

## Hungerford Nature Center response to Avian Flu

January 31, 2025

The Highly Pathogenic Avian Flu (HPAI), commonly known as avian flu, has been reported in several Connecticut counties. At The Hungerford Nature Center, we have proactively implemented protocols recommended by the USDA, DEEP, UCONN, and other professionals to ensure the health and safety of our birds, animals, staff, and visitors.

- We have reduced the public area in our barnyard, removing access to our chickens and Birds of Prey
- We have made adjustments to our outdoor bird enclosures to reduce risk of infection through contact with native, wild birds and waterfowl
- We have moved some birds to indoor enclosures
- Access to birds will be limited strictly to designated care providers, animal care specialists, and veterinary staff
- We have removed birds from all of our onsite and offsite programs
- Animal care staff are following handling and disinfection protocols as recommended by the USDA, DEEP, UCONN, and other professionals

### **About Avian Flu Transmission to Birds, Animals and Humans**

Avian flu primarily affects birds, particularly waterfowl and domestic poultry. Transmission to humans and other animal species is rare but possible, typically through direct and prolonged contact with infected birds or contaminated surfaces. Risk to the public and other animal species at the nature center is low.

Avian flu is often spread by migrating birds, particularly waterfowl carrying the virus without showing symptoms. These birds may spread the virus through droppings, saliva, and nasal secretions, exposing local birds to infection.

### **What can you do to help?**

- Immediately remove your birdfeeders and waterers to discourage the congregation of wild birds
- If you own chickens or waterfowl, follow recommended [USDA guidelines](#)
- Report dead waterfowl or birds as recommended through the [DEEP website](#)

Thank you for your understanding as we navigate this difficult time. The safety of our animals, staff, volunteers, and visitors is our top priority and we will continue to monitor this situation.

### **For more information about the Avian Flu:**

[Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection](#)

[United States Department of Agriculture](#)

[UCONN Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory](#)