

December 20, 2024
Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for December 16-20, 2024.

The second segment of duck season opened on December 7 and will run until January 31, 2025. Goose season opened on November 28, 2024 and will run until February 15, 2025. All bag limits will remain the same as the previous season. Check out the [2024-2025 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.

[Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza was recently confirmed](#) in samples from several dead snow geese at Sloughs WMA (December 11, 2024), and dead geese have also been observed at Ballard WMA. Hunters should use common sense when handling/cleaning harvested waterfowl. See page two of the 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. *Please let WMA staff know if you observe any sick or dead birds.*

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>Dec 17</i>	14,937 Ducks 2,100 WF Geese 8,700 Snow Geese 20 Canada Geese	Mallard- 60% Ring-necked 22% Gadwall 7% Wigeon 6% Pintail 5% (G-W Teal, N. Shoveler, Pintail, Wood Duck, Black Duck) ≤ 1%	Hunter success and water levels have been steady. Heavy rains in the region filled many impoundments and sloughs during this last couple of rain events. Migration reports still have many ducks north of our area.
Boatwright <i>Dec 18</i>	6,826 Ducks No Geese	Mallard- 11% Ring-necked- 59% Unknown- 30%	Lots of sheet water and flooded fields from recent rains and heavy precipitation should help with waterfowl activity in the area.
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA <i>Not Surveyed but some observation</i>	2,000-4,000 see notes		Levees were too soft after rain on 12/16 to conduct a full survey. From what was visible with limited access, there are 2,000-4,000 ducks utilizing the Beaver Pond Rest Area, mostly mallards with a small percentage of mixed dabbling ducks making up the remainder.

			There is sufficient water to hunt at all blind sites.
Sloughs WMA <i>Not surveyed</i>			No count this week due to levees being too wet from recent rainfall. As of 12/18, WF and Snow goose numbers seem to be similar to last week. Ducks are likely spread out across the landscape with a good amount of sheet water present. Current river forecasts indicate the potential loss of access to portions of Highland Creek/Grassy Pond units next week
Peabody WMA Dec 18	95 Ducks 164 Canada geese	Mallard 77% Remainder gadwall and green-winged teal	Heavy rains have raised water levels and spread ducks and geese out over a larger area on the WMA.
Yellowbank WMA <i>Dec 16</i>	825 Ducks	80% Mallard 10% Wood Duck 5% Gadwall 5% Black Duck	Most MSU's are at 90% water capacity. 1.5 inches of rain in the last 12 hours started filling several field units that we're dry.
Barren River WMA <i>Dec 19</i>	165 Ducks 180 Canada geese	10%diver/90% dabblers bufflehead, ring-necked, goldeneye, merganser/wood ducks, widgeon, mallard	Normal conditions, 50 white pelicans at Masons Island, loons, mergansers, grebes present, several fishermen
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds) <i>Not Surveyed</i>			
Cave Run Lake <i>Not surveyed</i>			