



DWHC-newsletter – Winter 2025

Current topics

Newcastle Disease



Since August 2025, we have been getting many reports of sick and dead pigeons from Groningen. During our post-mortem investigation Newcastle disease was found in one of the examined pigeons, a feral rock dove. The DWHC receives reports from multiple areas across the Netherlands of pigeons with the same clinical symptoms as the ones from Groningen. At present, pigeons from the Limburg, South-Holland, and Amsterdam are being tested.

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Hare myxomatosis



In August 2024, we received the first reports of European hares with myxomatosis-like symptoms. We found that the infection in these hares was caused by the hare myxomatosis virus (ha-MYXV). Ha-MYXV is an emerging virus. The DWHC is trying to track its spread in the Netherlands and understand its modes of transmission. We published a map of the municipalities with confirmed cases of hare myxomatosis on our website.

[Read more >>](#)

Bird flu



Maandelijks overzicht van vogelgriep testen 2025

Januari
Februari
Maart
April
Mei

The bird flu outbreak among wild birds is still ongoing, resulting in increased mortality. The test results are published monthly on our website. The first positive test results were found in October. The increased mortality decreased somewhat in December. Currently, birds are still being investigated. In addition, [a kitten infected with bird flu](#) has been found.

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Results of our research

Roe deer blood sample research 2024-2025



Between March 2024 and April 2025, hunters, wildlife managers, and game coordinators have submitted 324 blood samples from roe deer to us. Antibodies against tick-borne encephalitis were found in 26 blood samples. Antibodies against epizootic hemorrhagic disease were not found in any of the blood samples. Finally, bluetongue virus serotype 3 was also tested, with one positive result. Therefore, deer appear to contribute little to the spread of bluetongue virus in the Netherlands.

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DWHC focus species 2025: Common Kestrel and Peregrine Falcon



Trauma was the cause of death for almost all Common Kestrels and Peregrine Falcons examined. Bird flu was also a significant cause of death for both the Peregrine Falcon (2/3) and the Common Kestrel (4/10). Birds of prey are generally more susceptible to infection because they often eat prey infected with bird flu. This is, however, a new finding for the Common Kestrel, as this species primarily eats Common Voles, which are not known carriers of bird flu.

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Interesting case

Red deer intoxicated by acorns



At the end of September, a Red Deer was found in the National Park Hoge Veluwe. The animal was lying on the ground and made no move to get up when people approached. After examination at the DWHC, it turned out that the animal had recently suffered from acorn intoxication; their forestomachs were full of acorns. Green, unripe acorns contain relatively high levels of tannin. Tannin is a toxic substance for various herbivores that ingest large amounts of it. This can cause damage to the kidneys and gastrointestinal tract.

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Signals from abroad

France: Outbreak of lumpy skin disease in new department, Rhône



On September 18, 2025, an outbreak of lumpy skin disease (LSD) was reported in Rhône, France. This is the first infection in this department. The number of LSD infections in France now stands at 79. The disease has previously been found in the departments of l'Ain (2), Savoie (32), Haute-Savoie (44), and now also in Rhône (1). The NVWA (Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority) has traced potentially high-risk imports from this new restricted area.

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DWHC at the Science Week

Utrecht Science Week and Weekend of Science



The DWHC attended Utrecht Science Week and the national Weekend of Science to discuss our research. The theme of the Stakeholders dinner was infectious diseases. Here, we discussed bird flu – a disease that affects both birds and mammals. We demonstrated how we, together with clinical and fundamental research groups, contribute to the early detection of disease outbreaks. During the Weekend of Science, we invited children and their parents to our ‘cabinet of horrors’ and taught them how diseases can spread in wildlife.

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Happy holidays and best wishes for 2026

Photo: Margriet Montizaan

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