

FATAL VIRUS FOUND IN WILD DUCKS ON L.I.

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EASTPORT, L. I., Dec. 24—
A deadly virus that attacks ducks — diagnosed for the first time in North America last January here on a commercial duck farm — has now been found among wild ducks on eastern Long Island.

The infection of wild ducks was first discovered Nov. 18 in the Flanders Bay area of Riverhead, where there also are commercial duck farms.

About 60 wild black ducks have been found dead from the sickness, called duck virus enteritis.

Two veterinarians, Dr. Louis Leibovitz and Dr. Jen Hwang, first diagnosed the virus here last January while doing a regular check of commercial duck farms. A flock of several thousand farm ducks was destroyed as a precaution, and since then a vaccine has been produced and proved effective on the farms, according to Dr. Leibovitz. He expects final Federal approval of the vaccine next spring.

The disclosure that the virus had spread to wild ducks was made in Washington on Thursday by John S. Gottschalk, director of the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. He noted that this posed a "more dangerous" problem, since wild ducks were uncontrollable.

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