

December 1, 2023 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for November 27-30, 2023. Kentucky has been very dry since late summer and this continued this week. We had a good growing season for our crops and moist soil habitats throughout most of the state. The bad news is that at the start of the waterfowl hunting season, habitat will mainly be limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water and even that is limited. Very low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers means our waterfowl areas like Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis are struggling to keep water. Limited water is forcing us to limit hunting areas available on some of these WMAs.

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Duck season begins on Thanksgiving Day, with the first segment running from November 24 – 27. The second segment of duck season opens on December 7 and will run until January 31, 2023. Goose season opens November 24, 2022 and will remain open until February 15, 2023. New this year, youth season is Saturday, November 19, 2022, and Saturday, February 11, 2023. There is also a new veteran's hunt on Sunday, November 20, 2022, and Sunday February 12, 2023. All bag limits remain the same as last season. Check out the 2022-2023 Waterfowl hunting guide or visit the waterfowl hunting [web page](#) for more details.

Good luck hunting this year. Be safe and enjoy your time afield.

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>11/30/2023</i>	22,709 ducks 3,300 WF goose	90% Mallard 1% Gadwall 6% Ring-necked, 1% Green wing, shoveler, pintail, bufflehead, mergansers	Major lakes and sloughs have good water, but it has been dry. We are pumping into hunt units where possible but need 18+ feet on river to use big pump. Rain expected 11/30 and 12/1. No hunting activity – youth/veteran weekend was Nov 18-19, regular season starts Dec 7.
Boatwright <i>11/30/2023</i>	302 ducks 130 CA goose	74% Mallard, 26% Other	Water levels are low, some moist soil is available but very little crop availability. Trying to flood unit but slow going due to low river levels. Warming temp

			over last 2 days, calling for rain night of 11/30. No hunting activity – between split, regular season begins Dec. 7.
Duck Island <i>11/29/2023</i>	2,600 ducks 38 CA goose	65 % mallard 15% gadwall 5% ringneck 5% GW teal 5% wigeon 3% shoveler 2% pintail	Habitat excellent. Water level/conditions are optimum.
Doug Travis WMA <i>11/30/2023</i>	500 Ducks	85% mallard 15% mixed dabblers.	This is a partial survey based on a ground count of locations accessible by vehicle. It is likely more ducks were present in flooded buckbrush and timber in the Beaver Pond Rest Area and the Town Creek Moist soil unit but were not estimated for this count. All 3 wells are running, and habitat conditions should improve, especially considering predicted rainfall over the 10-day forecast.
Sloughs WMA <i>11/27/2023</i>	7,115 ducks 24 CA goose 3,000 WF goose 2,600 Snow goose 17 Tundra Swan	85% mallard 15% Northern shoveler, gadwall and teal	Fair to good hunting success over the Thanksgiving split. Water conditions remain the same with most waterfowl concentrated around the Muddy Slough rest area.
Peabody WMA <i>11/30/2023</i>	44 ducks 92 CA goose	50% Mallard 50% gadwall	Moist soil plant growth over the summer was good. Low water levels continue through the WMA due to the lack of significant rainfall over

			the last couple of months.
Yellowbank WMA <i>11/29/2023</i>	265 Ducks	90% mallard 5% wood duck 5% gadwall	Excellent moist-soil plant response and crop production in waterfowl units. Both well pumps are running but slowly gaining sheet water with the dry soil conditions. Most of the units are dry due to lack of substantial rainfall.
Barren River WMA <i>11/28/2023</i>	2,450 ducks 120 CA geese 155 Sandhill cranes	50% divers/50% dabblers High diversity cans, redhead, scaup, bufflehead, merganser/mallards, shovelers, widgeon, wood ducks, ringnecks, ruddy	Very dry conditions persist. Peters Creek MSU 10% full, Long Creek- Calvert Springs main unit 90% and units above and below the main spring 20%, MSUs off HWY 100 are 0% full. MSU plants in great condition, tenant farmer should be done harvesting this week at Long Creek. Lake level: 529.5'
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)			<i>Not Surveyed</i>
Cave Run Lake <i>11/30/2023</i>	53 CA geese 16 Ducks 1 American Coot 2 Pied-billed Grebe	16 Hooded Merganser	Not much at this point in the way of waterfowl for the northeast.

12/07/2023			increase in number of waterfowl as we start the regular season.
Duck Island			
<i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA			
<i>Not surveyed</i>			
Sloughs WMA 12/04/2023	13,560 ducks 75 CA goose 9,300 WF goose 7,000 Snow goose	85% mallard 15% mixed dabblers – pintails, black ducks, teal, and gadwall	Habitat conditions remain the same, recent rain has helped, but still in need of water on the landscape.
Peabody WMA 12/07/2023	12 ducks 100 CA goose	100% pintails	Moist soil plant growth over the summer was good. Low water levels continue throughout the WMA due to the lack of significant rainfall over the last couple of months.
Yellowbank WMA 12/06/2023	325 Ducks	90% mallard 5% wood duck 5% black duck	Excellent moist soil plant response and crop production in waterfowl units. Units are gaining sheet water after 1.91 inches of rain over the last two weeks – 30% water capacity.
Barren River WMA 12/05/2023	20 ducks 120 CA geese	50% divers/50% dabblers mergansers/mallards	Very dry conditions. Peters Creek MSU 10% full, Long Creek-Calvert Springs main unit 90% and units above and below the main spring

			<p>20%, MSUs off HWY 100 are 0% full.</p> <p>MSU plants in great condition.</p> <p>Lake level: 528.4'</p>
<p>Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)</p> <p><i>Not surveyed</i></p>			
<p>Cave Run Lake</p> <p><i>12/07/2023</i></p>	<p>37 Ducks</p> <p>26 CA geese</p> <p>9 other</p>	<p>65% bufflehead, 35% hooded merg.</p> <p>9 pied-billed grebe</p>	<p>No comments.</p>

December 15, 2023 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for December 11 – December 15, 2023. Kentucky has been very dry since late summer however we have gotten some rain the past couple weeks. We had a good growing season for our crops and moist soil habitats throughout most of the state. At the start of the waterfowl hunting season habitat is mainly limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water, which is limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This means our waterfowl areas like Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis are struggling to keep water. Limited water is forcing us to limit hunting areas available on some of these WMAs.

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The second segment of duck season opens on December 7 and will run until January 31, 2024. Goose season opened Thanksgiving Day and will remain open until February 15, 2024. The second day of Special Youth Waterfowl Season is Saturday, February 11, 2024. The second day of Special Veteran's Waterfowl Season is on Sunday February 11, 2024. All bag limits remain the same as last season. Check out the 2023-2024 Waterfowl hunting guide or visit the waterfowl hunting web page for more details. Good luck hunting this year. Be safe and enjoy your time afield.

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Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>Not surveyed</i>			Same birds have been here for weeks now so no new report for this week.
Boatwright <i>Not surveyed</i>			Same birds have been here for weeks now so no new report for this week.
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA			

<i>Not surveyed</i>			
Sloughs WMA <i>12/11/2023</i>	14,700 ducks 45 CA goose 9,000 WF goose 11,000 Snow goose	80% mallard 20% mixed dabblers – green winged teal, black ducks, gadwall, widgeon, northern shoveler	Habitat conditions remain the same, recent rain has helped, but still in need of water on the landscape.
Peabody WMA <i>12/14/2023</i>	4 ducks 200 CA goose	100% mallards	Low water levels continue to impact duck use. Significant rainfall is needed to fill shallow water areas and wetlands.
Yellowbank WMA <i>12/13/2023</i>	380 Ducks	90% mallard 5% wood duck 5% black duck	Excellent moist soil plant response and crop production in waterfowl units. Units are slowly gaining sheet water – 30% water capacity.
Barren River WMA <i>12/11/2023</i>	40 ducks 120 CA geese	50% divers/50% dabblers mergansers, scaup, redhead/mallards, wood ducks	Peters Creek MSU 10% full, Long Creek-Calvert Springs main unit 90% and units above and below the main spring 20%, MSUs off HWY 100 are 0% full. MSU plants in great condition. Lake level: 528.3'
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds) <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Cave Run Lake	43 Ducks 0 CA geese	50% bufflehead, 50% hooded merg.	

<i>12/14/2023</i>	22 other	72% pied-billed grebes 22% red-necked grebes 4% common loon	
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December 22, 2023 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for December 18 – December 22, 2023. Kentucky has been very dry since late summer however we did get some rain the first couple weeks of December. We had a good growing season for our crops and moist soil habitats throughout most of the state. At the start of the waterfowl hunting season habitat is mainly limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water, which is limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This means our waterfowl areas like Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis are struggling to keep water. Limited water is forcing us to limit hunting areas available on some of these WMAs.

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Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>12/19/2023</i>	38,963 ducks 30 CA goose 8,600 WF goose 12,000 Snow goose	80% mallard, 7% gadwall. 6% ring-necked, 3% shoveler, 2% green-winged teal, 1% wigeon, 1% black duck, pintail, wood duck	
Boatwright <i>12/21/2023</i>	2696 ducks	91% mallard, 8% unknown	Small cold front 4 days prior with gradual warm-up to present. Slight increase in waterfowl numbers.
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			

Doug Travis WMA <i>12/20/2023</i>	~900 ducks	95% mallard, 5% green-winged teal, wood ducks, mergansers	All 3 wells are pumping. Low groundwater conditions are slowing the recharge of water into well casings, so pumping is limited to prevent damage to pumps. Well #1 pumping for blinds #16, 17, and Willow Slough rest area. Well #2 is pumping into the Blinds 11/12 and 13/14 impoundments. Well #3 is pumping into the Baldy's Woods walkin unit, Indian Camp Rest Area, and Lake Erie impoundment.
Sloughs WMA <i>12/18/2023</i>	13,000 ducks 9,000 WF goose 9,500 Snow goose	90% mallard 10% mixed dabblers – gadwall, green winged teal, pintails, black ducks, northern shoveler	
Peabody WMA <i>12/14/2023</i>			
Yellowbank WMA <i>12/18/2023</i>	510 Ducks 20 WF geese	95% mallard 5% black duck	Excellent moist soil plant response and crop production in waterfowl units. Most units are at 30% water capacity. Several units are drying due to sandy loam soils.
Barren River WMA	140 ducks 120 CA geese	50% divers/50% dabblers mergansers, coot, scaup/mallards, gadwalls	Peters Creek MSU 10% full, Long Creek-Calvert Springs main unit 40% and units above and

<p>12/19/2023</p>			<p>below the main spring 50%, MSUs off HWY 100 are 0% full.</p> <p>MSU plants in great condition.</p> <p>Extremely dry conditions.</p> <p>Lake level: 528.2'</p>
<p>Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)</p> <p><i>Not surveyed</i></p>			
<p>Cave Run Lake</p> <p>12/21/2023</p>	<p>99 Ducks</p> <p>0 CA geese</p> <p>16 other</p>	<p>39% bufflehead, 59% hooded merg., 1% ruddy duck</p> <p>100% pied-billed grebes</p>	

December 22, 2023 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for December 27 – December 29, 2023. Many locations were not surveyed due to the holidays. Kentucky has been very dry since late summer however we did get some rain the first couple weeks of December. We had a good growing season for our crops and moist soil habitats throughout most of the state. At the start of the waterfowl hunting season habitat is mainly limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water, which is limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This means our waterfowl areas like Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis are struggling to keep water. Limited water is forcing us to limit hunting areas available on some of these WMAs.

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Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Boatwright <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA	1,450 ducks	83% mallard 10% green-winged teal 7% wood ducks, mergansers, gadwall	Still fighting drought conditions, but recent rainfall has helped conditions in Beaver

<p>12/27/2023</p>			<p>Pond Rest Area and Town Creek Impoundment.</p> <p>Well #1 has raised water levels in Willow Slough and at Blind 17, and should help Blind 16 soon. A breakdown on Well 2 resulted in losing water over the Christmas holiday, but that has hopefully been rectified and water levels should recover at Blinds 11, 12, 13, and 14.</p>
<p>Sloughs WMA</p> <p><i>Not surveyed</i></p>			
<p>Peabody WMA</p> <p>12/28/2023</p>	<p>29 ducks</p> <p>177 CA geese</p>	<p>80% mallard, 20% ring-necked</p>	<p>Rising river levels has provided some backwater habitat, although most shallow water areas are still lack water.</p>
<p>Yellowbank WMA</p> <p><i>Not surveyed</i></p>			
<p>Barren River WMA</p> <p><i>Not surveyed</i></p>			
<p>Blue Grass Army Depot</p> <p>(all lakes and ponds)</p> <p><i>Not surveyed</i></p>			

Cave Run Lake <i>12/27/2023</i>	40 Ducks 10 CA geese 18 other	40% bufflehead, 60% hooded merg. 66% pied-billed grebes, 34% common loon	
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January 05, 2024 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for January 01 – January 05, 2024. Kentucky has been very dry since late summer however we did get some rain the first couple weeks of December. We had a good growing season for our crops and moist soil habitats throughout most of the state. At the start of the waterfowl hunting season habitat is mainly limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water, which is limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This means our waterfowl areas like Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis are struggling to keep water. Limited water is forcing us to limit hunting areas available on some of these WMAs.

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Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>01/04/2024</i>	36,481 ducks 25 CA geese 11,100 WF geese 12,000 Snow geese	70% Mallard 12% Gadwall 11% Ring-Necked 3% Shoveler 2% green winged teal 1% wigeon 1% black duck, pintail, wood duck	Lack of cold weather has birds loafing more than usual for this time of year. Predictions of colder weather and more precipitation in the valley should increase migration movements of waterfowl.
Boatwright <i>01/04/2024</i>	2195 ducks	99% Mallard 1% gadwall, wood duck	
Duck Island			

<i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA <i>01/03/2024</i>	1,000 ducks	80% mallard 10% wood ducks 10% green winged teal >1% hooded mergansers, pintail, gadwall	Still struggling with low river and soil moisture. All 3 wells are pumping at reduced rates due to low groundwater table. Huntable water at blind sites 1-6, 10-11, 13, and 16-19. Water increasing at 16 and 17 with new pump and motor on Well #1. Baldy's Woods walk in unit also has huntable water.
Sloughs WMA <i>01/03/2024</i>	4,400 ducks 24,000 snow geese and WF geese 22 Tundra Swan	95% Mallard 5% mixed dabblers – gadwall, shovelers, green winged teal, black ducks	
Peabody WMA <i>01/03/2024</i>	289 ducks 142 CA geese	50% mallard 40% ring-necked 10% gadwall	Water levels continue to be low providing little shallow water habitat. The forecasted rain for this area is drastically needed.
Yellowbank WMA <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Barren River WMA <i>01/02/2024</i>	40 ducks 120 CA geese	50% diver 50% dabblers mergansers, coots, scaup/mallard, gadwalls	Extremely dry conditions with cold weather this week. Peters Creek MSU 10% full, Long Creek- Calvert Springs main unit 90% and units above and below the main spring

January 05, 2024 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for January 08 – January 12, 2024. Kentucky has been very dry and warm since late summer however we have seen a cold front and gotten some rain this past week. More cold weather is predicted for next week. We had a good growing season for our crops and moist soil habitats throughout most of the state. At the start of the waterfowl hunting season habitat is mainly limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water, which is limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This means our waterfowl areas like Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis are struggling to keep water. Limited water is forcing us to limit hunting areas available on some of these WMAs.

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Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>01/09/2024</i>	63,265 ducks 450 WF geese 29 Snow geese	65% Mallard 19% Ring-Necked 7% Gadwall 4% Shoveler 3% wigeon 1% pintail 1% green winged teal, wood duck	We are starting to see an upward trend in waterfowl utilizing the area and hunter success rates have trended upwards.
Boatwright <i>01/10/2024</i>	2594 ducks 15 CA geese	78% Mallard 21% unknown duck 1% gadwall, wood duck	More flooding in fields from recent rain. More food availability from rain.

Duck Island			
<i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA	~5,500 ducks	Mallards, green winged teal, a few wood ducks	Incomplete survey: Soft and muddy levels prevented access to much of the WMA. There are substantial numbers of ducks using the flooded cypress and buckbrush in the Beaver Pond Rest Area. Water levels and resulting habitat conditions have improved due to heavy rainfall and rising river levels.
<i>01/11/2024</i>			
Sloughs WMA	9,400 ducks 31,000 snow geese and WF geese	80% Mallard 20% mixed dabblers – pintail, gadwall, wigeon, northern shoveler, black duck, ringneck	Recent rains and colder weather have pushed new birds into the area as birds were seen using areas that were previously unused this fall. Most birds were still focused on the Muddy Slough/Southwood's rest area.
<i>01/08/2024</i>			
Peabody WMA	381 ducks 267 CA geese	80% ringneck 20% mallard and gadwall	Water levels in shallow areas have risen due to the recent rainfall. More rain is needed to bring many shallow water impoundments to full capacity.
<i>01/10/2024</i>			
Yellowbank WMA	230 Ducks	90% mallard 5% black duck	Units are slowly gaining sheet water- still at 30% water capacity on most units. Larger units that have access to pumps

01/08/2024		5%gadwall	are at maximum capacity.
<p>Barren River WMA</p> <p>01/10/2024</p>	<p>20 ducks</p> <p>120 CA geese</p>	<p>50% diver</p> <p>50% dabblers: mergansers, ringnecks, scaup/mallard, shovelers</p>	<p>Dry conditions, finally some runoff rain this week and more rain Friday, cold weather next week.</p> <p>Peters Creek MSU 25% full, Long Creek- Calvert Springs main unit 90% and units above and below the main spring 40-60%, MSUs off hwy 100 are 10% full.</p> <p>Corn/soybeans and MSU plants in great condition.</p> <p>Lake Level: 529.1.0'</p>
<p>Blue Grass Army Depot</p> <p>(all lakes and ponds)</p> <p>Not surveyed</p>			
<p>Cave Run Lake</p> <p>01/11/2024</p>	<p>23 Ducks</p> <p>9 CA geese</p> <p>12 other</p>	<p>44% common merg.</p> <p>25% hooded merg.</p> <p>>1% canvasback</p> <p>58% pied-billed grebes</p> <p>42% common loon</p>	

January 19, 2024 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for January 15 – January 19, 2024. Kentucky was very dry and warm from late summer to beginning of January, but we've seen a cold front and some precipitation over the last couple weeks. Rain with warmer temperatures is predicted for next week. We had a good growing season for our crops and moist soil habitats throughout most of the state. The waterfowl hunting season habitat is mainly limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water, which is limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This means waterfowl areas like Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis are struggling to keep water. Limited water is forcing us to limit hunting areas available on some of these WMAs. The recent rain has been helping.

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Ballard <i>01/16/2024</i>	90,981 ducks 18,000 WF geese 7,000 Snow geese 65 CA geese	69% Mallard 9% Ring-Necked 8% Gadwall 5% wigeon 5% pintail 4% green winged teal >1% wood duck, shoveler, black duck, hooded merg.	A significant cold front moved into area 8-10 days prior to survey. We noticed a sharp increase in number of birds on the WMA. The ability to operate the Ohio River pump station allowed us to assist the birds in maintaining open water in sub-zero temps. Hunter success in some of the units surrounding the area have sharply increased.
Boatwright	10,100 ducks 150 WF geese	72% Mallard 28% unknown dabblers	Strong cold front has about 90% of surface water frozen with ¾" – 1 ½" of ice sheeting. Most

01/18/2024	3,000 snow geese		of the ducks are holding tight on swan pond or any open water where they are trying to keep open. WF and Snow geese are actively dry-feeding on the cover crops in large ag fields in area.
Duck Island Not surveyed			
Doug Travis WMA 01/18/2024	~4,000 ducks	80% Mallard 20% mixed dabblers	All water bodies on the DTWMA are frozen except for the sites where we have wells running. A continual interchange of ducks coming and going to the Mississippi River and points beyond. Several blind sites have open water from wells pumping and are experiencing very good success right now.
Sloughs WMA 01/15/2024	4,800 ducks 8,500 snow geese and WF geese 24 tundra swans	85% Mallard 15% mixed dabblers – pintail, green-winged teal, gadwall	Severe cold weather has frozen almost all water on the area. Ducks were holding extremely tight in pockets of the refuge to hold water open.
Peabody WMA 01/17/2024	1,365 ducks 620 CA geese	45% ringneck 40% mallard 15% gadwall, green-winged teal, and northern shoveler	Water levels in shallow areas have risen due to the recent rainfall, although frigid temperatures have frozen all shallow water and some of the more shallower strip pits. Large, deep strip pits are maintaining

			open water and are currently concentrating waterfowl use.
Yellowbank WMA <i>01/16/2024</i>	0 Ducks		All units have a thick sheet of ice.
Barren River WMA <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds) <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Cave Run Lake <i>01/11/2024</i>	168 Ducks 268 CA geese 39 other	37% bufflehead 61% hooded merg. 1% canvasback, common merg. 79% common loon 21% pied-billed grebes	Numbers were way up compared to last week. Cold front must have pushed them in.

January 26, 2024 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for January 22 – January 26, 2024. This week gave us rain with warmer temperatures following a week of our coldest temperatures yet. We expect another cold front this coming week leading into the last weekend of our second segment of duck season. The waterfowl hunting season habitat has been mainly limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water, which is limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This means waterfowl areas like Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis are struggling to keep water. Limited water is forcing us to limit hunting areas available on some of these WMAs. The recent rain has been helping.

Avian Influenza is present in Kentucky, so hunters should use common sense when handling/cleaning harvested waterfowl. See page two of the [KY Waterfowl Guide](#) for recommendations for the safe handling and disposal of your birds. After cleaning waterfowl, hunters are encouraged to place the remains in trash bags and dispose of them through trash collection or a permitted landfill. Bald eagles and other raptors are particularly susceptible to avian influenza. This simple action could help prevent bald eagle and other raptor mortalities.

The second segment of duck season opens on December 7 and will run until January 31, 2024. Goose season opened Thanksgiving Day and will remain open until February 15, 2024. The second day of Special Youth Waterfowl Season is Saturday, February 11, 2024. The second day of Special Veteran's Waterfowl Season is on Sunday February 11, 2024. All bag limits remain the same as last season. Check out the 2023-2024 Waterfowl hunting guide or visit the waterfowl hunting web page for more details. Good luck hunting this year. Be safe and enjoy your time afield.

Good luck hunting this year. Be safe and enjoy your time afield!

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Boatwright <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA	~5,500 ducks	70% Mallard 30% mixed dabblers – green-winged teal, gadwalls, and pintails, shovelers, wood ducks	Partial survey conducted due to muddy conditions and foggy skies.

01/24/2024			<p>All 3 wells are running, and the local area has received around 2.5" of rain in the last 48 hours, improving water levels in several impoundments and helping to thaw ice that had covered most wetlands and lakes.</p> <p>Blind sites 11, 13, 14, and 17 have open water currently, with more blinds and the oxbow lakes expected by this weekend.</p>
Sloughs WMA 01/22/2024	<p>4,600 ducks</p> <p>7,900 snow geese and WF geese</p>	<p>95% Mallard</p> <p>5% mixed dabblers – black ducks, shoveler, pintail, green-winged teal</p>	<p>The area remains 99% covered with ice. Waterfowl are concentrated on the refuge near well outlets where water can be kept open. Warmer temps and rain should help water become more accessible as the week goes on.</p>
Peabody WMA 01/24/2024	<p>169 ducks</p> <p>13 CA geese</p>	<p>70% mallard</p> <p>30% gadwall, green-winged teal, wigeon, ring-neck</p>	<p>Water levels in shallow areas have risen due to the recent rainfall and created plenty of backwater for the Pond and Tradewater rivers. Many non-flowing shallow areas are still frozen, although everything should be thawed by the weekend.</p>
Yellowbank WMA 01/25/2024	<p>350 Ducks</p>	<p>85% mallard</p> <p>5% black duck</p> <p>5% pintail</p> <p>5% gadwall</p>	<p>All waterfowl units are at or near maximum water capacity. Ice is still present on most of the units.</p>
Barren River WMA Not surveyed			

<p>Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)</p> <p><i>Not surveyed</i></p>			
<p>Cave Run Lake</p> <p><i>01/25/2024</i></p>	<p>17 Ducks</p> <p>13 CA geese</p> <p>10 other</p>	<p>71% bufflehead</p> <p>12% hooded merg.</p> <p>6% common merg.</p> <p>6% mallard</p> <p>60% pied-billed grebes</p> <p>40% common loon</p>	

February 02, 2024 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for January 29 – February 02, 2024. This week gave us some rain and colder temps early in the week. The waterfowl hunting season habitat has been mainly limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water, which is limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This means waterfowl areas like Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis are struggling to keep water. Limited water is forcing us to limit hunting areas available on some of these WMAs. The recent rain has been helping.

Avian Influenza is present in Kentucky, so hunters should use common sense when handling/cleaning harvested waterfowl. See page two of the [KY Waterfowl Guide](#) for recommendations for the safe handling and disposal of your birds. After cleaning waterfowl, hunters are encouraged to place the remains in trash bags and dispose of them through trash collection or a permitted landfill. Bald eagles and other raptors are particularly susceptible to avian influenza. This simple action could help prevent bald eagle and other raptor mortalities.

The second segment of duck season opens on December 7 and ran until January 31, 2024. Goose season opened Thanksgiving Day and will remain open until February 15, 2024. The second day of Special Youth Waterfowl Season is Saturday, February 11, 2024. The second day of Special Veteran's Waterfowl Season is on Sunday February 11, 2024. All bag limits remain the same as last season. Check out the 2023-2024 Waterfowl hunting guide or visit the waterfowl hunting web page for more details.

Good luck hunting this year. Be safe and enjoy your time afield!

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Boatwright <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA <i>02/01/2024</i>	~9,500 ducks		The rising level of the Mississippi River has reached the point that it is "backing in" through the Town Creek Moist Soil Unit

			and inundating most of the shrub/scrub timber between Town Creek MSU and the Beaver Pond Rest Area. Large numbers of ducks were seen working and going down in this area, although we were unable to estimate numbers via ground count.
Sloughs WMA <i>02/02/2024</i>	1,100 ducks 75 CA geese 350 Snow/WF geese	90% mallard 10% mixed dabbling – pintails, green winged teal	
Peabody WMA <i>01/31/2024</i>	347 ducks 396 CA geese	50% mallard 33% ring-neck 17% gadwall, northern shoveler	Water levels in shallow areas are full due to the recent rainfall and have created plenty of backwater for the Pond and Tradewater rivers.
Yellowbank WMA <i>01/31/2024</i>	900 Ducks	90% mallard 5% black duck 5% gadwall	All waterfowl units are at or near maximum water capacity. The Ohio River has around 200 additional acres flooded on WMA.
Barren River WMA <i>01/29/2024</i>	75 Ducks 120 CA geese 35 Snow geese	50% diver 50% dabblers: mergansers, ringnecks, scaup/mallards, black ducks, wood ducks	Peters Creek MSU 85% full. Long Creek- Calvert Springs main unit 90% full. Units above and below the main spring 75-90% full. MSUs off hwy 100 are 80% full. Corn/soybeans and MSU plants in great condition
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds) <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Cave Run Lake	58 ducks	93% bufflehead	

<i>02/02/2024</i>	15 CA geese 21 other	7% hooded merganser 57% Pied-billed grebe 43% common loon	
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February 09, 2024 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for February 05 – February 09, 2024. The duck hunting season is now closed. During the season, habitat was mainly limited to areas that had the capacity to pump water, which was limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Rain at the end of the season helped with water levels.

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The second segment of duck season opened on December 7 and ran until January 31, 2024. Goose season opened Thanksgiving Day and will remain open until February 15, 2024. The second day of Special Youth Waterfowl Season is Sunday, February 11, 2024. The second day of Special Veteran's Waterfowl Season is on Sunday February 11, 2024. All bag limits remain the same as last season. Check out the 2023-2024 Waterfowl hunting guide or visit the waterfowl hunting web page for more details.

Good luck hunting this year. Be safe and enjoy your time afield!

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Boatwright <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Sloughs WMA	1,400 ducks	85% mallard	Waterfowl are tucked into heavy cover the past 3

02/07/2024	110 CA geese 245 Snow/WF geese 23 Tundra swans	15% mixed dabbler – pintails, gadwall, green winged teal	weeks making counts difficult. There are certainly more ducks here than observed but they are loafing in inaccessible areas with no reason to move around.
Peabody WMA 02/08/2024	54 ducks 165 CA geese	33% mallard 33% ring-neck 33% gadwall	Water levels are still good in most shallow water systems. Backwater in the Pond and Tradewater river systems are starting to fall.
Yellowbank WMA 02/08/2024	695 Ducks	85% mallard 5% black duck 5% gadwall 5% pintail	All waterfowl units are at or near maximum water capacity.
Barren River WMA <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds) <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Cave Run Lake <i>Not surveyed</i>			

February 16, 2024 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for February 12 – February 16, 2024. The waterfowl hunting season is now closed. During the season, habitat was mainly limited to areas that had the capacity to pump water, which was limited, due to the low levels in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Rain at the end of the season helped with water levels.

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The second segment of duck season opened on December 7 and ran until January 31, 2024. Goose season opened Thanksgiving Day and closed February 15, 2024. The second day of Special Youth Waterfowl Season was Sunday, February 11, 2024. The second day of Special Veteran's Waterfowl Season was on Sunday February 11, 2024. All bag limits remained the same as the previous season. Check out the 2023-2024 Waterfowl hunting guide or visit the waterfowl hunting web page for more details.

Thank you for participating in the hunting season this year!

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Boatwright <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Sloughs WMA	1,500 ducks	90% mallard	Waterfowl are tucked into heavy cover the past 3

02/13/2024	125 CA geese 275 Snow/WF geese 45 Tundra swans	10% mixed dabbler – pintails, gadwall, green winged teal	weeks making counts difficult. There are certainly more ducks here than observed but they are loafing in inaccessible areas with no reason to move around.
Peabody WMA <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Yellowbank WMA 02/15/2024	875 ducks	85% mallard 5% black duck 5% wood duck 5% gadwall	All waterfowl units are at or near maximum water capacity. Several units have started their spring drawdown.
Barren River WMA <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds) <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Cave Run Lake <i>Not surveyed</i>			