Common Moorhen (<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>)			1									1
Eurasian Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>)		1										1
Curlew Sandpiper (<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>)		1										1
Eurasian Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)	2	8	1			1		1				13
Eurasian Eagle-Owl (<i>Bubo bubo</i>)		5										5
Short-eared Owl (<i>Asio flammeus</i>)								1				1
Tawny Owl (<i>Strix aluco</i>)		1										1
	11	353	66	1	1	7	4	46	3	2	2	511

Implications for the UK

The presence of H5N8 in the UK was not unexpected given the annual autumn migration, and the rapidly developing epidemiological situation (first in southern Russia during the early autumn, and now in Europe as described in this, and previous, Outbreak Assessments). Taken together with the findings of HPAI H5N8 in UK domestic poultry and captive birds in England, and the wide geographical distribution of the reports in wild birds, circulating HPAI H5N8 virus appears to be widespread in wild birds.

In GB, the sensitivity of surveillance has been increased, to ensure collection and analyses of targeted species of wild birds (ducks, geese, swans, gulls, and birds of prey) known to carry a risk of infection with H5 HPAI viruses. Single dead birds of target species, where possible, will be collected and tested. Several systems are in place, including working through NGOs (non-governmental organisations), and members of the public reporting wild bird mortality.

The migration season for wild waterfowl to overwinter in the UK has begun, although numbers may not peak until December/January, depending on the species and the weather conditions in Continental Europe. Generally the Netherlands has a far higher number of wintering water birds than the UK, but cold weather on the Continent can force birds to move across the North Sea to the British Isles.

Following confirmation of one Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N8 outbreak in 'Cheshire West and Chester' district of England and one Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) H5N2 outbreak near Dover District, England the UK is no longer free from notifiable avian influenza under the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) rules.

Where disease is confirmed, we put in place measures in accordance with Council Directive 2005/94/EC. The EU will put safeguard measures in place, meaning that no trade with the EU in live poultry or poultry products will be permitted from either the Restricted Zone in Kent or the Protection or Surveillance Zone in Cheshire and Herefordshire.

Public Health England has confirmed that the risk to public health is very low, and the Food Standards Agency has said that avian influenza does not pose a food safety risk for UK consumers.

Conclusion

As a consequence of the HPAI H5N8 poultry outbreaks in the UK, also in Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Netherlands, and Poland; as well as the increasing HPAI H5N8 cases in wild birds in the UK, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden, and the known migration routes to the UK from these countries: the risk of HPAI incursion in wild birds in GB is **VERY HIGH**. The overall

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risk of exposure of poultry in the UK is **MEDIUM** (with stringent biosecurity) **TO HIGH** (where there are biosecurity breaches).

An Avian Influenza Prevention Zone is in place in [England](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#) and the Chief Veterinary Officers from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are urging bird keepers across the UK to take additional biosecurity measures; in order to prevent further outbreaks of avian influenza in the UK.

On 03 December, the Chief Veterinary Officers for England, Scotland and Wales announced housing measures, which will come into force on the 14 December 2020. It will be a legal requirement for all bird keepers to keep their birds indoors and to follow strict biosecurity measures in order to limit the spread of and eradicate the disease. These housing measures build on the strengthened biosecurity regulations that were brought in as part of the Avian Influenza Protection Zone (AIPZ) on 11 November 2020.

If you keep poultry (including game birds or as pets), you should follow our biosecurity best practice advice, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu#biosecurity-advice> Remain vigilant for any signs of disease in your flock and report any sign of avian influenza to Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301.

Further information is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu> including updated biosecurity advice for poultry keepers for England; <https://gov.wales/avian-influenza> for Wales and; <http://gov.scot/avianinfluenza> for Scotland.

The OIE/FAO International Reference Laboratory/UK National Reference Laboratory at Weybridge has the necessary ongoing proven diagnostic capability for these strains of virus, whether low or high pathogenicity AI, and continually monitors changes in the virus. We will continue to report on any updates on the situation in Europe and, in particular, any changes in disease distribution or wild bird movements which may increase the risk to the UK.

We ask that the public use the Defra helpline (Tel: 03459 33 55 77) to report findings of any dead wild birds. In particular, any wild ducks, wild geese, swans, gulls, or birds of prey.

Authors

Anthony Pacey

Dr Lauren Perrin

Dr Francesca Gauntlett

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Animal & Plant Health Agency
Advice Services Team - International Disease Monitoring

References

All outbreaks and cases were taken from the Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS).



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at iadm@defra.gov.uk