EFSA/CVO meeting, 11 March 2026

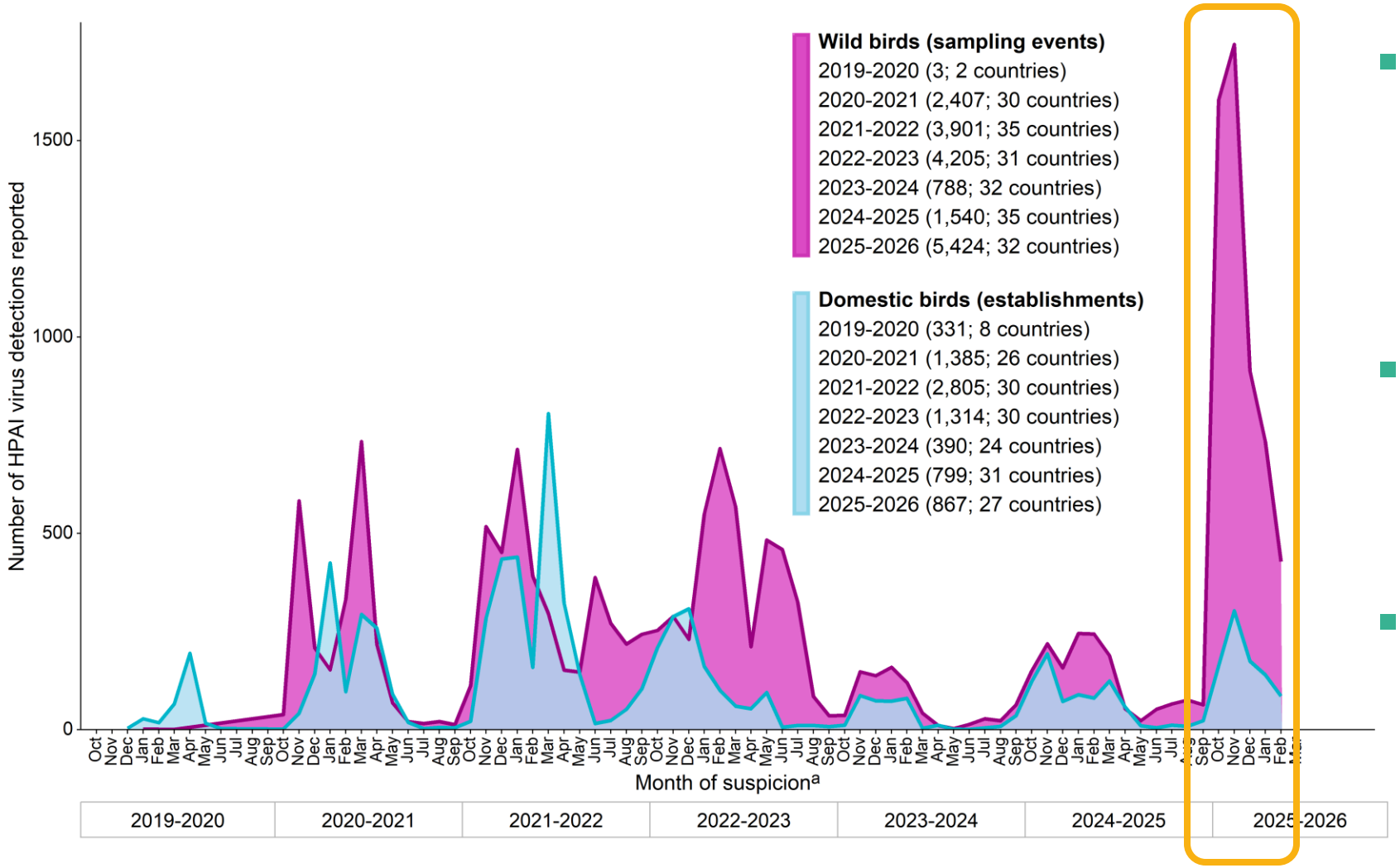
Avian influenza in animals

December 2025–February 2026

Inma Aznar,
Team Leader Animal Health
BIOHAW Unit

EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

HPAI IN BIRDS IN EUROPE

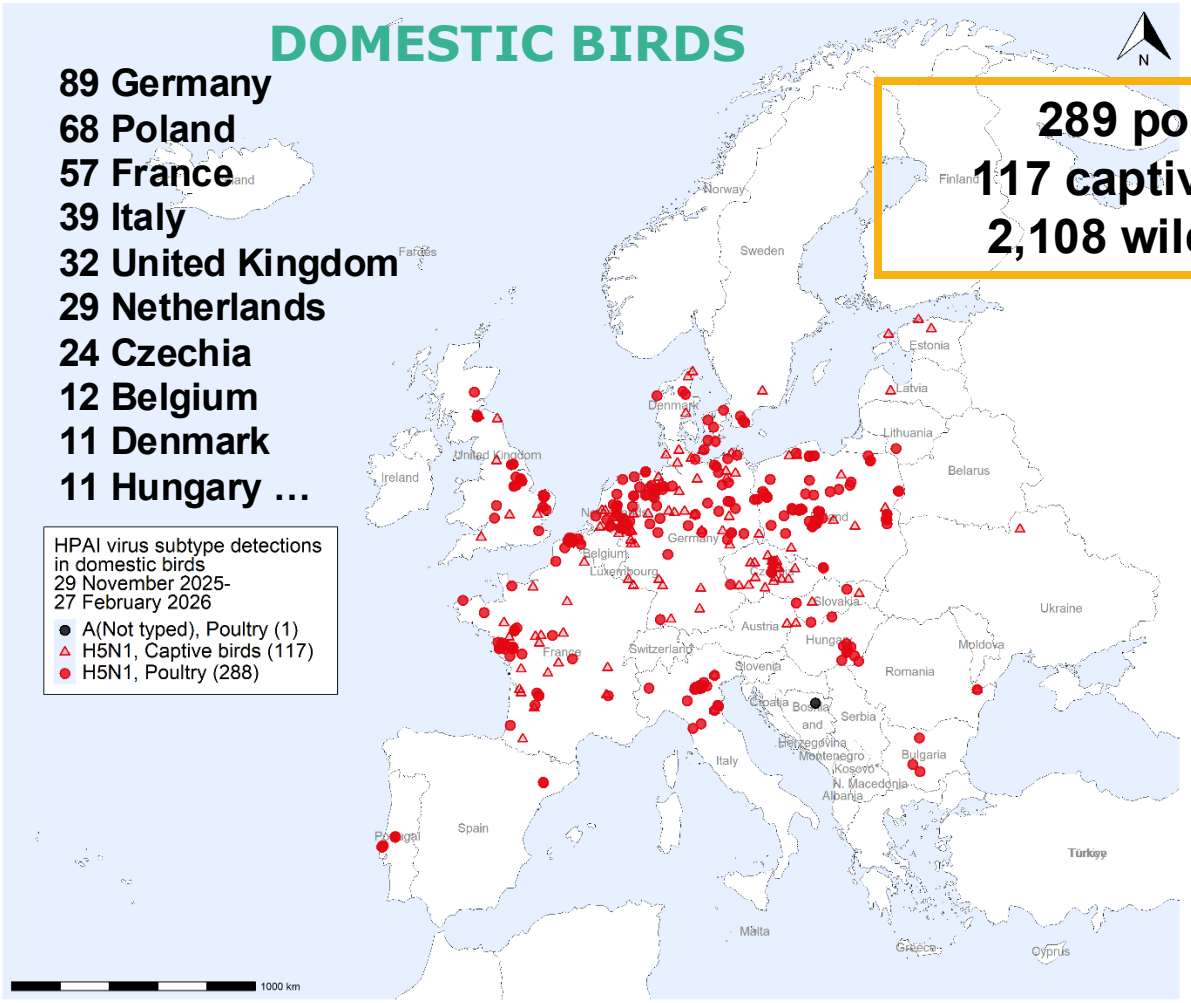


- Sharp increase in cases detected in autumn 2025, but decline since the end of 2025
- Highest viral circulation in waterfowl in the past 5 years
- Mostly primary outbreaks in poultry

HPAI IN BIRDS IN EUROPE | DECEMBER ‘25–FEBRUARY ‘26

DOMESTIC BIRDS

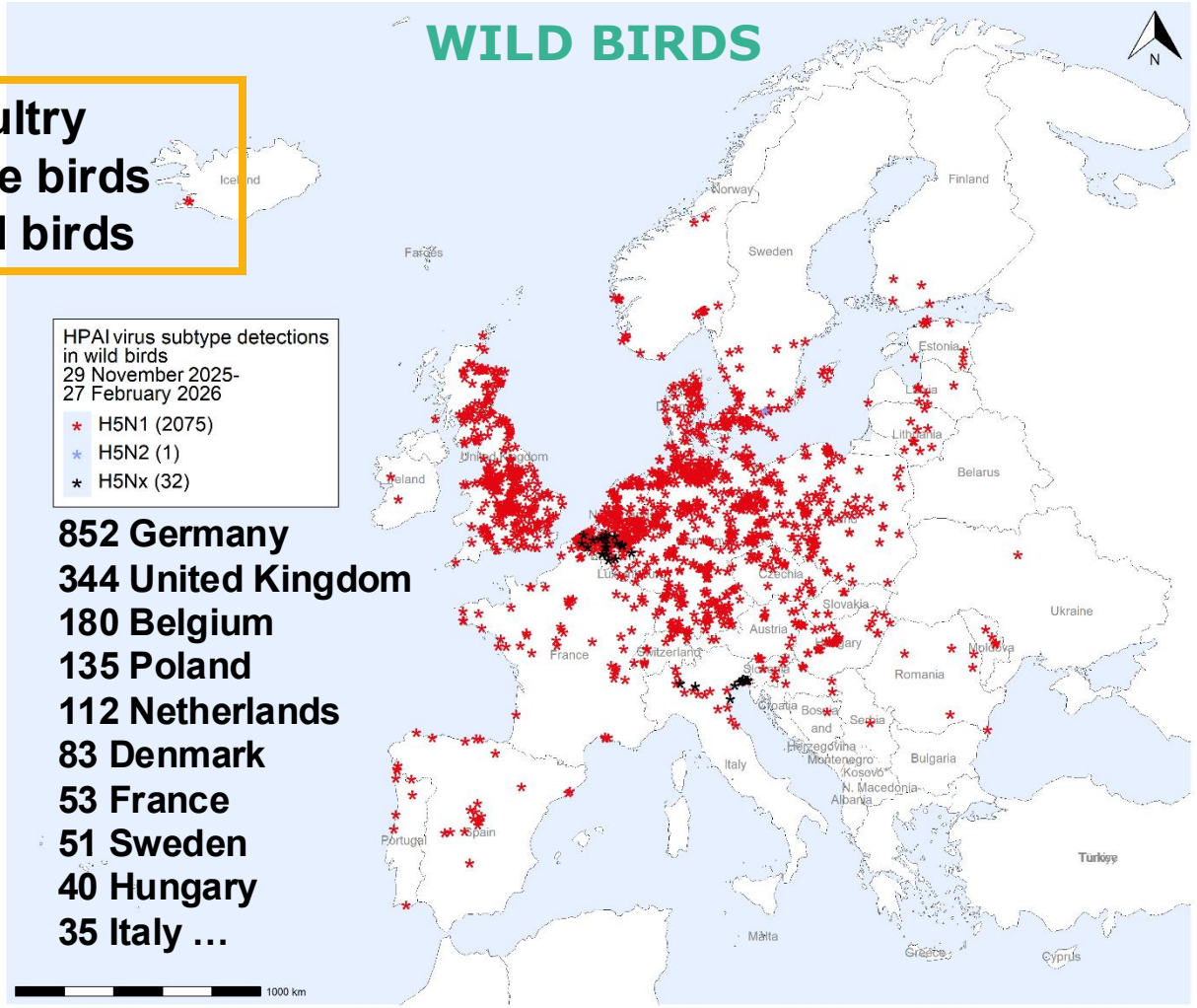
89 Germany
68 Poland
57 France
39 Italy
32 United Kingdom
29 Netherlands
24 Czechia
12 Belgium
11 Denmark
11 Hungary …



289 poultry
117 captive birds
2,108 wild birds

Author: EFSA
Data sources: ADIS, WOAH-WAHIS
Date updated: 27/02/2026

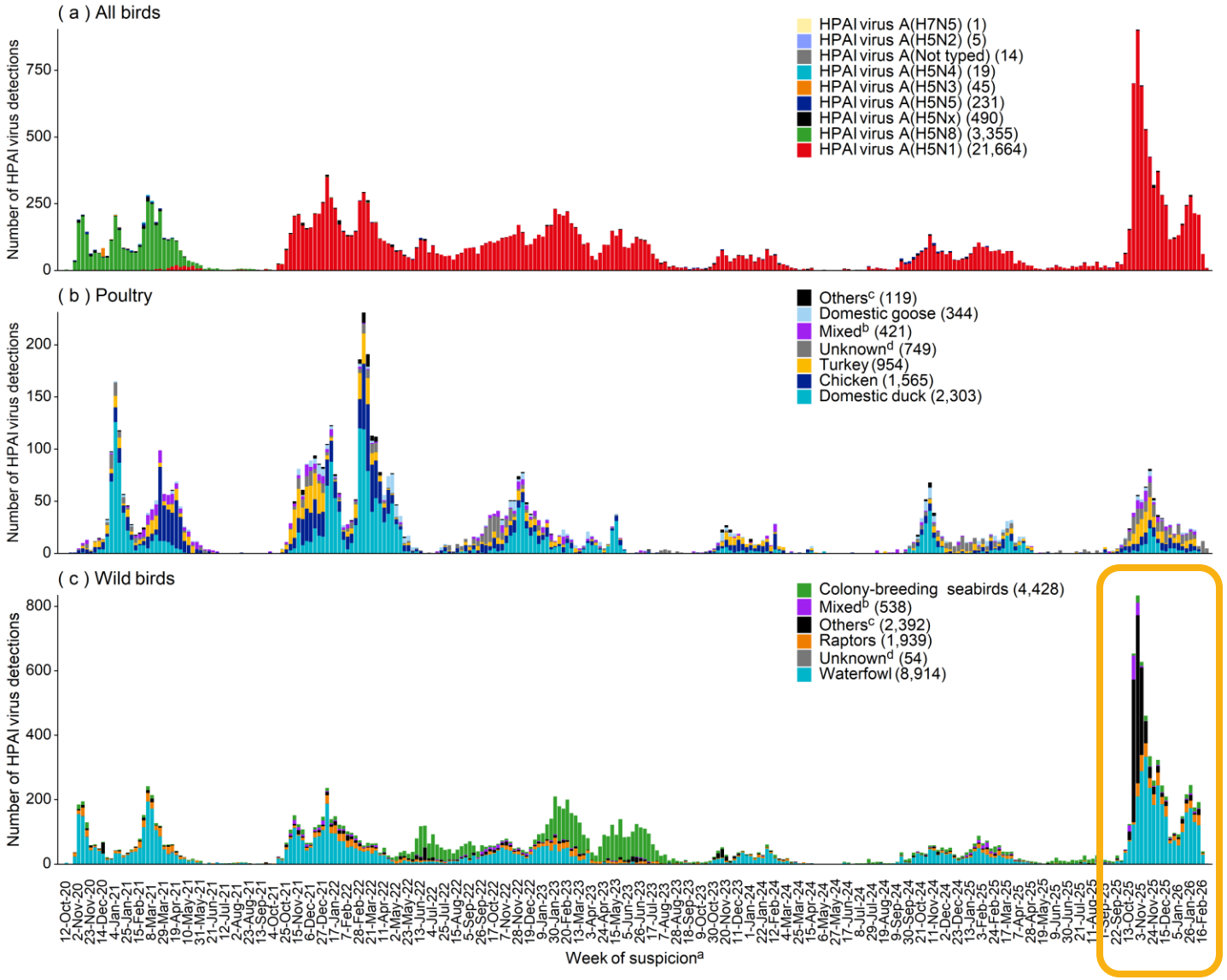
WILD BIRDS



852 Germany
344 United Kingdom
180 Belgium
135 Poland
112 Netherlands
83 Denmark
53 France
51 Sweden
40 Hungary
35 Italy …

Author: EFSA
Data sources: ADIS, WOAH-WAHIS
Date updated: 27/02/2026

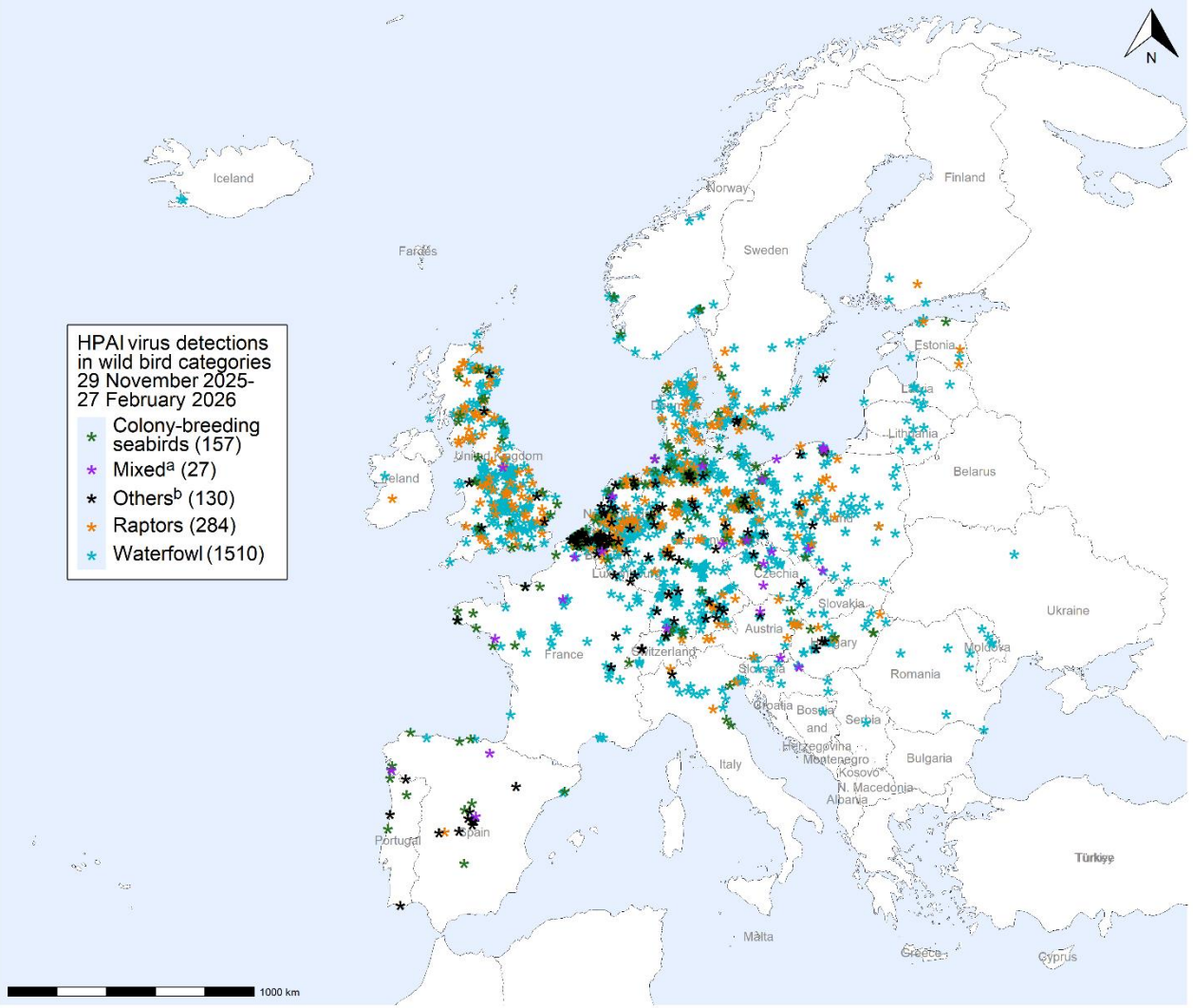
HPAI IN BIRDS IN EUROPE



Species and production systems affected

- Poultry: mostly chicken and turkey
- Wild birds: around 75% waterfowl, no more common cranes since end of November 2025

HPAI IN BIRDS IN EUROPE | DECEMBER ‘25–FEBRUARY ‘26



Author: EFSA
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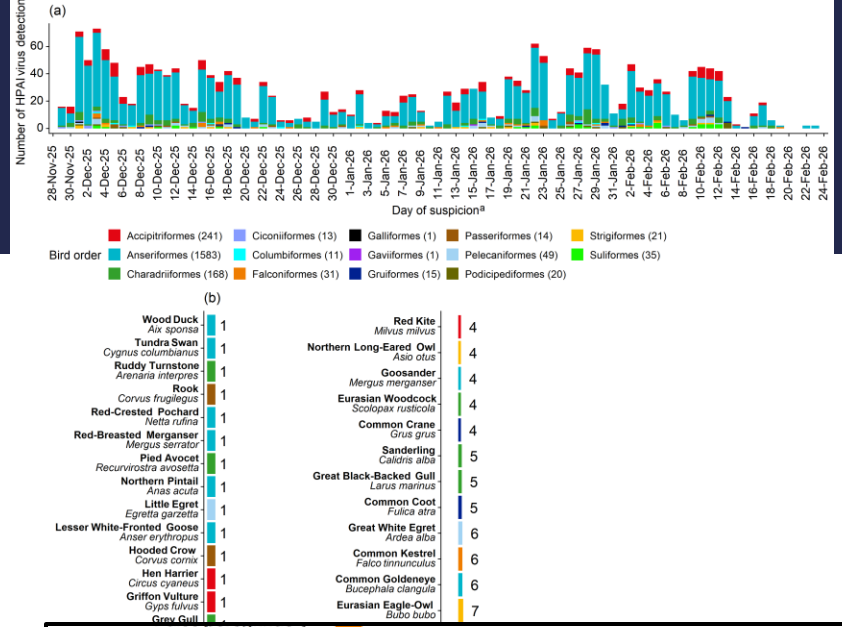
Spatial distribution of HPAI virus detections in wild birds

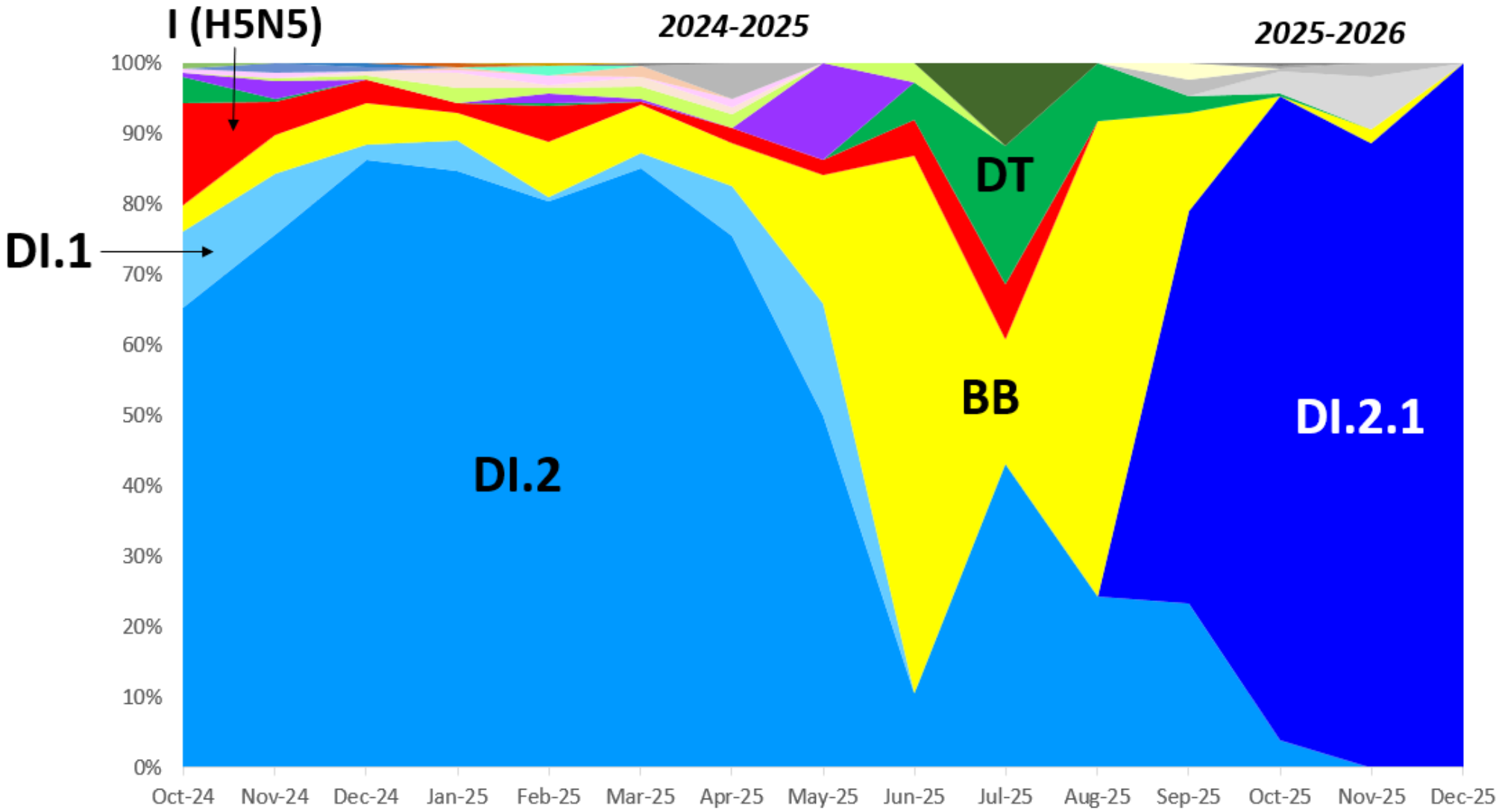
- Waterfowl scattered across Europe
- Raptors co-localised with other wild bird species



Wild bird species involved in HPAI virus detections

- Waterfowl: mostly swans (mute and whooper), geese (greylag, Canada, barnacle) and mallards
- Raptors: mostly Eurasian buzzards
- Colony-breeding seabirds: mostly gulls (European herring and black-headed)

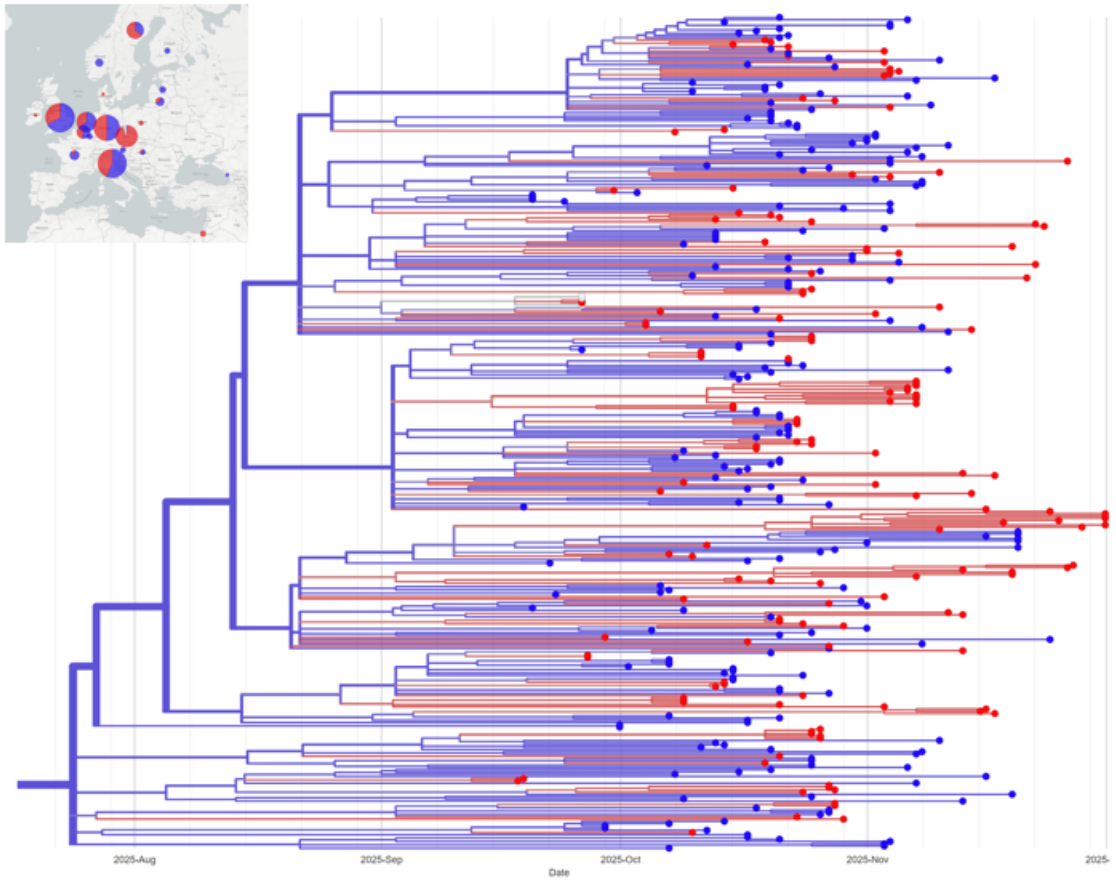
GENETIC CHARACTERISTICS



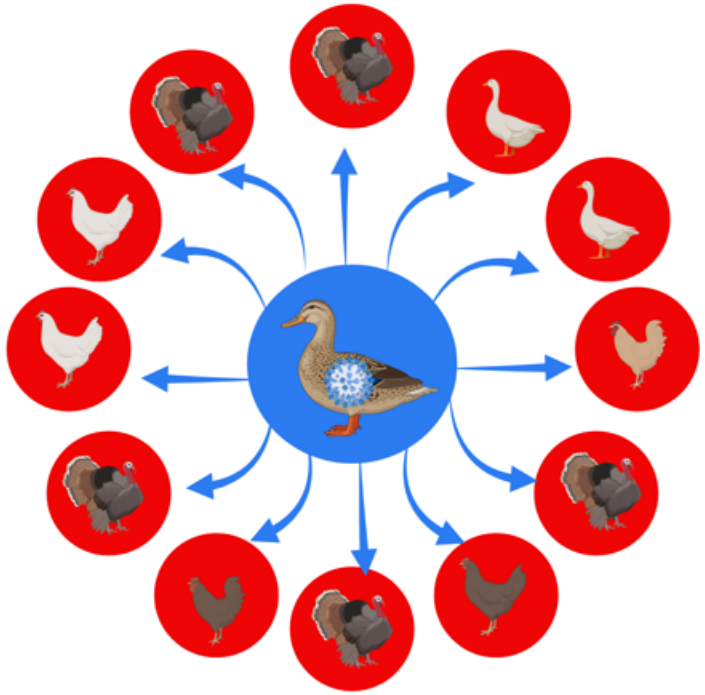
GENETIC CHARACTERISTICS

Source: Alice Fusaro (EURL)

Whole genome phylogeny of the European EA-2024-DI.2.1 viruses
September-November 2025



Multiple introductions from wild to domestic birds



Wild birds
Domestic birds

Downloaded from https://auspice.us/?c=dom/wild&d=tree,map&l=radial&m=div&p=grid&transmissions=hide on 11/12/2025, 12:00:25 (Hadfield et al, Nextstrain: real-time tracking of pathogen evolution, Bioinformatics (2018); Sagulenko et al, TreeTime: Maximum-likelihood phylodynamic analysis, Virus Evolution (2017))

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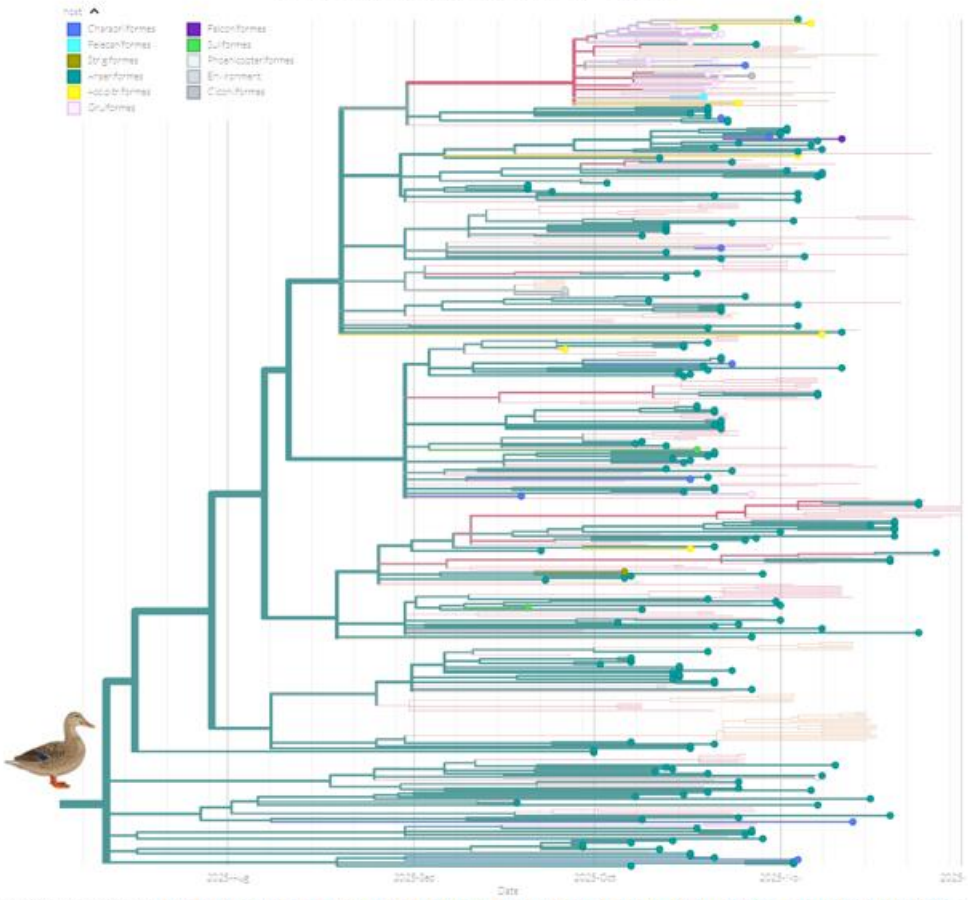
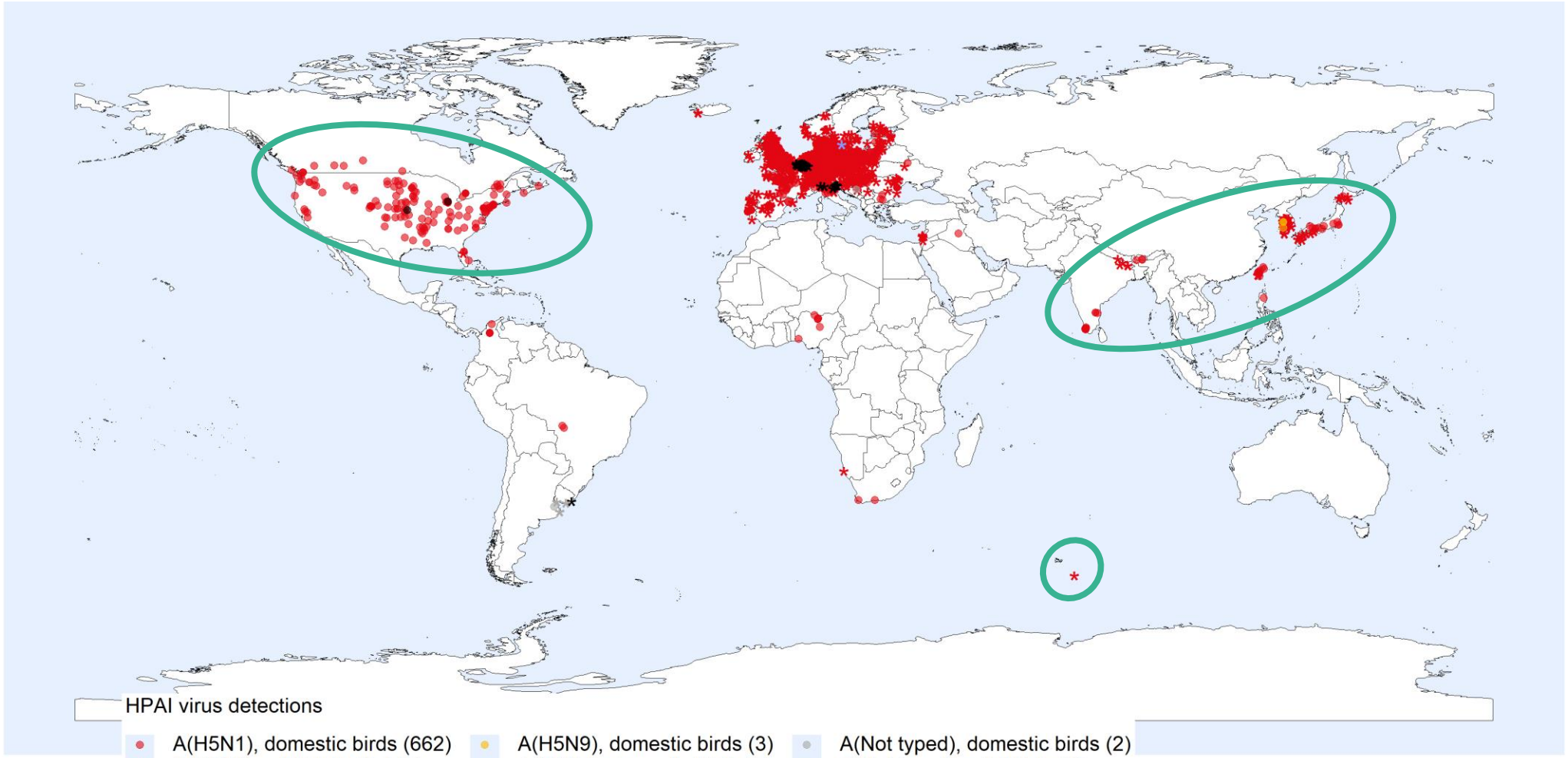


Anseriformes as the major source

Downloaded from https://auspice.us/?c=dom/wild&d=tree,map&l=radial&m=div&p=grid&transmissions=hide on 11/12/2025, 12:00:25 (Hadfield et al, Nextstrain: real-time tracking of pathogen evolution, Bioinformatics (2018); Sagulenko et al, TreeTime: Maximum-likelihood phylodynamic analysis, Virus Evolution (2017))

HPAI IN BIRDS WORLDWIDE | DECEMBER ‘25–FEBRUARY ‘26



Author: EFSA
Data sources: ADIS, WOAH-WAHIS
Date updated: 27/02/2026

HPAI IN MAMMALS | DECEMBER ‘25–FEBRUARY ‘26

EUROPE

H5N1

- Red fox: Germany (10), Estonia (1), France (1), Netherlands (1)
- Raccoon: Germany (10)
- Harbour seal: Netherlands (1)

- Domestic cat: Netherlands (1)
- Dairy cattle: Netherlands (serological detection, cattle were grazing on open pasture until end of November ‘25)

WORLDWIDE

H5N1

Dairy cattle

- USA (1,088 farms in 19 states) → dour documented spillover events from wild birds (now also of the D1.1 genotype)

Domestic cat

- USA: 5

Domestic dog

- Canada: 1

Wildlife

- USA: foxes, racoons, skunks, house mice, bottlenose dolphins, bobcats, mountain lions, Northern elephant seals

OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE IN ANIMALS

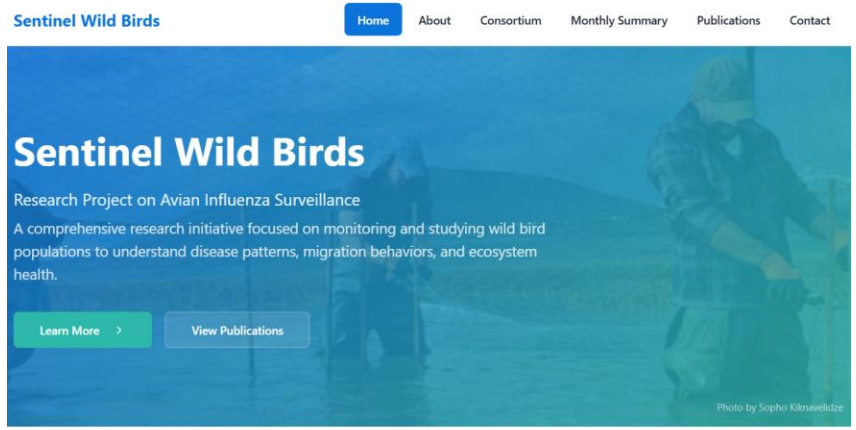
- **Preventive measures** such as **housing orders** and **strengthened biosecurity** are indicated to prevent spillover of infections from wild to domestic birds → especially in high-density poultry areas and establishments under the same ownership
- **Vaccination** should be accompanied by strict biosecurity and adequate surveillance
- **Surveillance in domestic birds** should be enhanced to ensure **early detection** of infected poultry establishments
- **Surveillance in wild birds** should be enhanced, particularly in wetland areas and at migratory stopover sites in autumn → including apparently healthy waterfowl
- **Wildlife rescue/rehabilitation centers** and bird shelters should be part of the **surveillance**
- **Artificial feeding of wild birds**, particularly of cranes and swans, **should be avoided** during high-risk periods to reduce the level of crowding of these species
- **Surveillance in wild and free-roaming domestic carnivores** as well as **domestic and farmed mammals exposed** to highly contaminated environments or in close contact with HPAI virus-infected poultry or wild birds → Ruminants, pigs, camelids, fur animals
- **Pets and other captive mammals should not be fed with raw poultry meat**, **raw pet food** (based on poultry) or **other raw animal products (e.g. raw milk)**
- At times of high HPAI virus circulation in an area, it is recommended to **keep pets indoors or on a leash**

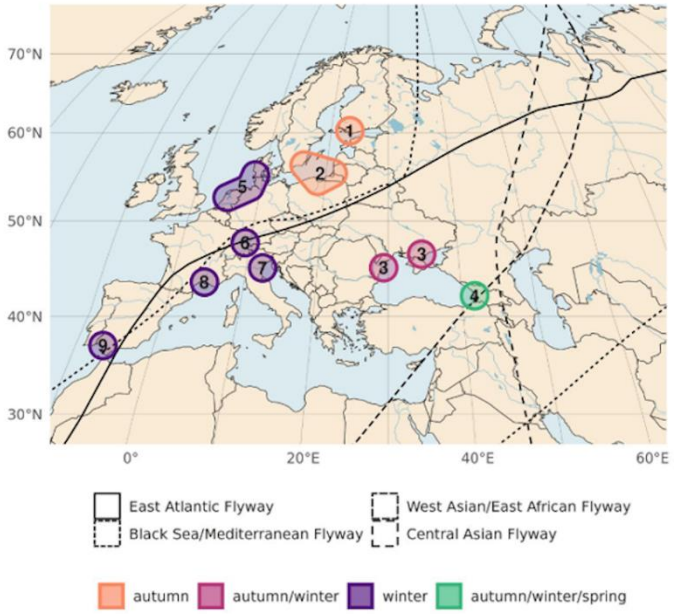
ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE OF HPAI VIRUSES IN WILD BIRDS

Sampling of trapped and hunted wild birds

Rapid pipelines for the detection and characterisation of HPAI viruses

- Early warning of HPAI virus circulation in areas from which migratory birds may transport virus into the EU
- Early detection of HPAI viruses inside the EU before outbreaks occur
- Monitoring infection waves in the EU
- Collecting viral genomes for modelling and forecasting of emerging variants
- Gathering phenotype data on newly introduced virus lineages
- Collecting contemporary genomes from LPAI viruses that may evolve into HPAI viruses
- Increasing the pool of strains available for developing diagnostics and vaccines





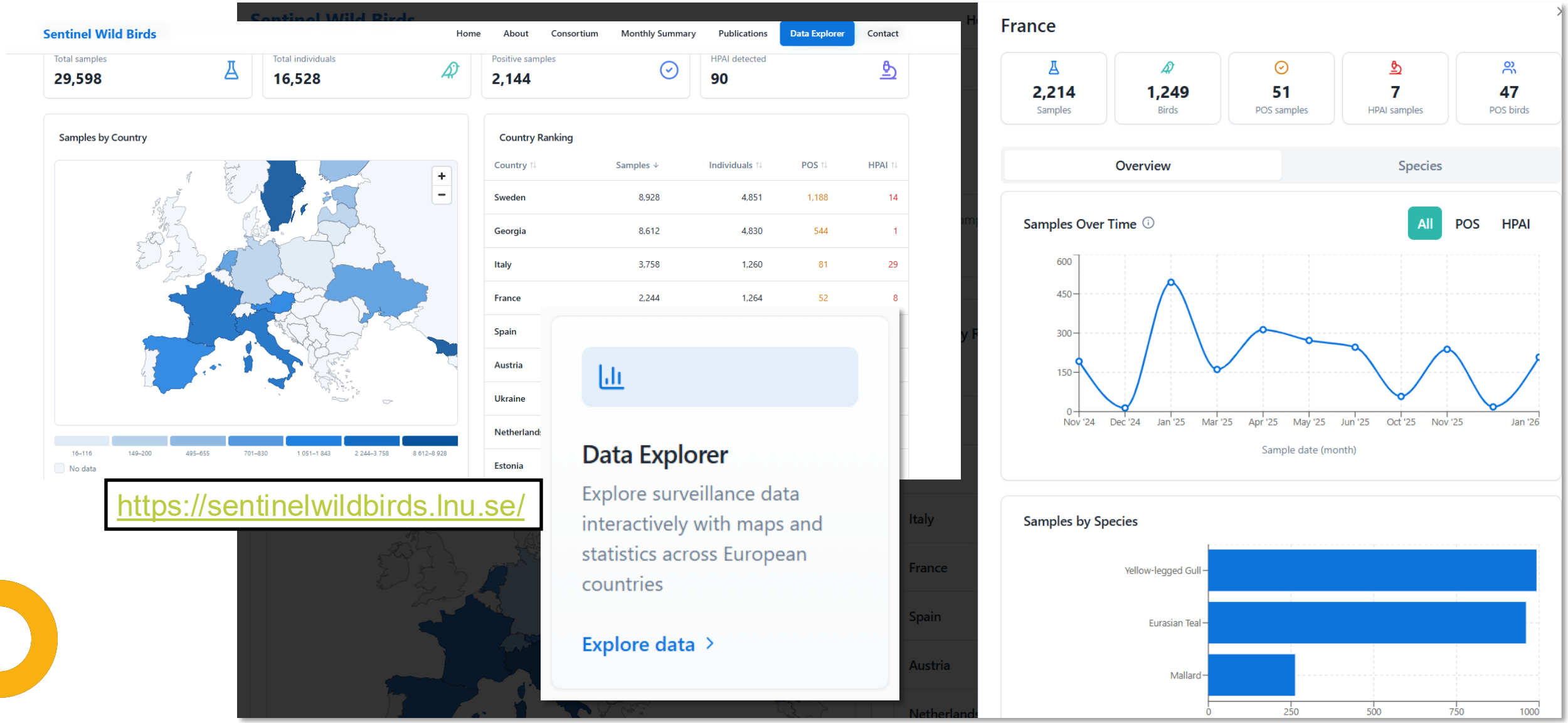
https://sentinelwildbirds.lnu.se/

EFSA-funded project comprising 9 consortia from 15 different countries performing activities in **9 selected surveillance nodes**

SENTINEL WILD BIRDS

Coordination	FWC (procurement)	Linnaeus University (Sweden) + Francis Crick Institute (United Kingdom)
Node 1: Gulf of Finland	FPA (grant)	Ruokavirasto/Finnish Food Authority (Finland) + LABRIS/National Centre for Laboratory Research and Risk Assessment (Estonia) + Linnaeus University (Sweden)
Node 2: Southern Baltic Sea	FPA (grant)	SVA/National Veterinary Institute (Sweden) + Linnaeus University (Sweden) + BIOR/Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment (Latvia) +NMVRVI/National Food and Veterinary Risk Assessment Institute (Lithuania) + VMVT/State Food and Veterinary Service (Lithuania) + PIWet-PIB/National Veterinary Research Institute (Poland)
Node 3: Western Black Sea	FPA (grant)	Linnaeus University (Sweden) + National Scientific Center Institute of Experimental and Clinical Veterinary Medicine (Ukraine)
Node 4: Eastern Black Sea	FPA (grant)	Linnaeus University (Sweden) + Ilia State University (Georgia)
Node 5: Wadden Sea region	FPA (grant)	Stichting Wageningen Research + Erasmus University Medical Center + Netherlands Institute of Ecology (all Netherlands)
Node 6: Lake Constance region	FPA (grant)	AGES/Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (Austria) + FLI (Germany) + Institut für Virologie und Immunologie, Bundesamt für Lebensmittelsicherheit und Veterinärwesen (Switzerland) + Nationales Referenzzentrum für Geflügel- und Kaninchenkrankheiten (Switzerland) + Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior (Germany) + Amt der Vorarlberger Landesregierung (Austria) + Naturschutzverein Reheindelta (Austria)
Node 7: Veneto region	FPA (grant)	IZSVe/Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie + Ispra/Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (all Italy)
Node 8: Camargue region	FPA (grant)	ANSES/French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety + ENVT (National Veterinary School of Toulouse) + INRAE (French National research institute for agriculture, food and environment) + Conservatoire d'espaces naturales d'Occitanie (CEN) + Office français de la biodiversité (OFB) + Laboratoire departemental d'analyse du Gard + Fondation Tour du Valat (all France)
Node 9: Gulf of Cadiz	FPA (grant)	CSIC (Spanish National Research Council) (Spain)

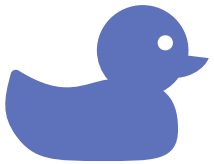
SENTINEL WILD BIRDS: NEW DATA EXPLORER



KEY OUTPUTS FROM SENTINEL WILD BIRDS PROJECT

Discovery of a new H5 genotype in Georgia and of H5N2 in Latvia

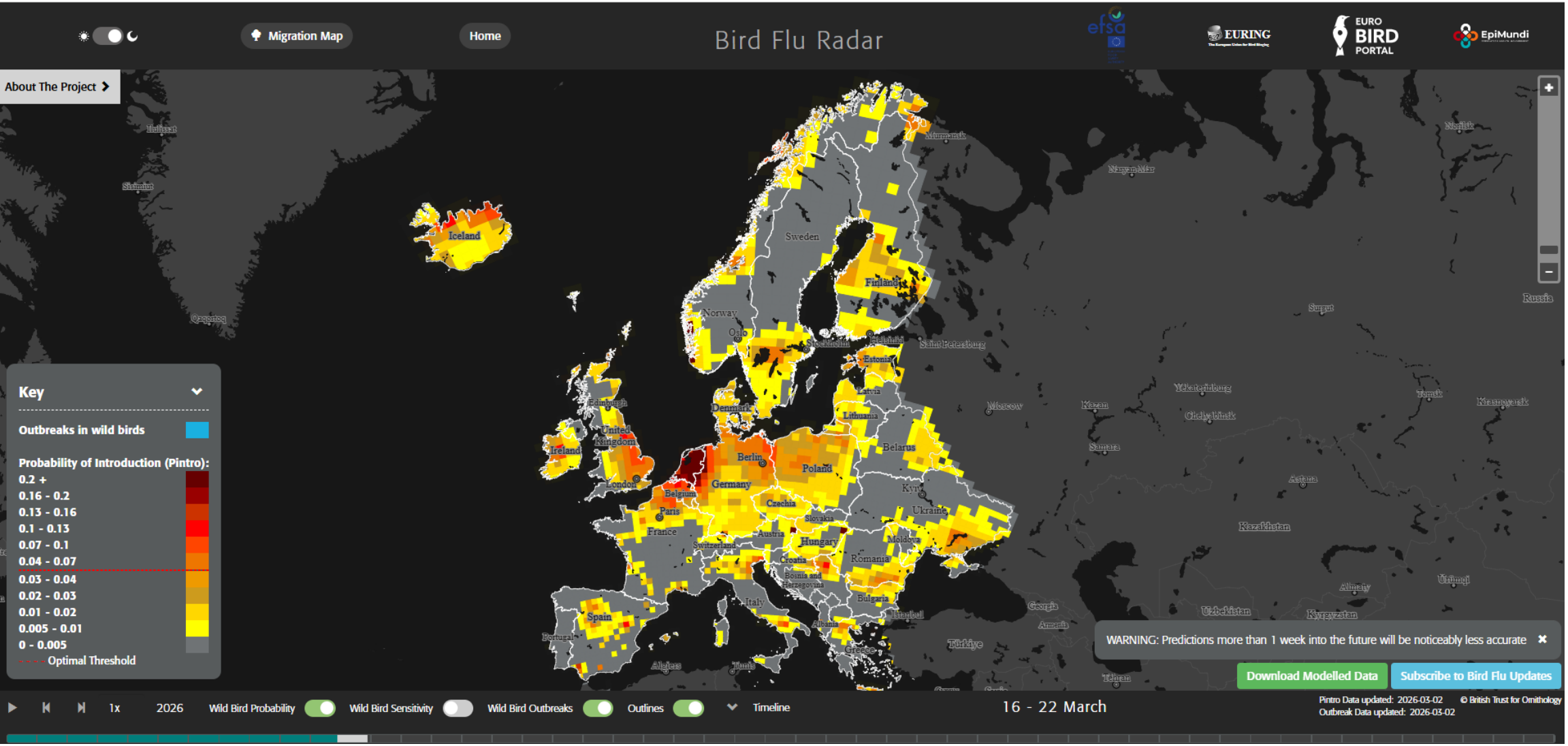
Evidence of co-infections with multiple LPAI viruses in individual birds



Links between H5 HPAI and LPAI viruses, and links between surveillance nodes

Detection of subclinical HPAI virus infections in apparently healthy ducks

BIRD FLU RADAR: 2-WEEK AHEAD PREDICTIONS



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