

Canada's Inter-Agency Wild Bird Influenza Survey — 2006

Species Data Sheet: Arctic Tern

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The goal of the survey is twofold: to characterize the strains of avian influenza viruses and to ensure early detection of highly pathogenic avian influenza strains in wild birds in Canada. Expanding on the 2005 nation-wide survey of influenza virus strains of wild ducks, this survey places a greater focus on birds that migrate regularly between Canada's North Atlantic region and Europe or that spend some part of their year in close proximity to birds that winter in Europe. The expansion of the survey complements work being carried out in the United States, which is surveying western (Pacific Flyway) populations.

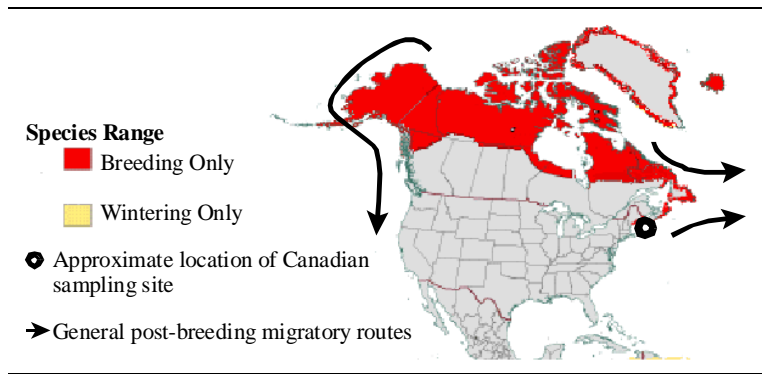
Reason for inclusion in the Wild Bird Influenza Survey

Arctic Terns are trans-Atlantic migrants, and a primary target for the survey. Birds from Canadian breeding populations share key migration stopovers and wintering areas with birds belonging to other breeding populations, providing an opportunity for exchange of viruses.



Species: *Sterna paradisaea* Arctic Tern

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Migratory range

The Arctic Tern is a circumpolar species that breeds across the Arctic regions of North America and Eurasia. The birds migrate over water, with birds that breed in northern Canada mainly flying across the Atlantic Ocean and south along the coasts of Europe and Africa to wintering areas in the southern Atlantic.

Dates in Canada

Arctic Terns arrive each spring in late April to early May. They leave the nesting grounds within a few days of fledging and are often on their way by early to mid-August.

Canada's Inter-Agency Wild Bird Influenza Survey Partners

The survey is coordinated by the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre. Partners include the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Environment Canada, provincial/territorial representatives of public health, animal health, and wildlife, the Centre for Coastal Health, Ducks Unlimited Canada, and the government of Iceland.

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The Arctic Tern is protected in Canada under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, administered by the Canadian Wildlife Service.