

January 22, 2021 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count for January 18-22, 2021. Mild weather crept back in this week, slowing bird movement quite a bit. Numbers of birds seem to be steady, though some ground count totals are significantly lower than last week. The warm weather may just have the birds sitting still in thick cover, or they could be scattered across the landscape again, now that the ice is gone.

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>1/21/2021</i>	27,519 ducks 85 CA goose 9,300 WF goose 10,000 Snow goose	76% Mallard, 9% Shoveler, 9% Ring-neck, 5% Gadwall, 1% Bufflehead and Goldeneye	Habitat continues to look great, pretty good water levels in most hunt units. The weather is very mild for January, and birds are not moving much. The count is down from last week, but it's uncertain if they have moved on or just moved into thicker cover. We did pick up some more snows and specks this week.
Boatwright <i>1/21/2021</i>	1,831 Ducks 17 CA goose	65% Mallard, 23% GW Teal, 10% Ring-neck, 2% Canvasback, Wood Duck and Wigeon.	Habitat still looks great. There is an abundance of moist soil food and flooded row crops still available. The River has dropped out to mid-teens this week.
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	3,550 Ducks	90% mallards, 10% ring-necked ducks and gadwall.	Water conditions are good at all blind sites.

<i>1/19/2021</i>			
Sloughs WMA <i>1/19/2021</i>	5,920 ducks 225 CA goose 1,550 WF goose 3,000 Snow goose 244 Tundra Swan	80% Mallard, , 20% shoveler, Pintail, Green Wing Teal and Gadwall	At time of survey, dryer conditions persisted throughout the region, finding only the refuge and deeper Cypress slough systems holding water. Also, Jenny Hole and hunt units on Sauerheber were at normal conditions. Duck numbers seem stable and were found throughout the refuge.
Peabody WMA <i>1/19/2021</i>	962 ducks 253 CA goose	65% Mallard, 30% Gadwall, and 5% Ring neck, Black duck, Green wing Teal and Pintail	
Yellowbank WMA <i>1/14/2021</i>	800 Ducks 55 Canada Geese	80% mallard, 10% black duck, 5% pintail, 5% gadwall	Most units are above 75% water capacity.
Barren River WMA <i>1/19/2021</i>	40 ducks 115 CA geese 716 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. <i>1/12: Lake 528.2'</i>
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
Herrington Lake	Not surveyed		
Cave Run Lake <i>1/20/2021</i>	266 Ducks, 12 CA geese	34% bufflehead 34% ruddy duck, 22% canvasback, 10% mallard, merganser, and black duck.	Lake level – 724.4'