



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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IDNR: Use of backyard bird feeders, bird baths may resume *Feeding ducks, geese should be avoided, however*

SPRINGFIELD – Bird lovers may resume using backyard feeders and baths effective Wednesday, June 1, 2022, wildlife biologists at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) advised today.

IDNR originally recommended the use of bird feeders and bird baths be suspended through May 31 in response to the EA H5N1 strain of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in Illinois.

With the annual spring migration of non-resident waterfowl and other migratory bird species complete, the risk of further disease outbreaks among wild bird populations has been minimized. To date, HPAI has not been detected in songbird species.

“The IDNR would like to thank the public for their assistance and cooperation in potentially reducing the spread of HPAI during this critical time,” said Chris Jacques, the agency’s wildlife disease program manager.

IDNR continues to encourage regular cleaning of bird feeders and bird baths. People who keep domestic poultry should remain extra vigilant. Further guidance for poultry owners can be found at the following USDA website: [USDA APHIS | Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza \(HPAI\)](#).

And because HPAI may still occur in resident waterfowl, people should avoid feeding ducks and geese. Even under normal conditions, feeding waterfowl can lead to nuisance problems and, consequently, increase rates of disease transmission in wild bird populations.

IDNR first announced HPAI was detected in wild migratory waterfowl (Canada geese) in Illinois in March 2022. Since that time, experts have documented HPAI-related mortalities in wild eagles, double-crested cormorants, snow geese, American white pelicans, red-tailed hawks, mallard ducks, redhead duck, lesser scaup, Canada geese, Ross’s geese and turkey vultures in Champaign, Cook, Fulton, Lake, Madison, Peoria, Sangamon and Will counties.

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