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A Solitary Case of Duck Plague in a Wild Mallard

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Duck plague was diagnosed on the basis of pathology and virus isolation in a wild female mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* found dead near Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Day-old Pekin ducklings and one of two adult mallards died with lesions typical of duck plague following inoculation of tissue from the wild bird. This is believed to be the only reported case of duck plague in a wild bird since a major outbreak occurred in South Dakota in 1973, and the fourth such report in North America.

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Transmission to the wild meant “the virus could broaden its host-range [and] infect other species of animals that it wouldn’t ordinarily be able to infect”, Santini said. Prof Marion Koopmans, head of viroscience at Rotterdam’s Erasmus University, in an email to the Guardian, said: “Sars-CoV-2 could potentially continue to circulate in large-scale farms or be introduced to escaped and wild mustelids [weasels, badgers, otters, ferrets, martens, minks, and wolverines] or other wildlife” and then “in theory, as avian flu and swine influenza viruses do, continue to evolve in their animal hosts, c Duck plague (DP), also known as duck virus enteritis or anatid herpesvirus infection, was first recognized as an entity in the Netherlands (Baudet, 1923), although it was mistakenly diagnosed as fowl plague (an influenza A virus infection) at the time (Jansen, 1961). The virus was isolated and the name Duck Plague was proposed by Jansen and Kunst (1949). (1983) reported an outbreak among wild Mallards in park in Denmark. There have been three major outbreaks recognized among free-flying wild birds in North America. Solitary cases of DP have been recognized in a Mallard in Saskatchewan (Wobeser and Docherty, 1987) and a Black Duck in Maryland (Brand and Docherty, 1988). Keywords. Wild Bird Duck Virus Enteritis Canada Goose Domestic Duck Mute Swan. Mallard ducks are the most common and recognizable wild ducks in the Northern Hemisphere. You’ll find them near ponds, marshes, streams, and lakes, where they feed on plants, invertebrates, fish, and insects. Mallards are dabbling, or surface-feeding, ducks because they eat by tipping underwater for food—head down, feet and tail in the air—rather than diving. Mallards also forage and graze for food on land. Outside the nest, ducklings often follow their mother in a single-file line. Photograph by William Lehman, Dreamstime. A little more than a day after hatching, ducklings can run, swim, and forage for food on their own. Photograph by Gpphotos, Dreamstime. Female mallard ducks have mottled brown feathers. Photograph by Justinhoffmanoutdoors, Dreamstime.