



Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza/2022

Introduced by migrating wild birds (mainly waterfowl, marsh and shore birds, and raptors), HPAI has spread through the migration flyways and is here in Texas. It is easily transmissible and is killing millions of domestic poultry, as well as wild birds, throughout North America. This outbreak is different than the last outbreak in 2015, which was not as highly transmittable to wild birds.

After consulting with governmental agencies and wildlife hospitals across the country as well as evaluating our space/quarantine limitations, we've made the grave decision to not admit HPAI susceptible and sensitive species for treatment. This decision will allow us to continue to safely admit and treat songbirds and other avian species, which make up a larger percentage of our overall avian intakes. As you can imagine, this is a devastating decision. We appreciate your support as we do our best to navigate the situation.

According to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), high-risk avian species include large raptors (hawks/owls/eagles/vultures), gulls, waterfowl (ducks/geese/swans, etc.), crows, and herons. **NOTE:** We are still accepting Eastern Screech Owls (a small raptor).

We will continue to monitor HPAI cases and may need to make changes as the situation develops. Once the virus has run its course (hopefully mid-June), we'll re-evaluate our ability to safely intake these species.

If you have found one of the high-risk species listed above, please visit Animal Help Now (AHnow.org) to locate an independent rehabber or wildlife facility that has the resources and space to intake these high-risk species in a manner that is safe for their other avian patients. If you are unsure of what species you have found, please call us at 713-468-8972 for identification assistance.

Be advised that HPAI can spread to backyard chickens and other domestic birds and is a zoonotic virus. More information on the transmissibility to humans can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/spotlights/2021-2022/h5n1-low-risk-public.htm>

More information on HPAI can be found by visiting these links:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/ai>

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-2022/2022-hpai-wild-birds>