



-For Immediate Release-

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CONNECTICUT'S BEARDSLEY ZOO REPORTS PRELIMINARY DETECTION OF AVIAN FLU CASE, IMPLEMENTS PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Bridgeport, CT – (January 30th, 2025) – Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo (CBZ) has received preliminary results of Highly Pathogenic Avian Flu (HPAI), commonly known as avian flu, following testing of a deceased Cotton Patch goose on grounds, Tuesday, January 28th. In response, the zoo has taken additional steps above and beyond already established protective measures to ensure the health and safety of its birds, animals, staff, and guests. The zoo is working closely with state and federal partners, including U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) to follow guidelines and conduct ongoing reviews as a result of the detection.

Health and safety precautions had already been enacted at CBZ in response to HPAI cases reported in Connecticut. Out of an abundance of caution for the wellbeing of zoo animals, staff and guests, additional and increased measures have been implemented.

Animal Care and Safety Protocols

To further protect the zoo's bird collection, staff, the public and animals in care, the following measures have been put in place:

- The farmyard and outdoor aviary are temporarily closed.
- Access to birds will be limited strictly to care providers, designated animal care specialists, and veterinary staff.
- All volunteer activity and ambassador experiences with birds are cancelled.
- Animal care staff will use designated tools for each avian area, all tools will be placed in disinfectant solutions after use.
- Staff who have critical care roles with birds will continue to wear increased PPE to reduce the risk of transmission.

Next Steps

The zoo's Animal Care team will continue to evaluate the health of all birds, animals and staff and will adjust safety precautions as needed.

Birds in nearby exhibits that did not have direct contact with the affected flock, including ravens, peafowl, and turkeys, will be quarantined and tested to ensure that staff with proper PPE can monitor the flock. In accordance with state and federal guidelines, the zoo has humanely euthanized the remaining affected birds in the pond community that may have been exposed to HPAI, to prevent the possible spread of the disease.

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 zoo is low.

Avian flu is often spread by migrating birds that travel from southern regions to New England, particularly waterfowl carrying the virus without showing symptoms. As these birds pass through the region, they may shed the virus through droppings, saliva, and nasal secretions, potentially exposing local birds to infection.

The zoo remains committed to the health and well-being of all its animals and will continue to monitor the situation closely. Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo will provide updates if significant changes occur.

Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo appreciates our guests for their patience, as visits may be disrupted by these changes. For more about the zoo, its animals and visiting hours click here beardsleyzoo.org.

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About Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo

Connecticut's only zoo, celebrating 102 years, features 350 animals representing primarily North and South American and Northern Asian species. Guests won't want to miss our Andean bear, maned wolves, Mexican gray wolves, and red wolves. Other highlights include our Spider Monkey Habitat, and a new prairie dog exhibit. As an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and participant in its Species Survival Plan (SSP) programs, the non-profit Zoo is committed to the preservation of endangered animals and wild habitats. Tickets can be purchased on the [Zoo's website](http://beardsleyzoo.org).