

THE GEESE

We all love to see the geese return to Staats Lake every fall. Unfortunately, living in the natural world is not without risk.

Sometimes, in the fall, when migrating geese feed in surrounding farmlands they are exposed to a fungus that can cause aspergillosis, which is often fatal. And sometimes geese throughout the Willamette Valley can be exposed to bird flu (avian influenza). When these things happen, many of the sick geese end up dying here at Staats Lake. We all hope that such outbreaks are short-lived.

When these infections occur, the Staats Lake Association works closely with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to have the dead birds removed properly. While bird flu can spread among bird populations, the transmission to other wildlife or mammals is generally less common. Some strains, however, can infect other animals if there is close contact with infected birds. Please do not handle sick or dead birds yourself, and keep your pets at a safe distance. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, humans appear to be at low risk of infection with the current H5N1 strain. More information on this can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/>

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