

January 02, 2026

Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

The second segment of duck season opened Sunday December 7 and will run through January 31, 2026. Goose season opened on Thursday November 27, 2025 and will run through February 15, 2026. All bag limits will remain the same as the previous season, except that hunters may now harvest three pintails daily. Check out the 2025-26 Kentucky 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 is present in Kentucky. As of November 20, 2025, it has only been detected in raptors for the 2025-26 migratory season. Visit the KDFWR Avian Influenza webpage to view an up-to-date map of detections. 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	Date	Ducks	Geese	Duck Species Composition	Comments
Ballard WMA	12/31/2025	14825 total 12890 Mallard 1525 Ring-necked 266 Gadwall 79 Shoveler 21 Wood duck 14 Pintail 10 Redhead 8 Canvasback 5 Wigeon	12362 total 10700 Snow 1650 Wf Goose 12 Canada	Mallard 87% Ring-necked 10% Gadwall 2% Shoveler <1% Wood duck <1% Pintail <1% Redhead <1% Canvasback <1% Wigeon <1%	7 Hooded Mergansers
Blue Grass Army Depot	12/29/2025	881 total 327 Mallard 270 Ring-necked 233 Black duck 175 Gadwall 45 GW teal 18 Pintail 12 Ruddy duck 8 Wigeon 2 Wood duck	0 total	Mallard 37% Ring-necked 31% Black duck 26% Gadwall 20% GW teal 5% Pintail 2% Ruddy duck 1% Wigeon <1% Wood duck <1%	Cold snap and winds have most ducks relating to protected bodies of water. Forecasted low overnight temps for the rest of the week should result in smaller bodies of water freezing over. Some areas without wind are already beginning to freeze in the shallows and along the banks. Expect waterfowl numbers to increase as the week progresses as more water freezes in the area.
Boatwright WMA	12/31/2025	2997 total 1663 Unknown 1257 Mallard 75 GW teal	1343 total	Unknown 55% Mallard 42% GW teal 3%	2 Hooded Mergansers
Doug Travis WMA	12/29/2025	3423 total 3175 Mallard	0 total	Mallard 93% Ring-necked 3%	Most ducks were found in buckbrush in

		110 Ring-necked 50 Gadwall 30 GW teal 30 Wood duck 20 Hooded merganser 5 Pintail 3 Black duck		Gadwall 1% GW teal <1% Wood duck <1% Hooded merganser <1% Pintail <1% Black duck <1%	Beaver Pond Rest Area. Wells were kicked off by storms 12/28 but restarted 12/29. Water levels are still below optimal in most units.
Sloughs WMA	12/29/2025	6835 total 5000 Mallard 800 Gadwall 550 Misc Dabblers 400 Ring-necked 45 Pintail 40 Shoveler	850 total 700 Wf Goose 150 Canada	Mallard 73% Gadwall 12% Misc Dabblers 8% Ring-necked 6% Pintail <1% Shoveler <1%	No snow geese observed on area today