

**December 27, 2024**  
**Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts**

This is the ground count survey for December 23-27, 2024. Due to the Holiday Season, many sites were not surveyed this week. We hope everyone had a great holiday.

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 26, 2024</i>	Ducks- 19,830 WF Geese-5,850 Snow Geese – 3,501 Canada Geese- 13	Mallard- 77% Ring-necked 19% Gadwall 1% G-W Teal 1% N. Shoveler 1% (Wigeon, Canvasback, Pintail, Bufflehead, Unknown) ≤ 1%	Normal water levels for this time of the year and warm rising temperatures may contribute to decreased feeding behavior and lower hunter success rates. Long term projections predict a strong cold front in early to mid-January.
Boatwright <i>Dec 26, 2024</i>	Ducks-4,300	Mallard- 29% Ring-necked- 70% Gadwall- ≤1% (Pintail, Canvasback)- ≤1%	Daytime temps spiking to 50° and a slight warming trend this last week have waterfowl numbers stable. Hunting continues as we draw close the 3 <sup>rd</sup> week of regular season. Hunter's focusing on natural forage base and sloughs are returning higher success rates.
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA <i>Not Surveyed</i>			

Sloughs WMA <i>Dec 23, 2024</i>	Ducks 6,246 WF Geese 5,030 Snow Geese 12,000 Tundra Swan 150	Mallard- 85% Pintail 5% Gadwall 2% Other Ducks 8%	
Peabody WMA <i>Not surveyed</i>			
Yellowbank WMA <i>Dec 23, 2024</i>	Ducks 755	Mallard 85% Gadwall 10% Black Duck 5%	Most MSU's are at maximum water capacity.
Barren River WMA <i>Not Surveyed</i>			
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds) <i>Dec 26, 2024</i>	Ducks 471 Canada Geese 26	Mallards 16% Black Duck 9% Pintails 3% Gadwalls 5% Ring-necked duck 66% Hooded Merganser 1%	Fluctuating temps have pushed birds in and out over the past weeks, expect trend to continue until more sustained weather occurs.
Cave Run Lake <i>Not surveyed</i>			