

January 21, 2022 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count for January 17 through January 21, 2022. Another big cold front has swept through, leaving some frozen water in it's path. Most shallow water areas and areas protected from wind will likely freeze and stay locked up over the weekend. Expect ducks to congregate near open bodies of water. The Ohio River is receding, opening most roads back up at Sloughs and Ballard WMAs, however access to most Boatwright is still not possible for vehicles. Ballard WMA reopened on Wednesday, but backwater rules remain in effect for Boatwright WMA. Remember, extreme caution is advised when attempting to hunt in backwater situations.

Backwater rules are in effect for Boatwright WMA through at least Sunday, January 23. All hunters must check in and be assigned a spot through the in-person drawing. See waterfowl hunting [guide](#) for details.

Growing conditions this summer were favorable for both planted crops and moist soil plants. Most areas are still reporting ample food available for ducks. Water levels in hunt units are where we want them. Overall, wetland conditions and food availability remain excellent.

Duck season will run until January 31, 2022. Goose season will remain open until February 15, 2022. The western zone youth hunt will be February 5-6, 2022. All bag limits remain the same as last season. Check out the waterfowl hunting [web page](#) for more details.

Good luck hunting and be safe out there. Enjoy your time afield.

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard 1/19/2022	23,490 ducks 46 CA geese 6,426 WF geese 2,130 Snow geese	94% mallard 3% ring-neck 2% gadwall, GW teal, shoveler & pintail	Temps this week falling into the teens. Ohio River is at 37.14' and falling. Backwater is going down and seems like birds are returning to normal loafing spots on the area. Cold is forecast through the weekend and we may freeze up. Flooded corn and moist soil units still have plenty of food readily available, and have plenty of water.
Boatwright 1/12/2022 <i>Partial survey due to flooding.</i>	2,948 ducks 30 CA geese	100% mallard	Backwater Rules in effect. Partial count only, but Swan Pond "was a roar from snow geese and Speckle Bellies". River is

			receding, and waterfowl were found along the edge of backwaters, feeding in row crops and moist soil food. Ohio River (Cairo, IL) is at 37' and slowly falling.
Duck Island <i>Not surveyed</i>			Water levels are optimum. Habitat is good/excellent this year.
Doug Travis WMA <i>1/19/2022</i>	725 Ducks		Incomplete survey due to backwater.
Sloughs WMA <i>1/17/2022</i>	5,500 ducks 6,000 WF goose 5,000 Snow goose 35 CA goose 65 Tundra Swan	85% mallard 10% gadwall 5% ring-neck, pintail and shoveler	Flooding conditions have subsided and are expected to be at normal stages this week with Grassy and Highland Creek units opening back up to vehicle traffic. Cold and icy conditions are forecast for later in the week, leaving little open water on the wma.
Peabody WMA <i>1/18/2022</i>	1,628 Ducks 202 CA geese	70% mallards along with gadwall, American widgeon, pintail, ring-necked and redhead.	Most shallow water is frozen across the survey area.
Yellowbank WMA <i>1/18/2022</i>	850 Ducks	85% mallard 5% pintail 5% black duck 5% other ducks	Excellent moist soil plant response and row crops in most units. Moist-soil units are above 100% water capacity. Several units still have sheet ice that will increase throughout week.
Barren River WMA <i>1/18/2022</i>	300 ducks 85 CA geese 2,757 Sandhill cranes	50%diver/50% dabblers (bufflehead, ring-necks, redheads/ mallards, shovelers, wood ducks)	Peters Creek MSU 80% full. Long Creek- Calvert Springs main unit 80%, and units above and below the main spring 50-90%. MSUs off hwy

			<p>100 are 80-100% full, with corn and MSU plants in great condition.</p> <p>Lake 546.5(+18.5) up 0.2 ft 1795cfs</p>
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
<p>Cave Run Lake</p> <p>1/6/2022</p>	<p>137 Ducks, 248 CA geese 9 coots</p>	<p>194 Mallard 43 Bufflehead 25 Ring-necked ducks 8 pintails 6 wood duck 4 wigeon</p>	<p>Lake level – 741.0', which is 17' above winter pool.</p>