

H5 Bird Flu – Communications pack

Updated: 31 August 2026

OFFICIAL



Energy,
Environment
and Climate Action

What's included in this pack:

- Introduction
- Social media content
- Web content
- Signage
- Fact sheets and translated materials
- Frequently asked questions



Introduction

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) is coordinating Victoria's and response to H5 bird flu.

Victoria is supporting national efforts to monitor and respond to this significant biosecurity threat.

This pack contains the most up-to-date information on the H5 bird flu response. Please use this content to ensure your content reflects the current situation in Victoria.

Updates are being provided as the situation evolves.

For the latest information about H5 bird flu visit
agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu

We would greatly appreciate your help in sharing the available H5 bird flu information and resources with your communities and networks.

We have developed this communications pack to assist you in this process.

Social media content

- About H5 bird flu
- How to report H5 bird flu
- What happens when you report
- Victoria's response
- Priority birds
- Housing order
- Disposal advice
- Backyard chickens
- Domestic birds
- Seals and marine mammals
- Keeping pets safe
- Human health
- Health and wellbeing
- Boating and fishing
- Bushwalking

About H5 bird flu

Suggested copy:

H5 bird flu has now been confirmed in wild birds along much of Victoria's coastline and some inland locations.

There have been no detections in poultry in Australia.

Avoid. Record. Report. If you see sick or dead birds or wildlife:

- ✓ avoid direct contact
- ✓ record the exact location and what you observed
- ✓ report it online

While injured wildlife may still need rescue and care, if birds or wildlife appear sick or dead, avoid contact and report it so trained responders can safely assess the situation.

Your report could help detect disease early and support our wildlife.

 agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



How to report H5 bird flu

Suggested copy:

H5 bird flu is present in wild birds in Victoria.

Every report helps us to understand where the H5 bird flu is in our state and monitor the spread.

Avoid. Record. Report. is a simple way you can help.

If you see sick or dead birds or wildlife:

- ✓ avoid direct contact
- ✓ record the exact location and what you observed
- ✓ report it online

We know people care deeply about wildlife and want to help when they see an animal in distress.

Injured wildlife may still need rescue and care. However, if a bird or wildlife appears sick or is found dead, avoid contact and report it so trained responders can assess the situation.

Your report could help detect disease early and support our wildlife.

 agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



What happens when you make a report

Suggested copy:

Reported sick or dead birds or wildlife? Here's what happens next 🗣️

Community reports play an important role in helping us monitor for signs of disease.

Each report we receive is reviewed and assessed using information such as the species, number of birds affected, location and disease risk.

Not all reports will lead to an investigation, collection or testing.

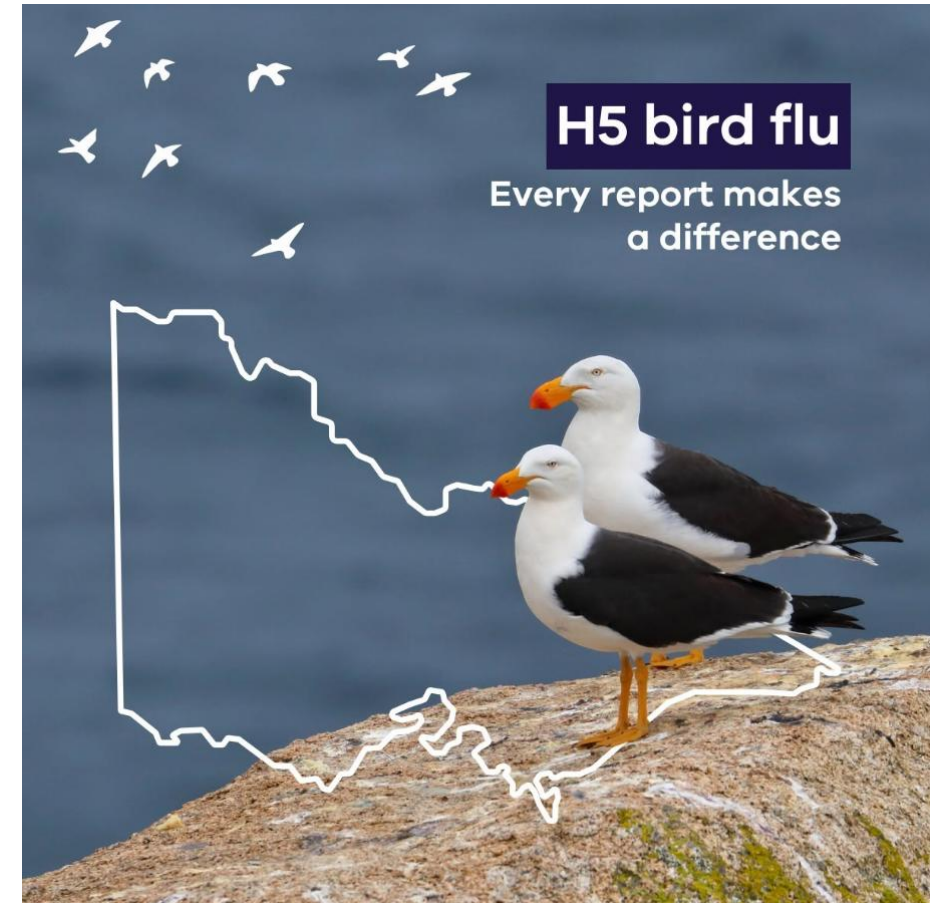
In areas such as the southwest coast, where the presence of H5 bird flu in crested terns is known, not every reported dead or sick crested tern will be sampled as we prioritise other species and regions where disease status is unknown.

Where further action is needed, we may contact you for more information or arrange collection and testing.

If you see sick or dead birds or wildlife, avoid contact, record its exact location and report it online.

You can also view reports on our online map and see where H5 bird flu has been detected.

Learn more and view the map: agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



Greater crested terns and H5

Suggested copy:

Why are we seeing more terns affected by H5 bird flu?

H5 bird flu is affecting large numbers of terns along parts of Victoria's coastline, and they have also showed up in inland areas recently too.

Terns are highly social seabirds that gather in large breeding and roosting colonies.

When a disease like H5 bird flu enters a colony, it can spread more easily between birds that are living and feeding close together

Terns also migrate and move across large distances, including along Australia's coastline and between countries, which can increase their exposure to the virus.

While H5 bird flu can affect many bird species, some species are more vulnerable because of their behaviour, habitat and the way they gather in large groups.

If you see sick or dead birds, please avoid contact, keep pets away and report what you see to Agriculture Victoria.

Learn more and view the map: agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



Victoria's response

Suggested copy:

Victoria is responding to H5 bird flu through one of the most extensive wildlife disease responses ever undertaken in the state.

Since the virus was first detected, DEECA has coordinated a statewide response with support from the Australian Government, local councils, Traditional Owners, Parks Victoria, wildlife organisations, industry and land managers.

Extensive surveillance, testing and monitoring are helping authorities understand how the virus is spreading and which species are affected.

Every community report contributes valuable information, even when testing is not required.

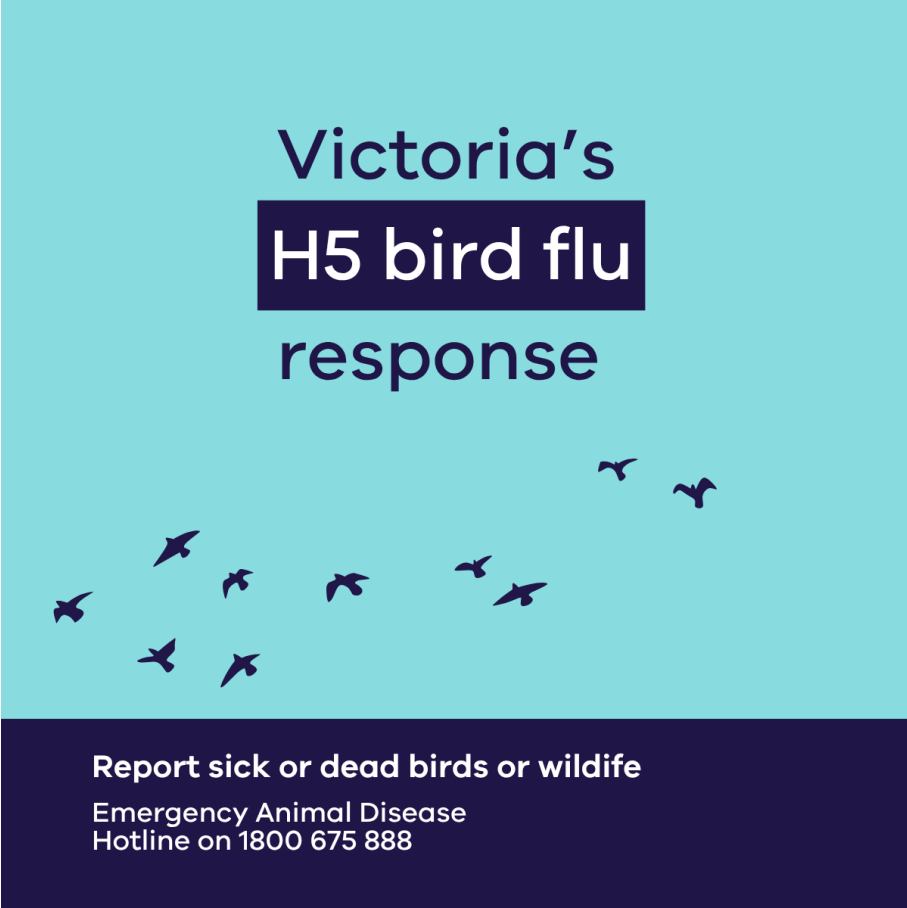
While H5 bird flu cannot be controlled in wild bird populations, Victoria is taking action to reduce impacts, including targeted wildlife vaccination programs, protection of threatened species and biosecurity measures.

Community reports remain vital and help inform response decisions across the state.

If you see sick or dead birds or wildlife:

- ✓ avoid direct contact
- ✓ record the exact location and what you observed
- ✓ report it online

 agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



The poster features a light blue background with several black silhouettes of birds in flight. The title 'Victoria's H5 bird flu response' is prominently displayed in the upper half. The lower half has a dark blue background with white text providing contact information for reporting sick or dead birds or wildlife.

Victoria's H5 bird flu response

Report sick or dead birds or wildlife
Emergency Animal Disease
Hotline on 1800 675 888

Priority birds

Suggested copy:

Do you know your birds?

H5 bird flu has now been confirmed in wild birds along much of Victoria's coastline and some inland locations.

Knowing which birds to look out for can help us detect the disease early, before it has the chance to spread further.

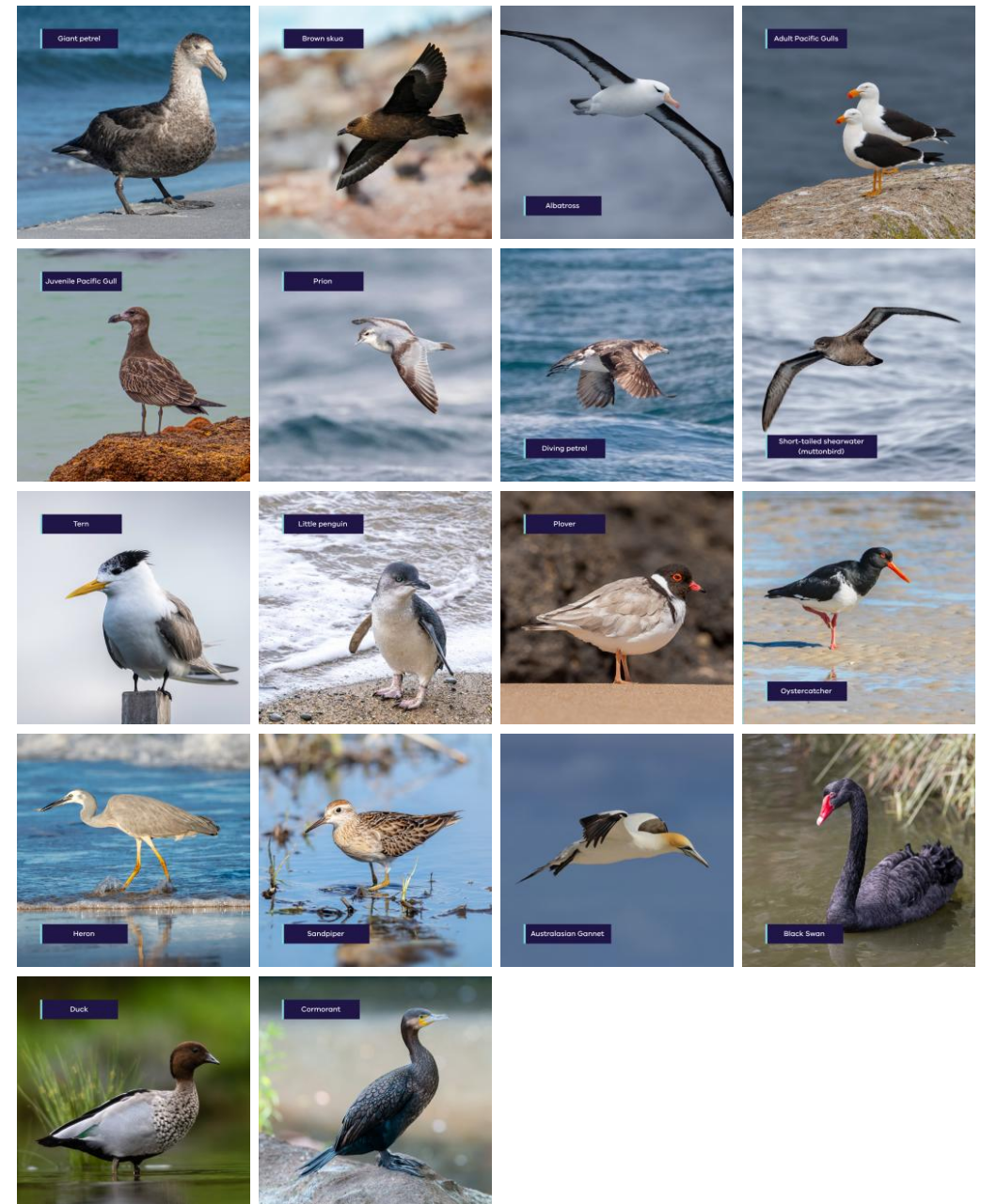
Swipe through to see the different bird species that are most susceptible to H5 bird flu.

If you find:

- 🐦 1 or more sick or dead seabird, waterbird, shorebird or bird of prey
- 🐦 5 or more sick or dead wild birds of any species anywhere in Victoria
- 🐻 1 or more sick or dead marine mammal (e.g. seal, sea lion, dolphin)

Avoid contact, record its exact location and report it online or call 1800 675 888.

🔗 agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



Housing order

Suggested copy:

A poultry housing requirement for flocks of 50 or more birds is in place in Victoria for southern local government areas, including metropolitan Melbourne.

The requirement is for flocks of 50 or more poultry to be confined to prevent contact with wild birds.

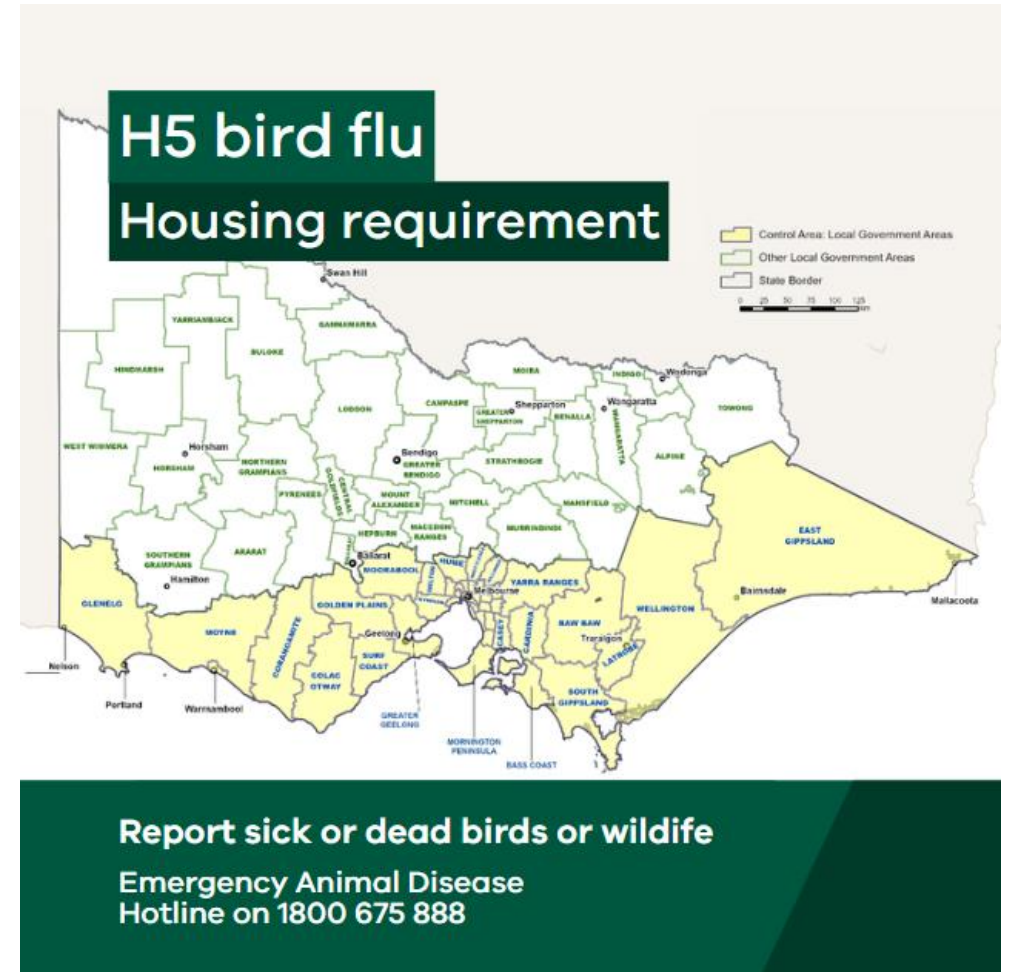
The requirement is in place for at least another 28 days until 18 September and will continue to be reviewed based on current disease activity and risk it poses to poultry.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has advised non-enforcement of free-range labelling applies for up to 90 days while a housing order or a recommendation was put in place.

Poultry owners are expected to implement all reasonably achievable measures that minimise contact between poultry and wild birds.

Such practical measures could include restricting access to higher-risk areas, reducing the area or time birds are outside, improving exclusion from sheds or yards and protecting feed and water from wild bird contamination.

For more information, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



Disposal advice

Suggested copy:

In general, dead wildlife should be left where found to decompose naturally.

Unnecessary intervention can disturb surviving birds, increase stress in affected colonies and could interfere with development of immunity.

If you see sick or dead wildlife, avoid contact, keep pets away and report what you see. Community reports help us track where disease may be present.

Beaches, parks and public spaces remain open unless otherwise advised.

If a dead bird must be disposed of:

- Do not touch it with bare hands
- wear gloves, a mask, eye protection and long sleeves
- use a shovel, tongs or a plastic bag to collect the bird
- double-bag the dead bird before placing it in a regular household waste bin (red bin)
- thoroughly wash hands, clothing and any equipment used during handling.

More information on managing dead birds and wildlife on your land is available at agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu

H5 bird flu

Avoid direct contact with sick or dead wildlife

EMERGENCY ANIMAL
DISEASE HOTLINE
1800 675 888



Backyard chickens

Suggested copy:

Good biosecurity remains the best defence against H5 bird flu for backyard chickens.

There are simple steps you can take to help protect your backyard birds from H5 bird flu:

- ✓ Use netting, fencing, roofing or other barriers where possible to reduce contact with wild birds or wild bird droppings.
- ✓ Keep feed and water away from wild birds
- ✓ Clean poultry yards and coops regularly
- ✓ Wash your hands before and after handling birds
- ✓ Avoid sharing equipment with other poultry owners
- ✓ Monitor your birds for signs of illness and report any suspect cases immediately

These steps can help keep your birds healthy and reduce the risk of spreading disease.

Find out more at agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu and report suspected cases by calling 1800 675 888.



Domestic birds

Suggested copy:

Whether you keep cockatiels, budgies, or other pet birds, good biosecurity matters.

Simple actions can help protect your birds from disease.

Here's what to keep in mind.

- ✓ Keep feed and water away from wild birds
- ✓ Prevent contact between your birds and wild birds or their droppings
- ✓ Keep aviaries, cages and outdoor enclosures clean and secure
- ✓ Wear clean footwear and wash your hands before and after handling birds

If you notice something unusual, talk to your local vet or call the Emergency Animal Disease hotline on 1800 675 888.

Read more [🔗 go.vic.gov.au/4gNznME](https://go.vic.gov.au/4gNznME)



Seals and marine mammals

Suggested copy:

Seals are an important part of Victoria's coastal landscape and our communities.

While there have been no confirmed cases in seals in Victoria, the virus has affected a fur seal in South Australia, which means we may see seal deaths linked to H5 bird flu in the future.

With H5 bird flu detected in Victoria, it's important not to touch sick, injured or dead seals and other marine mammals.

If you see a marine mammal that appears unwell:

- ✓ Stay at least 30 metres away. Keep children and pets clear.
- ✓ Do not touch, handle or attempt to move the animal
- ✓ Avoid disturbing groups of seals resting on beaches or rocks
- ✓ Report sick or dead wildlife

Limiting contact with potentially infected wildlife helps protect people, pets, livestock and other wildlife.

For more information, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



Human health

Suggested copy:

Human cases of H5 bird flu are very rare, and it has not been shown to spread easily from person to person.

There is currently no evidence of sustained person-to-person transmission of H5 bird flu.

As a precaution, people who regularly work or interact closely with birds, particularly sick or dead birds, should follow standard safety advice and hygiene measures.

If you come into contact with sick or dead wildlife and you develop flu-like symptoms, call your doctor for medical advice and let them know about any contact with sick or dead wildlife in the last 10 days.

If you see sick or dead birds or wildlife:

- ✓ AVOID direct contact with sick or dead wild birds or wildlife and their environment
- ✓ RECORD what you see
- ✓ REPORT it online through agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu

For more information visit:

betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/bird-flu-avian-influenza



Health and wellbeing

Suggested copy:

It is normal for people to have strong emotional or physical reactions to distressing events.

Animal disease outbreaks affect different community members in different ways.

It is understandable to feel distressed and anxious when the future is uncertain. This is natural. If you feel overwhelmed, it is important to ask for help. Encourage friends and family to seek help too, if needed.

Where to get help:

- talk to your general practitioner (GP)
- contact your local Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub
- contact your mental health specialist, such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, counsellor or social worker.

In an emergency where there is immediate risk of harm to a person, call Triple Zero (000). For 24-hour crisis support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

More information and resources (in English and 35 other languages) is available at:

betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/trauma-reaction-and-recovery



Keeping pets safe

Suggested copy:

While the risk of H5 bird flu in pets is extremely low, it's best to take precautions.

If you're out walking your dog or spending time outdoors:

- ✓ Keep dogs on a lead in areas with native wildlife
- ✓ Don't allow pets to investigate or eat dead animals
- ✓ Stop cats from roaming and hunting wildlife

These simple actions help protect pets, wildlife and curbs the spread of disease.

If you suspect H5 bird flu in birds, mammals, poultry or other captive birds, report it immediately by calling the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888 or to DEECA online.

Find out more at agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu

More information about responsible pet ownership and legal requirements: agriculture.vic.gov.au/animalwelfare



Boating and fishing

Suggested copy:

H5 bird flu has been detected in some Victorian wetlands.

Boating and fishing can continue as normal in most areas.

If there has been a recent mortality event, avoid activities that could expose you to contaminated water, including swimming, wading, fishing and boating.

- ✓ Avoid direct contact with sick or dead birds
- ✓ Wash your hands thoroughly after visiting areas where wild birds gather
- ✓ Supervise children and pets around affected areas

For more information, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



H5 bird flu

Boating and fishing can continue as normal

Avoid sick or dead birds and report them

Bushwalking

Suggested copy:

Exploring Victoria's parks, forests and beaches? Help stop the spread of H5 bird flu and other pests and diseases.

Before and after your walk:

- ✓ Check your boots, clothing and gear for soil, seeds and plant material
- ✓ Clean equipment before visiting a new area
- ✓ Stay on designated tracks where possible
- ✓ Be on the lookout for sick wildlife or signs of disease
- ✓ Report sick or dead birds of any species in Victoria

Bushwalkers are often among the first people to spot changes in the environment, making them an important part of Victoria's biosecurity system.

By taking a few simple steps before you leave the trail or beach, you can help keep Victoria's natural places healthy and limit the spread of pests and diseases.

Report suspected H5 bird flu cases immediately to the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888 or to DEECA online.

For more information, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



Website content

Website content

The Agriculture Victoria website is the key source of information for H5 bird flu information in Victoria.

Recommended content for your website is included in the attachment which can be modified to include local information.

NOTE FOR APPROVERS: The draft website copy is available for review here: [Website content - H5 bird flu in Victoria.docx](#)

Website copy – H5 bird flu

Current as of 31 August 2026

H5 bird flu is in Victoria

H5N1 avian influenza, also known as H5 bird flu, has been detected in wild birds in Victoria. H5 bird flu is a disease that mainly affects birds and wildlife. The risk to human health remains low, but people should avoid contact with sick or dead birds and wildlife.

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) leading the response to H5 bird flu in Victoria. As information can change quickly, we recommend visiting the Agriculture Victoria website for the latest updates, maps and advice.

[Visit the Agriculture Victoria H5 bird flu website.](#)

What you should do

If you see sick or dead birds or wildlife:

- Do not touch, handle or move them.
- Keep children and pets away from the area.
- Avoid contact with bird droppings and contaminated environments.
- Record the location and the number of animals affected.

Report what you see through [Agriculture Victoria's online reporting form](#).

Please report:

- clusters of 5 or more sick or dead wild birds of any species
- a single sick or dead seabird, waterbird, shorebird or bird of prey
- a single sick or dead marine mammal, such as a seal or dolphin.

If you need to report sick or dead poultry or livestock, call the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888 immediately.]

Advice for pet owners

When visiting beaches, parks and other outdoor areas:

- Keep dogs on a lead.
- Stop pets from approaching, scavenging or eating dead birds or wildlife.
- Wash your hands after outdoor activities, especially if you may have come into contact with bird droppings.

Advice for backyard poultry owners

Poultry owners should take steps to reduce contact between domestic birds and wild birds. This includes protecting feed and water sources and maintaining good biosecurity practices. Agriculture Victoria provides the latest guidance for poultry owners and any current requirements.

Managing sick and dead wildlife

Leave dead wildlife where it is

In most situations, dead wildlife can be left where it is found to decompose naturally.

While it can be distressing to see dead birds or wildlife, leaving them undisturbed is often the best option. This helps minimise disturbance to surviving animals and supports natural processes within local ecosystems.



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Signage

Print ready signs

Print ready signage files are included in the attachment which you can use in public spaces to encourage awareness in the community.

If you would prefer to use your own branding, you can copy the text and adjust the layout to suit your style guide.

We recommend keeping a log of where signage is installed.

A note on public land closure:

Public land access is not routinely restricted when H5 bird flu is detected in wildlife, as closures are unlikely to prevent its spread.

It should only be considered where there is a clear operational need, with decisions based on evidence, risk and the effectiveness of less restrictive measures such as public information and community education.

Help spot H5 bird flu

Report sick or dead birds

AVOID

contact with sick or dead birds, wildlife or their environment

RECORD

what you see. How many? Where? When?

REPORT

to DEECA by using the QR code or calling the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

Report groups of 5 or more sick or dead wild birds of any species, anywhere in Victoria.

Report even one:

sick or dead seabird, waterbird, shorebird or bird of prey

sick or dead marine mammal (e.g. seals, sea lions, dolphins).

Following a notification, DEECA will assess and test as required.

agriculture.vic.gov.au/reportdeadbirds

VICTORIA

Government of Victoria

Energy, Environment and Climate Action

H5 bird flu

Avoid

contact with sick or dead birds, wildlife or their environment.

Record

what you see. How many? Where? When?

Report

to DEECA by scanning the QR code or calling the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

Scan the QR code or call Emergency Animal Disease Hotline 1800 675 888

VICTORIA

Government of Victoria

Energy, Environment and Climate Action

H5 bird flu detected in this area

Avoid contact with sick or dead wildlife

Avoid disturbing or feeding birds or wildlife

Keep pets away

For more information visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu Emergency Animal Disease Hotline 1800 675 888

VICTORIA

Government of Victoria

Energy, Environment and Climate Action

H5 bird flu detected in this area

Area temporarily closed

This area is temporarily closed to support wildlife response activities and help reduce the spread of H5 bird flu.

Do not enter this area.

Keep pets away.

For more information visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu Thank you for your cooperation.

VICTORIA

Government of Victoria

Energy, Environment and Climate Action

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Fact sheets and translated materials

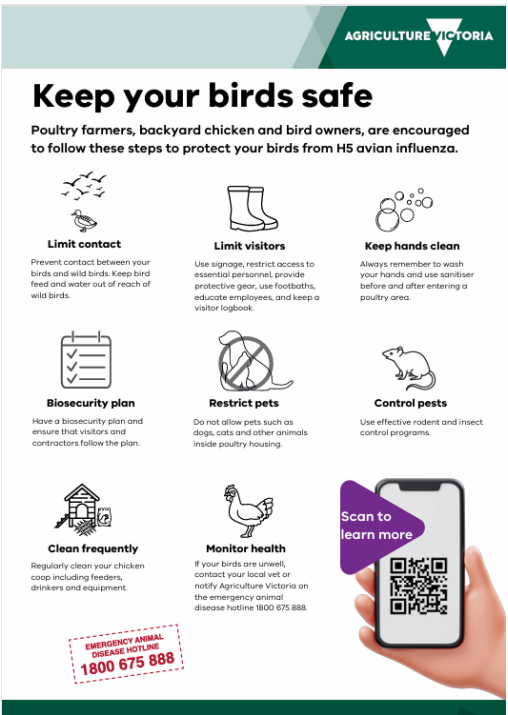
Fact sheets, post cards and translated materials

Fact sheets and post cards on a range of topics are included in the attachment.

You can also find translated information on the Australian Government’s [Bird Flu website](#).



This postcard is also available in Chinese, Greek, Punjabi and Vietnamese.



Frequently asked questions about H5 bird flu

Frequently asked questions

Please share the latest FAQs with your customer service team members or anyone who works in a community-facing role to help with any queries.

Current situation

Has H5 bird flu been detected in Victoria?

Yes. H5 bird flu has been detected in wild birds in Victoria. The Agriculture Victoria website provides the latest information on detections and an interactive map showing reported cases.

What to do when you see sick or dead birds

What should I do if I find a dead bird?

Avoid touching or handling the bird. Keep children and pets away from the area, note the location and report it if it meets the reporting criteria.

For the latest reporting requirements, residents should visit the Agriculture Victoria website or contact the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 88

What should I do if I see a sick bird?

Avoid contact with the bird and keep pets away from the area. If possible, note the location and any visible signs of illness, then report it through Agriculture Victoria's online form at agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu.

Should I try to rescue a sick bird?

No. People should avoid handling sick wildlife. Although it can be upsetting to see an animal in distress, reducing contact helps minimise stress on the animal and reduces the risk of spreading disease.

Why aren't sick birds being euthanised?

Government veterinarians do not routinely euthanise sick wild birds. Some birds may recover from infection, which can contribute to population recovery. Minimising disturbance to wildlife can also help reduce the spread of disease.

Can I remove a dead bird from my property?

If removal is necessary after you have reported the bird to Agriculture Victoria, residents should avoid direct contact and wear appropriate protective equipment such as gloves, a mask and eye protection. The bird should be double-bagged and disposed of in a general household waste bin. There is detailed guidance on the Agriculture Victoria website.

Can I still feed wild birds?

Feeding wild birds and wildlife can cause serious health issues. Native animals have adapted to a particular diet and altering or supplementing their diets with foods that they wouldn't otherwise eat can make them sick.

You can help local wildlife by planting a mix of local native trees and shrubs in your garden. Native plants provide food, shelter, and breeding opportunities for birds.

Why aren't dead birds being removed?

While seeing dead birds can be upsetting, they are not routinely removed from public spaces. Removing dead birds can disturb surviving wildlife, create additional stress for bird colonies. In most situations, leaving wildlife undisturbed is the best approach. Authorities monitor reports and will take action where needed, while residents can help by avoiding contact, keeping pets away and reporting sick or dead wildlife

Frequently asked questions

H5 bird flu in the community

Is it safe to visit beaches, parks and public spaces?

Yes. Beaches, parks and public spaces remain open unless otherwise advised by authorities. People can continue to enjoy these areas while taking sensible precautions around wildlife.

Is it safe for children to play outside?

Yes. Children can continue normal outdoor activities. Parents and carers should encourage children to avoid touching sick or dead birds and remind them to wash their hands after playing outside.

Is it safe to walk my dog on the beach or the local park?

Yes. People can continue to walk their dogs on beaches and in public areas. Dogs should be kept on a lead and prevented from approaching, scavenging or eating dead birds and wildlife.

Can I go fishing?

Yes. Recreational fishing can continue as normal. As a precaution, avoid contact with sick or dead birds and wildlife, practise good hand hygiene and report any sick or dead wildlife you encounter.

Information for pet owners

How can I protect my pets?

Keep pets away from sick or dead birds and wildlife, keep dogs on a lead in public spaces, and prevent pets from scavenging for deceased birds. If your pet becomes unwell after contact with wildlife, contact your veterinarian for advice.

H5 bird flu and your health

Is H5 bird flu a risk to people?

The risk to the general public is considered low. Human infections are rare and are generally associated with close contact with infected birds, their droppings or contaminated environments.

Is it safe to eat chicken and eggs?

There is no food safety concern with properly handled and cooked poultry products. Residents should continue to follow normal food safety practices when handling and preparing food.

Is my drinking water safe?

There is currently no advice that H5 bird flu affects treated drinking water supplies. Residents should continue to follow normal health and hygiene practices and refer to health authorities for the latest information.

Can I get H5 bird flu from walking near birds?

Simply being near birds does not generally pose a risk. The main concern is direct contact with infected birds, their droppings or contaminated environments. People should avoid touching sick or dead birds and should wash their hands after outdoor activities.

Where can I get health advice?

For information about bird flu and human health, residents can visit the Victorian Department of Health website or speak with their GP.

Frequently asked questions

Information for poultry and bird owners

H5 bird flu has not been detected in poultry in Australia.

Should I be concerned about H5 bird flu and my chickens?

H5 bird flu mainly affects birds, including backyard poultry. If you keep birds, now is a good time to review your biosecurity practices and take steps to reduce contact between your birds and wild birds. For the latest advice, visit the Agriculture Victoria website.

Is there a poultry housing order in Victoria?

Yes. Agriculture Victoria has introduced a poultry housing requirement for flocks of 50 or more birds in certain local government areas across coastal and southern Victoria to help reduce contact between poultry and wild birds.

If you keep poultry, it is important to check whether the housing requirement applies in your area and to stay up to date with any changes.

Even where housing is not required, Agriculture Victoria recommends taking steps to minimise contact between poultry and wild birds, including protecting feed and water sources and maintaining good biosecurity practices.

For the latest information about poultry housing requirements, affected areas and advice for bird owners, visit the Agriculture Victoria website.

Do I need a Property Identification Code (PIC)?

If you keep 50 or more poultry, you must have a Property Identification Code (PIC). A PIC helps Agriculture Victoria contact livestock owners during animal disease outbreaks and other emergencies.

How can I protect my birds?

The best way to protect your birds is to keep them away from wild birds and follow good biosecurity practices.

You can:

- keep feed and water covered
- stop wild birds accessing bird enclosures
- keep sheds, aviaries and equipment clean
- keep pets out of poultry areas
- wash your hands after handling birds or eggs
- clean your footwear before entering bird enclosures.

For more Information, visit the Agriculture Victoria website.

Can I still give eggs to family and friends?

Yes. If you share eggs, it's a good idea to keep a record of who received them and when. You should also collect eggs daily, discard any that are cracked or heavily soiled, refrigerate them promptly and cook them thoroughly before eating.

Can I still sell eggs?

Yes, but anyone selling eggs for human consumption must comply with the Victorian egg production standards and any additional Agriculture Victoria requirements that may apply.

Thank you for your support

For more information about H5 bird flu, visit
[agriculture.vic.gov.au/bird flu](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/bird-flu)

For further information or feedback on this
communications pack, contact
SBOC.publicinformation@agriculture.vic.gov.au

For any media enquiries, please contact
SBOC.media@agriculture.vic.gov.au

