



## Interesting Case from our web site [www.fairfield-vets.co.uk](http://www.fairfield-vets.co.uk)



### "Duckling" - and thoughts on Avian Flu



Duckling

It has been said that the best thing about living in Hinckley is that 'It is close to a lot of other places!' Whilst this may be true for many destinations because of its central location it is also as far away from any coast as practically any other town in the UK.

This clearly poses a problem for those who like to spend their time beside the sea combing the beaches. However it does help to provide a natural geographic barrier to the introduction of avian influenza to our area.

Migratory water birds remain a possible source of disease to this country as the infected swan found in Fife, Scotland, demonstrates.

Whilst the severe and prolonged outbreak of this disease in Asia is of some concern it is important to try and keep the situation in perspective. It is fundamentally a disease of birds and rarely poses a threat to human health. The 62 people who have died worldwide in the current outbreak were in close contact with large numbers of infected birds. This contrasts with 12,000 people who die every year in the UK alone from the more usual flu that we encounter!

Nevertheless, a combination of a ban on the import of live birds and increased surveillance of the wild bird population remain the best strategy to keep this disease under control. If you do find one or more dead wild swans, ducks or geese (wild fowl); 3 or more dead wild birds of the same species; 5 or more of different species in the same place you should contact the Defra Helpline (08459 33 55 77) You will be asked for details of your finding and its location.

No such concern need be raised for this young duckling that was brought to our surgery last week. Free from any signs of clinical disease this poor chap had unfortunately lost his mum! Fortunately, he was quickly found a new home at the nearby Warwickshire wildlife sanctuary and clearly poses no threat to anyone!

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This article is available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at [www.fairfield-vets.co.uk](http://www.fairfield-vets.co.uk)

***You won't care how much we know - until you know how much we care***