

November 29, 2024 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for November 25 - November 29, 2024. The region experienced light to moderate rainfall, with some areas also receiving freezing precipitation earlier in the week. The week started with below-average temperatures, with daytime highs mostly in the 40s and nighttime lows in the 20s, leading to several nights of freezing conditions. Parts of western Kentucky remain in dry to moderate drought conditions, though some areas have improved compared to earlier in the fall. The Ohio River remains slightly below average for this time of year, while the Mississippi is near seasonal norms due to upstream rainfall.

The first segment of duck season will open on Thursday November 28, 2024 and run until Sunday December 1, 2024. Goose season will open on Thursday November 28, 2024 and run until Saturday 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.

Avian Influenza is present in Kentucky, so 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.

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard 11/27/2024	16,758 ducks 73 Canada geese 2000 white-fronted geese	87% mallard 5% ring-necked 4% gadwall 4% misc ducks	Rain expected this afternoon and tonight as front approaches, then turning colder through Thanksgiving. The cold front that came through last week brought more waterfowl to the WMA. No change in habitat since last count. We are working to get big river pump back online, but wells are running to flood what hunt units we can.
Boatwright 11/27/2024	763 ducks	69% mallards 31% unknown duck	3 eagles. Recent cold front.
Duck Island			

<i>Not surveyed</i>			
Doug Travis WMA			
<i>Date</i>			
Sloughs WMA <i>11/25/2024</i>	3127 ducks 117 Canada geese 1397 WF geese 800 snow geese 46 swan	80% mallard, 10% teal, 5% pintail, 3% gadwall, 6% misc dabblers – shoveler, wood duck, widgeon; 1% misc divers	Lots of water on the area at this time compared to last season. Most ducks observed were in the marsh and tucked into thick areas, likely causing an under representation of total numbers. There is a wide range of habitat quality across the area; natural vegetation is overall great, some planted crop struggled due to mid-summer drought.
Peabody WMA			
<i>Not surveyed</i>			
Yellowbank WMA <i>11/26/2024</i>	415 ducks	70% mallard 10% wood duck 10% GW teal 10% gadwall	Most units are at 60% water capacity. Excellent moist-soil plants and row crops in hunting units. Pumps are running into hunting units.
Barren River WMA			
<i>Date</i>			
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)			
<i>Not surveyed</i>			
Cave Run Lake	94 ducks 83 Canada geese	93% bufflehead 4% mallard 3% ruddy duck	

<i>11/26/2024</i>	8 pied-billed grebe		
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