

Pigeon tests positive for H5N1 in Hong Kong

May 2 2009

Hong Kong authorities said Saturday that a dead pigeon found in the city had tested positive for the H5N1 bird flu virus.

The announcement came as the city was dealing with its first confirmed human case of swine flu, after a Mexican visitor tested positive for the [virus](#) on Friday.

The dead pigeon was found on April 27 in the Tuen Mun district of the city, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department said in a statement.

More than a dozen birds found in different parts of Hong Kong have tested positive this year for the H5N1 strain of the virus, which can be fatal to humans.

Hong Kong was the scene of the world's first reported major H5N1 [bird flu outbreak](#) among humans, in 1997, when six people died.

In December, authorities found H5N1 in a chicken at a poultry farm in Hong Kong, prompting the slaughter of more than 90,000 birds.

Around 250 people have died of the human form of avian [flu](#) since 2003, according to the World Health Organisation.

Most had close contact with sick birds, but scientists fear the virus could mutate into a form that would spread rapidly among humans, causing a pandemic.

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