

January 13, 2022 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for January 9-13, 2023. The frigid weather that swept through at Christmas has given way to a couple mild weeks. We do continue to receive some rain, and some rain events were heavy enough to swell the bigger rivers and cause some backwater and headwater flooding from the smaller tributaries. Ducks have spread out across the newly flooded habitats, making surveying difficult in some areas. The mid-winter aerial survey was flown last week, and will be posted online as soon as all the data can be compiled.

**Avian Influenza is present in Kentucky, so hunters should use common sense when handling/cleaning harvested waterfowl. See page two of the [KY 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.

The second segment of duck season will run until January 31, 2023. Goose season opened November 24, 2022, and will remain open until February 15, 2023. New this year, youth season is Saturday, November 19, 2022, and Saturday, February 11, 2023. There is also a new veteran's hunt on Sunday, November 20, 2022, and Sunday February 12, 2023. All bag limits remain the same as last season. Check out the 2022-2023 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.

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard 1/10/2023	41,725 ducks 61 CA goose 9,100WF goose 14,200 Snow Geese	84% Mallard, 10% Ring-Neck, 3% Green Wing Teal, 2 % Gadwall, 1% Northern Shoveler, Pintail, Mergansers	Birds are sitting on large moist soil impoundments with heavy cover. Hunters who are able to identify corridors and flight patterns have seen better success.
Boatwright 1/12/2023	8,137 Ducks 7 CA Geese 275 Snow Geese	79% Mallards 11% G-W Teal 10% Other	Recent rains have helped with impoundments that were still impacted by drought. Full moon and the warm temps has made hunting challenging.
Duck Island	<i>Mid-winter aerial survey</i> 1/4/23	675 mallards 7 black ducks 15 gadwall	
Doug Travis WMA 1/12/2023	50 Ducks*		*Incomplete count due to wet levees. We have seen little use of the

			Indian Camp Rest Area this week. Ducks using the Beaver Pond Rest Area are concentrated in brushy openings that cannot be estimated.
Sloughs WMA 1/9/2023	5,500 ducks 25 CA geese 3,700 WF geese 4,000 Snow geese 79 Tundra Swan		Local sloughs and drainages have improved habitat conditions with most having water but remain low compared to previous years. Lower bottoms such as Grassy and Highland has water. Duck numbers decreased from the previous week with birds scattered throughout the area with newly available water and food.
Peabody WMA 1/12/2023	342 ducks 118 CA goose	95% mallard, 5% gadwall, ring-neck, black duck and mergansers.	Moist soil units and impoundments are now full.
Yellowbank WMA 1/4/2023	550 Ducks	90% mallard, 5% black duck, 5% diving ducks	All units are at maximum water capacity.
Barren River WMA 1/10/2023	76 ducks 105 CA geese 4,026 Sandhill cranes	75%diver/25% dabblers mergansers, ringnecks, scaup, redheads, mallards	Peters Creek MSU 25% full, Long Creek- Calvert Springs main unit 100% and units above and below the main spring 100%, MSUs off HWY 100 are 100% full. Food in abundance, with both corn and moist soil plants in great condition. Lake level: 530.8'
Blue Grass Army Depot	<i>Not Surveyed</i>		
Cave Run Lake 1/11/2023	79 Ducks 0 CA geese 50 coot	72 bufflehead, 6 mallard, 1 common merganser	Lake level: 724.4'