

February 5 – February 9, 2018 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the weekly waterfowl ground count for February 5 - February 9, 2018. Many areas have stopped doing surveys for the season, and will be missing from the report. Water levels are still fluctuating on most of our areas, following the rains, snow and ice melts, and birds are taking advantage of the newly available habitat. Moist soil impoundments across the state are still providing above average food, and planted crops are still hanging in as well. Some winter wheat fields have been hit hard, but plenty of other food is still available. River levels are predicted to stay high enough to keep water levels manageable at Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis WMA's, and snowmelt has recharged some wetlands at the Slough's WMA, bringing water levels closer to where they should be. The warm weather has scattered birds quite a bit, so I suspect that the counts given are not representative of the actual number of birds in the area.

All duck seasons are now closed. The goose season will remain open until Monday, February 15, 2018. Good luck to all, and remember to be safe whenever you are out pursuing birds this hunting season.

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard	Not Surveyed		
Boatwright	Not Surveyed		
Birdsville Island	Not surveyed		
Kentucky/Barkley Lakes	Not surveyed		
Duck Island	Not surveyed		
Barren River Lake	Not surveyed		
Doug Travis WMA	12,568 ducks	11,900 mallard, 400 green-winged teal, 250 pintail, 10 shoveler, 6 wood ducks, 2 hooded merganser	Ducks were tucked into stands of buckbrush / sesbania / hibiscus / corn and difficult to see in many cases. In several spots, there was open water "in" the cover but skim ice in open areas. I would consider numbers reported an absolute minimum for duck numbers on DTWMA yesterday. We shut all 3 wells off at DTWMA yesterday.
Cave Run Lake	Not Surveyed		
Clear Creek WMA	Not surveyed		
Peabody WMA	Not Surveyed		

<p>Sloughs WMA</p>	<p>13,495 Ducks 681 CA geese 5,067 WF geese 10,250 Snow geese 105 Swans</p>	<p>85% mallard, 15% northern pintail, shoveler, gadwall, green-winged teal.</p>	<p>Despite freezing temperatures overnight and throughout most of the day, a large majority of the water on Sloughs WMA is now ice-free. Ducks have begun to shift their foraging habitats toward areas rich in invertebrate food sources, and have developed strong pair bonds. Consequently, the largest concentrations of ducks were observed either feeding in moist-soil impoundments (Hardy Slough impoundments and Shorebird Unit), or loafing within dense buttonbush areas of the Pond Creek marsh complex. Canada geese were scattered across the WMA in groups of 35-50, while the majority of the white-fronted geese were observed loafing on the Pond Creek marsh. During the course of the survey, thousands of snow geese were seen returning from outside feeding areas to loaf on agricultural fields along Muddy Slough.</p>
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Yellowbank WMA	Not Surveyed		
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
Herrington Lake	Not Surveyed		
Taylorsville Lake	Not surveyed		
Cedar Cr./Dix R. WMA	Not surveyed		
Green River WMA	Not surveyed		