

Macro Roundup Article

Headline: [The Bird Flu Virus Adapted to Sea Mammals. It May Not Be Done Yet.](#)

Article Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/05/health/bird-flu-mutations-mammals.html>

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Tweet: Scientists confirmed that an H5N1 mutation allowed spread among elephant seals, causing up to 95% mortality for Argentine elephant seal pups born last year. Since March H5N1 has been detected in cows in nine states, and in wastewater from several others.

Summary: Elephant seals in South America died in massive numbers because the bird flu virus acquired mutations that allowed it to spread among mammals, according to a new study. A genetic analysis suggests that H5N1 jumped at least three times from wild birds to marine mammals on the Pacific Coast of South America, and then evolved to spread between elephant seals. The research offers the first genetic and epidemiological evidence of bird flu virus transmission among mammals. And the findings hold a warning: The virus, called H5N1, may similarly transform to cause large-scale infections in other mammalian species, including people. The bird flu virus is responsible for an ongoing outbreak in dairy cows in the United States. Since March, it has been detected in cows in nine states, and in wastewater from several others.

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Primary Topic: Science

Topics: News article, Science

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