

Birds infected with West Nile found

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OROVILLE — Two dead birds found in Butte County have tested positive for West Nile virus, according to the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District.

The district received confirmation of the positive results on Wednesday.

One of the birds was collected from the west side of Chico near River Road. The other was found in downtown Oroville.

Previously, a dead squirrel found in Paradise was tested and discovered to have been killed by the virus.

There have been no reported human, horse or chicken cases of West Nile in the county to date.

West Nile virus has been found to be present in 17 California counties this year. These include Butte, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Madera, Merced, Orange, Placer, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, Sutter and Tulare.

So far this year around the state, no human cases of West Nile have been reported.

No cases of horses having the disease have been reported either.

Dr. Mark Lundberg, Butte County's health officer, was quoted in a news release as urging residents to take precautions against the virus, which is spread by mosquitoes.

"Wear repellents, reduce contact with mosquitoes, learn about prevention," he said.

Matt Ball, district manager of the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District, said it's essential that residents eliminate any standing water on their property.

Mosquitoes can breed in extremely small amounts of standing water, he said.

In most cases, when people become infected with West Nile, they have no symptoms or very mild ones.

But in some cases, people become very sick and may even die.