

January 15, 2021 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count for January 11-15, 2021. The Mid-winter Waterfowl Aerial Survey was completed this week, so look for that report also available online. Last week's flights and ground counts found low numbers of ducks and geese, but this week's cold front has increased numbers for many of our WMA's. Freezing temperatures have locked up a lot of shallow habitat this week, concentrating birds to open water and rest areas. Hopefully the slight warm up predicted will get them moving some.

Habitat across the state continues to look excellent in moist soil units and good to excellent habitat over all. Water levels are full on most hunt units, and we are adding water to increase food availability where possible. Overall, wetland conditions and food availability are excellent.

Duck season began on Thanksgiving Day, with the first segment running from November 26 – 29. The second segment of duck season opened on December 7, and will run until January 31, 2021. Goose season opened November 26, 2020 and will remain open until February 15, 2021. The western zone youth hunt will be February 6-7, 2021. Also new this year, is the daily bag limit reduction for Scaup (blue bills). The new Scaup bag limit is one bird November 26-29, and December 7-18, 2020 and two birds December 19, 2020 through January 31, 2021. All other bag limits remain the same.

We wish everyone great luck this year. Be safe, and enjoy your time afield.

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard <i>1/14/2021</i>	46,050 ducks 206 CA goose 10,000 WF goose 5,000 Snow goose	89% Mallard, 4% Gadwall, 4% Ring-neck, 3% GW Teal, Wood Duck, Pintail, Wigeon, Canvasback and Redhead.	Habitat is still looking good. Everything has been frozen for a couple of days, but a slight warm up is predicted in the near forecast. Birds are sitting in large groups.
Boatwright <i>1/14/2021</i>	34,136 Ducks	84% Mallard, 12% unknown diver, 2% Scaup, 1% GW Teal, 1% Wigeon, Gadwall, Canvasback, Pintail and Hooded Merg	The cold front pushed some birds into Swan Lake, as most shallow units froze. Hunt units look good, and there is still an abundance of moist soil and row crops available. Shallow units should start thawing quickly. River is dropping out pretty steady as well.
Duck Island <i>1/4/2021 Flight data</i>	3,155 ducks 75 Canada geese	92% Mallards 8% GW teal & pintail	Habitat conditions are excellent. Planted crops and moist soil plants did well this summer.
Doug Travis WMA <i>1/12/2021</i>	3,400 Ducks	90% mallards, 5% mixed dabblers, 5% ring-necked ducks	Water conditions are good at all blind sites. There was open water

		<i>*Minimum estimate. Most ducks were in the buck brush, making counts difficult.</i>	at blinds 11, 12, 13, and 14, while most other sites were iced over. We saw more black ducks today than had been present, indicating some kind of influx has occurred.
Sloughs WMA 1/11/2021	5,600 ducks 250 CA goose 1,540 WF goose 4,512 Snow goose 259 Tundra Swan	70% Mallard 20% pintail, 10% shoveler, Green Wing Teal and Gadwall	At time of survey, ice covered over 50% of the area. Water levels within the hunt units on the WMA and Jenny Hole were at normal conditions.
Peabody WMA 1/13/2021	2,086 ducks 140 CA goose	75% Mallard, 20% Gadwall, 5% mixed; Ringneck, Wigeon, Green Winged Teal	
Yellowbank WMA 1/14/2021	800 Ducks 55 Canada Geese	80% mallard, 10% black duck, 5% pintail, 5% gadwall	Most units are above 75% water capacity.
Barren River WMA 1/12/2021	210 ducks 115 CA geese 3,542 Sandhill Cranes	50/50 dabblers and divers. Redheads, mallards, ringnecks, bufflehead & scaup	Peters Creek MSU 90% full, Long Creek- Calvert Springs main unit 100% and units above and below the main spring 75-100%, MSUs off hwy 100 are 75-100% full, with corn/soybeans and MSU plants in great condition. 1/12: Lake 528.2'
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
Herrington Lake	Not surveyed		
Cave Run Lake 1/13/2021	569 Ducks, 461 CA geese 30 coots	36% mallard, 23% ruddy duck, 15% bufflehead, 20% merganser, 6% teal, ringneck and a surf scoter.	Lake level – 724.4'