

How can I help reduce avian botulism?

- Avoid feeding the ducks, it is better to encourage waterfowl to forage naturally.
- Don't feed the ducks bread, it can rot in ponds and promote the growth of botulism bacteria.
- If you do feed the birds, please feed them on land. Seeds and grains are best for their diet.
- Pick up your pet's waste and dispose of it properly.
- Call the council when you see a sick or dead duck.
- Inform your friends and family about ways to reduce avian botulism.



Is avian botulism a threat to humans?

The risk to human health is believed to be minimal, but consider the following precautions to protect human and pet health:

- Don't let your pets eat dead fish or birds.
- Don't handle dead fish or waterfowl with your bare hands.
- Don't eat undercooked or improperly prepared fish or waterfowl.
- Don't harvest birds that appear to be sick or dying.



► Find out more:
phone 09 301 0101 or visit
aucklandcouncil.govt.nz



Avian Botulism

Bacteria causing bird death



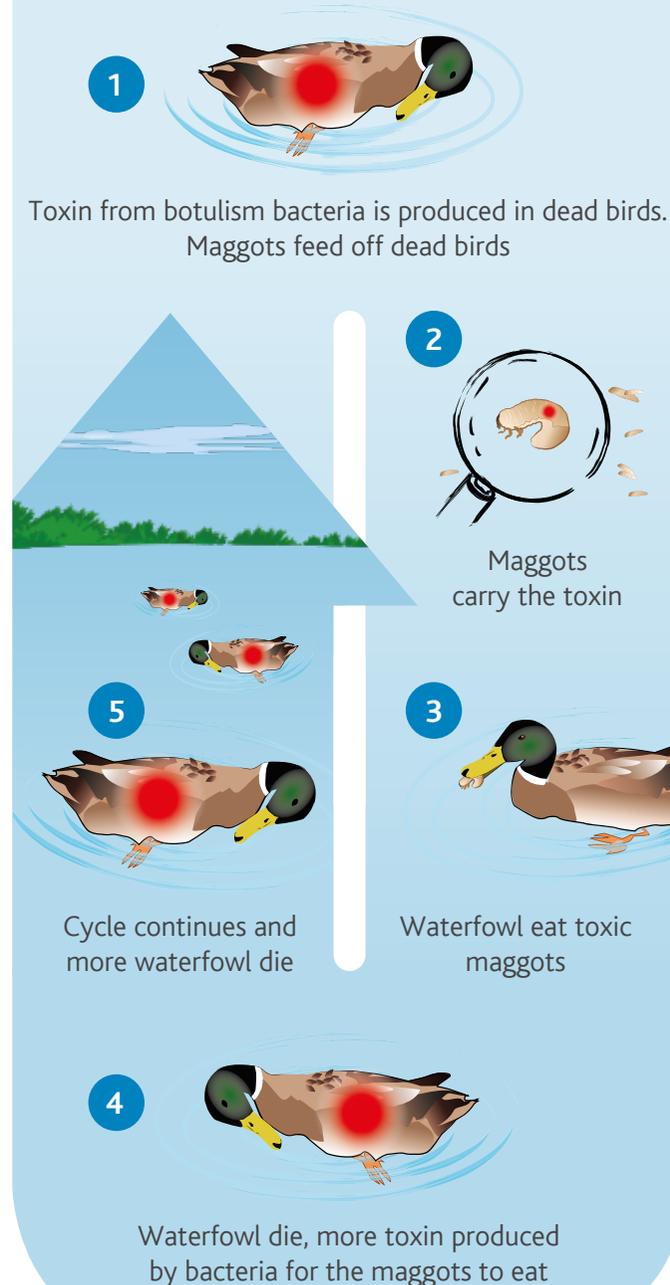
What is avian botulism?

- It is a disease causing birds to be paralysed and often results in death.
- The disease is caused when the bird eats toxin produced by *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria. Even a small amount of the toxin can cause harm to birds.
- *Clostridium botulinum* naturally occurs in soils found in ponds and wetlands. It is harmless until the right environmental factors occur.
- Eliminating avian botulism is difficult because the toxin producing bacteria occurs naturally in the environment.

How does avian botulism spread?

- Most avian botulism outbreaks are caused by ducks eating maggots, that have fed off dead birds.
- Please see the illustration on the next page for reference.

Dead bird - maggot cycle:



What is Auckland Council doing to reduce avian botulism?

- Removing dead and sick waterfowl quickly to break the maggot cycle.
- Installing barley bales in ponds to reduce algae growth and improve water quality.
- Displaying educational signs at ponds with high public use.
- Providing waste bins and bags for pet waste at select local parks.

