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Avian botulism in Aotearoa New Zealand: a One Health/Welfare problem

Abstract

Avian botulism is one of the most significant diseases of waterbirds globally and regularly causes mass mortality events in Aotearoa New Zealand. Botulism outbreaks threaten native species and biodiversity, as well as animal and human welfare. Outbreaks are perceived to be happening more often and in more locations around NZ, a trend attributed to climate change and various human activities that degrade water quality. However, responses to botulism outbreaks in NZ have reportedly been reactive and inconsistent across water management jurisdictions. In this presentation I will discuss recent stakeholder discussions and planned research to further explore and address this One Health/Welfare problem.

Bio

Ngaio is Professor of Animal Welfare Science at Massey University. She has been involved in welfare-related research in areas such as identification marking of NZ wildlife, pest animal control, cetacean stranding management, and captive management of native birds. Ngaio and her colleagues are keen to bring together a wide range of parties interested in how endemic wildlife diseases, like avian botulism, are managed in NZ.