Biosecurity Tips
FOR HANDLING WILD BIRDS

If you do come into contact with wild birds, here are some basic precautions to take:

• Do not handle dead or obviously sick birds.
• Avoid contact with bird droppings and nests.
• Wash hands with soap and water, hand sanitizer, or alcohol wipes immediately after handling bird feeders or bird baths.
• If you have contact with wild birds, wash your hands with soap and water before you eat, drink, smoke, or rub your eyes.
• To dispose of a dead bird, pick it up with an inverted bag or disposable gloves. Place it in another plastic bag, and dispose of it in a trash can that is secure against access by children, pets, or animals.

Hunters should also follow routine precautions when handling wild birds. These include:

• Do not handle or consume game animals that are obviously sick or found dead.
• Do not eat, drink, or smoke while cleaning game.
• Wear rubber gloves when cleaning game.
• Wash hands with soap and water, or alcohol wipes, immediately after handling game.
• Wash tools and working surfaces with soap and water and then disinfect them.
• Keep uncooked game in a separate container, away from cooked or ready-to-eat foods. Cook game meat thoroughly; poultry should reach an internal temperature of 165°F to kill disease organisms and parasites.

If you have any questions or concerns about wild birds, contact your local USDA Wildlife Services office at 1-866-4-USDA-WS.

Wild birds can carry several diseases, including avian influenza. It’s best to observe wildlife from a distance. That way, you are less likely to disturb the animal or pick up any germs it may carry.