

**January 3, 2025**  
**Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts**

This is the ground count survey for December 30-31, 2024 and January 1-3, 2025. The region experienced heavy rains early in the week, filling many impoundments and pushing water into hunt units. Unseasonably mild temperatures early in the week gave way to a cold front with gusty winds and below freezing temps at night, moving many ducks around. 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, 2024 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>1/2/2025</i>	23,833 ducks 8,500 WF geese 1,311 Canada geese 12,000 snow geese	70% mallard 25% ring-necked 2% gadwall 1% GW teal 1% wigeon <1% pintail, shoveler, canvasback, bufflehead, ruddy duck, goldeneye, redhead, unknown	Heavy rainfall in the area over the past week helped to refill impoundments and push new ducks into the area. Recent flooding helped to increase water levels in the hunt units and across the landscape.
Boatwright <i>1/2/2025</i>	3,940 ducks 5 Canada geese	51% ring-necked 46% mallard 1% gadwall 1% pintail 1% canvasback <1% unknown	Smaller pools with overhead cover throughout the survey area held higher percentages of mallards. Swan pond was primarily where most of the diver species were observed.
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			

Doug Travis WMA <i>1/2/2025</i>	800-1,000 ducks	90% mallard 10% GW teal, wood duck, gadwall, ring-necked	The ducks present on DTWMA were almost entirely in the Beaver Pond Rest Area, with most concentrated in flooded buckbrush. Around 50 ducks were present on the upper end of Willow Slough. All blind sites have plenty of water to hunt following the last rainfall events. There is some water present in the Ward Tract walk-in unit, although the impoundments are not full. Wells #1 and 2 are running at capacity, flooding impoundments around blinds 11-14 and 16/17. We are hopeful that repairs to Well #3 will be completed within the next 1-2 weeks.
Sloughs WMA <i>12/30/2024</i>	5,766 ducks 65 Canada geese 260 WF geese 150 snow geese 24 swans	94% mallard 3% teal 1% gadwall 1% pintail 1% misc dabbler <1% misc diver	All floodable units are at full pool. Ducks are holding tight to thermal cover during the day and there are still good amounts of sheet water present on the landscape.
Peabody WMA <i>1/2/2025</i>	79 ducks 247 Canada geese	Mixed mallard, gadwall, and ring-necked.	Conditions have remained about the same and waterfowl numbers are lower than usual for this time of the year on Peabody.
Yellowbank WMA <i>1/3/2025</i>	590 ducks	75% mallard 10% gadwall 5% pintail 5% wood duck 5% ring-necked duck	Most MSUs are at maximum water capacity.
Barren River WMA <i>Not Surveyed</i>			
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds) <i>12/30/2024</i>	381 ducks 38 Canada geese	59% ring-necked 16% mallard 13% black duck 8% gadwall 1% GW teal <1% pintail, common merganser, hooded merganser	Warmer trend has caused waterfowl to move a lot. Expect the forecasted cold snap to improve conditions over the next week.
Cave Run Lake <i>Not surveyed</i>			

