

Updated Outbreak Assessment #9

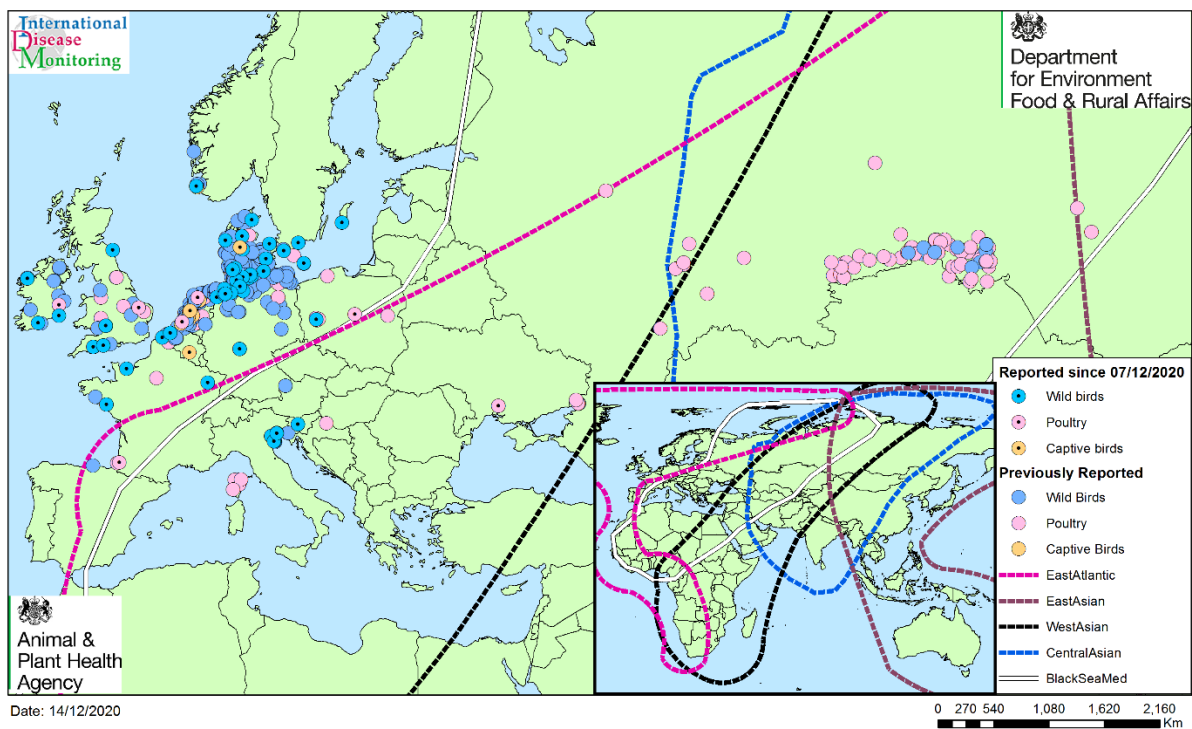
Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in the UK, and Europe

15 December 2020

Ref: VITT/1200 HPAI in the UK and Europe

Disease Report

Since our last report on 07 December, in the **United Kingdom** there have been two new outbreaks of HPAI H5N8, in poultry and captive birds; many reports of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds; and a small number of reports of H5N1 (2 reports), and H5N5 (6 reports), also in wild birds. Elsewhere in Europe, since 07 December, **H5N8** has been reported in poultry in France, Ireland and the Netherlands. H5N8 in captive birds has been reported in the Netherlands. And in wild birds, H5N8 has been reported in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Slovenia and Sweden. Again in wild birds, **H5N1** has been reported in Italy, and H5N5 in Italy and Sweden. **H5Nx** (N untyped) has been reported in poultry in France and the Ukraine. H5Nx has been reported in captive birds in Belgium Denmark and Norway. H5Nx has also been reported in wild birds in Germany and Italy.



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 07 December, there have been two new reports of HPAI H5N8 in poultry ,and many new reports of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds, as well as a small number of reports of H5N1 (2 reports) and H5N5 (6 reports) in wild birds.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N8 was confirmed in captive birds (non-poultry premises) in a wild bird rescue near Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire, on the 13 December 2020.

HPAI H5N8 was confirmed in captive birds and poultry at a premises near Willington, Derbyshire on 15 December 2020. A 3km Protection Zone and a 10km Surveillance Zone have been put in place around the infected premises.

We previously reported that on 04 December, HPAI H5N8 was confirmed in rearing turkeys at a premises near Attleborough, Breckland, Norfolk. Culling has been completed. Also reported was that on 05 December, HPAI H5N8 was confirmed in rearing turkeys at a premises near King's Lynn, Norfolk. Culling has been completed.

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
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

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05 December	near King's Lynn, Norfolk	Rearing turkeys
13 December	near Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire	Captive birds
15 December	near Willington, Derbyshire	Captive birds and poultry

Table 2: Wild birds in England, Wales, and Scotland have tested positive for H5N1, H5N5, H5N8 and H5Nx as of 15 December 2020. Pathogenicity testing has not been completed for all samples yet.

Country / county	H5N1	H5N5	H5N8	H5Nx	Total
England	2	1	212	6	221
Black Swan			11		11
Devon			10		10
Gloucestershire			1		1
Brent Goose			6		6
Lincolnshire			3		3
Northumberland			3		3
Buzzard			2	1	3
Cornwall				1	1
Lancashire			1		1
Warwickshire			1		1
Canada Goose	1		18		19
Devon	1				1
Dorset			5		5
Essex			1		1
Gloucestershire			9		9
Lincolnshire			1		1
Northumberland			1		1
Oxfordshire			1		1
Great White Egret				1	1
North Yorkshire				1	1
Grey Heron			1		1
Warwickshire			1		1
Greylag goose			7	2	9
Gloucestershire			3		3
Lancashire			1	2	3
Lincolnshire			2		2
Surrey			1		1
Herring Gull			2		2
Dorset			2		2

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Kestrel			1		1
Warwickshire			1		1
Lesser Black Backed Gull			1		1
Oxfordshire			1		1
Lesser Black headed Gull			1		1
Cambridgeshire			1		1
Mixed Avian			1		1
Dorset			1		1
Mute Swan	1	1	132		134
Bedfordshire			1		1
Cambridgeshire			8		8
Cumbria			6		6
Devon			1		1
Dorset			76		76
Essex	1	1	3		5
Gloucestershire			4		4
Hampshire			3		3
Isle of Wight			1		1
Lancashire			6		6
Leicestershire			1		1
Lincolnshire			1		1
Norfolk			5		5
Staffordshire			1		1
Suffolk			1		1
Warwickshire			2		2
Worcestershire			12		12
Peregrine Falcon			1		1
Kent			1		1
Pink footed goose			1		1
Lancashire			1		1
Shelduck			1		1
Lincolnshire			1		1
Sparrow Hawk			1		1
Devon			1		1
Swan			1		1
Dorset			1		1
Unspecified			1		1
Dorset			1		1
Unspecified Goose			1		1
Northumberland			1		1
Unspecified Swan			6		6
County Durham			5		5
Tyne and Wear			1		1
Whooper Swan			15	2	17

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Cambridgeshire			4	2	6
Lincolnshire			1		1
Norfolk			10		10
Wigeon			1		1
Lincolnshire			1		1
Wales		5	1		6
Little Grebe			1		1
Carmarthenshire			1		1
Mute Swan		5			5
Gwent		3			3
Monmouthshire		2			2
Scotland			5		5
Greylag goose			1		1
Highlands			1		1
Unspecified Swan			1		1
Fife			1		1
Whooper Swan			3		3
Aberdeenshire			3		3
Grand Total	2	6	218	6	232

Since our last report on 07 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 in Europe

Since 07 December, **Belgium** has reported HPAI H5 in (unspecified) captive birds in the province of Namur towards the south, and two cases of HPAI H5N8 in Pink-footed Geese (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) in coastal West Flanders.

Denmark has reported HPAI H5 in a number of (unspecified) captive birds in the county of Vejle in the south east of the Jutland peninsula. HPAI H5N8 was reported in Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*), Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*), Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*), Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*), Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) and a White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*). These were (respectively) in the various municipalities of Vejle, Naestved, Viborg, Ringkobing-Skjern, Bronderslev-Dronninglund and Lolland.

France has reported two outbreaks of HPAI in poultry (H5N8 and H5). Both are in the department of Landes (in the south-west), both at farms for fattening ducks, and reports to ADNS suggest an epidemiological link between the two outbreaks. HPAI H5N8 has also

been reported in wild birds; in a Brant Goose (*Branta bernicla*), a Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) and Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*). These were, respectively, in the departments of Loire-Atlantique, Meurthe-et-Moselle and Calvados – the latter in Normandy and close to the coast.

Germany has reported 18 cases of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds. With the exception of three cases of HPAI H5N8 in the district of Vogelsbergkreis in central Germany (unspecified swans), all other cases were in the north; in the states of Bremen, Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. Species included Accipitridae (unidentified), Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*), Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*), Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*), Great Egret (*Ardea alba*), Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*), and Strigiformes (unidentified). There was also an HPAI H5 reported in an unspecified bird in the district of Dithmarschen (also in Schleswig-Holstein).

Ireland has reported an outbreak of HPAI H5N8 in poultry. This was in a small turkey fattening premises (of 127 birds) in County Wicklow. In addition, there were three reports of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds: a Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*) in County Cork, a Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) in County Wexford, and a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) in County Mayo.

Italy has reported HPAI H5N8 in wild birds. These were within the province of Venice, and included one Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*), and 24 Eurasian Teal (*Anas crecca*). HPAI H5 in wild birds was reported from the province of Rovigo (again, Eurasian Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*)). Two cases of HPAI H5N1 were reported from the province of Venice: Eurasian Teal (*Anas crecca*) and Eurasian Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*). And HPAI H5N5 was reported in wild birds from the province of Rogivo – Eurasian Teal (*Anas crecca*), Eurasian Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*) and Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*).

The **Netherlands** reported two outbreaks of HPAI H5N8 in poultry. These were in the province of South Holland (a premises of over 21,000 birds) and Friesland (373 birds). ADNS does not record the poultry type for either outbreak. HPAI H5N8 was also reported in (unspeciated) captive birds; in the provinces of North and South Holland.

Norway has reported one incident of HPAI H5 in (unspeciated) captive birds, and two incidents of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds (Eurasian Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*)). All incidents were within the county of Rogaland in western Norway.

Poland has reported three outbreaks of HPAI H5N8 in poultry. These were in the districts of Grodziski (a premises of turkey broilers – approximately 73,000 birds), Gostyninski (again turkey broilers – approximately 34,000 birds), and in the district of Wolsztynski (a premises containing laying hens and with approximately 715,000 birds). There was one reported incident of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds; in a Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis*), and this was also in the region of Wolsztynski.

Slovenia has reported two incidents of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds. Both were in the municipality of Ljubljana, and both were swans; one Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) and one unspiciated swan.

Sweden has reported two incidents of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds: in the province of Gotland (Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)), and in the municipality of Bromölla (Eurasian Eagle-Owl (*Bubo bubo*)). HPAI H5N5 in wild birds was also reported in the municipality of Staffanstorp (a Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)).

Ukraine has reported one outbreak of HPAI H5, in a small premises (of 115 birds), in Mykolayiv Oblast, in the south of the country, and near to the Black Sea.

Since our last report on 07 December, there have been no new reports of HPAI H5N8 in wild birds in the **Netherlands** or **Spain**.

Table 3: Excluding the UK, reported outbreaks of HPAI H5N8, H5N1, H5N5 and H5Nx in domestic poultry and captive birds, and cases in wild birds (since September and as of 7 am on 14 December 2020), according to ADNS reporting. Please note that this is a rapidly changing picture, with new disease reports being made to EU's Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS) on a daily basis.

Country	Untyped	H5			H5N1	H5N5		H5N8			Total
	Wild Birds	Captive Birds	Poultry	Wild Birds	Wild Birds	Poultry	Wild Birds	Captive Birds	Poultry	Wild Birds	
Belgium		1		4		1				9	15
Croatia									1		1
Denmark		1		5			2		1	66	75
France			6	1					4	3	14
Germany	1			11		1	12		11	348	384
Ireland									1	10	11
Italy				2	2		1			4	9
Netherlands			1		4		1	9	7	39	61
Norway		1								5	6
Poland									6	1	7
Slovenia										4	4
Spain										1	1
Sweden							1		1	4	6
Ukraine			2								2
Total	1	3	9	23	6	2	17	9	32	494	596

Table 4: Excluding the UK, reports of HPAI H5N8, H1N1, H5N5 and H5Nx in wild birds in Europe, by species since September, as of 7 am on 14 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.*

Species	BE	DE	DK	ES	FR	IE	IT	NL	NO	PL	SE	SI	Count
Accipitridae (unidentified) (Accipitridae incognita)		5											5
Common Buzzard (Buteo buteo)		19	8					3					30
Eurasian Sparrowhawk (Accipiter nisus)		1	1										2
White-tailed Eagle (Haliaeetus albicilla)		1	1										2
Barnacle Goose (Branta leucopsis)		142	32			1		7			3		185
Brant Goose (Branta bernicla)		2	1		2								5
Canada Goose (Branta canadensis)	1	2											3
Common Eider (Somateria mollissima)		1	1										2
Common Shelduck (Tadorna tadorna)					1								1
Egyptian Goose (Alopochen aegyptiaca)	1												1
Eurasian Teal (Anas crecca)		1					4	1					6
Eurasian Wigeon (Mareca penelope)		29	1				5	5	2				42
Gadwall (Mareca strepera)			1										1
Greater White-fronted Goose (Anser albifrons)	1	1	1				1	1					5
Greylag Goose (Anser anser)		70	6					11					87
Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos)		21	1				2	3					27
Mute Swan (Cygnus olor)	1	1	2		1	4		11				4	24
Northern Pintail (Anas acuta)							1						1
Northern Shoveler (Spatula clypeata)							1						1

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Species	BE	DE	DK	ES	FR	IE	IT	NL	NO	PL	SE	SI	Count
Pink-footed Goose (Anser brachyrhynchus)	3		2						2				7
Swan (unidentified) (Cygnus (incognita))		6											6
Taiga Bean Goose (Anser fabalis)		4	1					2		1			8
Whooper Swan (Cygnus cygnus)						1							1
Great Egret (Ardea alba)		1											1
Charadriidae (unidentified) (Charadriidae (incognita))		1											1
Common Wood Pigeon (Columba palumbus)	1												1
Eurasian Magpie (Pica pica)	1												1
Common Kestrel (Falco tinnunculus)		4											4
Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus)		5	4	1		3					1		14
Crane (unidentified) (Grus (incognita))		2											2
Eurasian Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus)		1											1
Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus)		6	2										8
European Herring Gull (Larus argentatus)	1	10	5										16
Great Black-backed Gull (Larus marinus)		3											3
Gull (unidentified) (Larus (incognita))		15							1				16
Common Pheasant (Phasianus colchicus)			1										1
Great Crested Grebe (Podiceps cristatus)	1												1
Common Moorhen (Gallinula chloropus)			1										1

Species	BE	DE	DK	ES	FR	IE	IT	NL	NO	PL	SE	SI	Count
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									1		6
Short-eared Owl (<i>Asio flammeus</i>)								1					1
Strigiformes (unidentified) (<i>Strigiformes</i> (<i>incognita</i>))		2											2
Tawny Owl (<i>Strix aluco</i>)		1											1
Northern Gannet (<i>Morus bassanus</i>)			1										1
	13	372	74	1	4	10	14	46	5	1	5	4	549

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 is underway, and numbers are peaking in 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.

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Following confirmation of cases of both Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N8 and Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) H5N2 in poultry 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 disease control zones.

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 outbreaks in poultry and captive birds in the UK, also in Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Poland and Sweden; as well as the increasing HPAI H5N8 cases in wild birds in the UK, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, 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 remains **VERY HIGH**. The overall risk of exposure of poultry in GB remains **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 came into force on the 14 December 2020. It is 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.

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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.

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References

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



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