

December 30, 2024



H5N1 Avian Influenza and the Feeding of Wild Ducks in Saanich Parks

In response to concerns regarding the potential risks of feeding wild ducks and other waterfowl in Saanich's parks, and in light of the ongoing H5N1 avian influenza outbreak in parts of B.C., Saanich Parks has made some changes to park signage related to feeding ducks.

H5N1 is a highly pathogenic avian influenza virus that has been causing mortality in wild birds throughout Canada. H5N1 is currently deemed to pose a low risk to the public; however, those who come into contact with sick birds or other animals may have an increased risk and should take precautions.

As of December 12, 2024, all signs related to feeding wild ducks have been removed from Saanich park areas. This decision aligns with the federal government's recommendations to avoid feeding wild birds to help reduce the spread of H5N1 among them.

While some park-goers enjoy feeding ducks, we encourage residents to explore alternative, lower-risk recreational activities such as bird watching, that allow for safe and enjoyable experiences with wildlife.

Please visit the BC Centre for Disease Control's website for more information on H5N1 and recommendations for keeping wildlife and the community safe.

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