



## DWHC newsletter – Summer 2026

### Current topics



#### **Tularemia**

In April 2026, multiple dead and weakened hares were found in two areas in the provinces of Friesland and Overijssel. The animals were often emaciated, showing little flight behavior, and became weakened and apathetic in the final stages. Tularemia (rabbit fever) was confirmed in both animals using PCR.

**[Read more >>](#)**

## Results of our research

### Bird flu rapid test



The DWHC, together with WBVR, has conducted research into the avian influenza rapid test on dead wild birds. Although positive results often prove to be correct, the test misses a significant proportion of actually infected birds. As a result, there is a risk that infected animals may falsely test negative for avian influenza.

[Read more >>](#)

### Fryslan: foxes and bird flu



A total of 50 foxes from Friesland were tested for avian influenza. Two of the 50 foxes tested positive for the virus, and 22 tested positive for antibodies. This means that these foxes have come into contact with avian influenza at some point in their lives. The fox is therefore a good indicator species for monitoring avian influenza in mammals in an area.

[Read more >>](#)

## Secondary poisoning from rat poison



Rat and mouse poison, on a large scale, ends up in animal species for which these substances are not intended, such as foxes, martens, hedgehogs, birds of prey, and owls. Since the policy got stricter in 2023, no lasting decrease in this secondary poisoning has been observed. In this study, rat and mouse poison was found in all foxes and virtually all stone martens. One or more of these substances were found in 84% of the hedgehogs, and in 58 to 100% of the birds of prey and owls.

[Read more >>](#)

## Risk Map Tick-borne Encephalitis



To predict in which areas the tick-borne encephalitis virus may occur, even if no cases of the disease have yet been discovered there, a risk map of the Netherlands has been generated. The research shows that large parts of the Netherlands are suitable for the occurrence of TBEV, particularly areas where many ticks and small rodents are present.

[Read more >>](#)

## Remarkable case

### Eye spot developed in young red deer

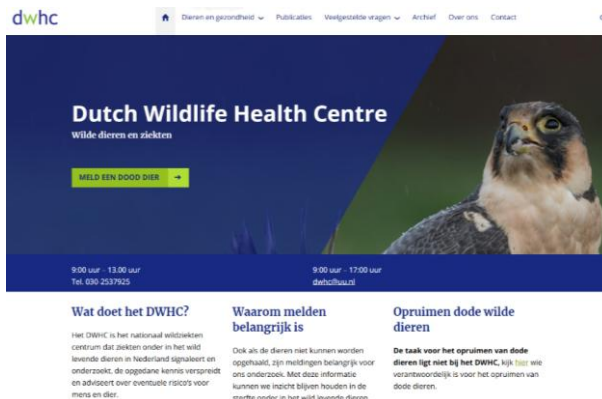


Late May, a young red deer was found in National Park De Hoge Veluwe. The animal was examined at the DWHC. Both of the red deer's eyes were not developed. The crossing of the optic nerves in the brain was also missing. These abnormalities originated before birth. The precise cause of these abnormalities could not be determined. Blindness poses a major problem for a wild animal, as they have more difficulty finding food, orienting themselves, and perceiving danger.

[Read more >>](#)

## General

### New website



The DWHC website has had a new look since April. Reporting via our report form works the same way. Feel free to take a look around!

[Go to the website>>](#)

## Annual report 2025



The annual report, detailing all DWHC activities in 2025, is now available. In 2025, 5,385 notification forms were completed. Through a triage process, a total of 1,231 animals were collected from these for (avian influenza) testing. We would like to thank everyone for reporting and sending in these animals!

**[Read more >>](#)**

Read all news items [here](#)!

*Subscribe to or unsubscribe from the newsletter by sending an email to [m.montizaan1@uu.nl](mailto:m.montizaan1@uu.nl) with your name and organization (if applicable).*