

December 9, 2022 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for December 5-9, 2022. The rains this week continue to improve habitat conditions, however some areas are still drier than normal. River levels improved some, and Ballard WMA is running the big pump. Conditions at Ballard continue to be much drier than normal, but are improving. Doug Travis is still battling low water table issues. Pumps are running, but some hunt units are not gaining much water. Bird numbers have increased/held steady in most areas.

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.

Duck season began on Thanksgiving Day, and ran from November 24 – 27. The second segment of duck season opened on December 7 and 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 <i>12/1/2022</i>	44,495 ducks 28 CA goose 100 WF goose 300 Snow Geese	95% Mallard, 2% Green wing, 1% Wigeon, 2% Gadwall, Northern Pintail, Ring-necked, Blue-Winged Teal, Wood Duck, Hooded Merg.	
Boatwright <i>12/1/2022</i>	478 ducks	83% Mallard, 13% Ring-neck, 4% Other	Many of the shallow impoundments were covered in sheet ice. Drought conditions and freezing temps have concentrated birds in available open water.
Duck Island <i>11/22/2022</i>	5,100 ducks 50 CA geese	90 % mallard 10% gadwall, ringneck, GW teal, pintail, wigeon and black ducks.	Habitat conditions at the moment are excellent with heavy use of the moist-soil habitat in the lowest area. We stockpiled water in the north impoundment in August as usual, but evaporation since that time has be dramatic.

<p>Doug Travis WMA</p> <p>12/7/2022</p>	<p>890 Ducks</p>	<p>80% mallard 20% misc. dabblers including wood ducks, teal and gadwall.</p>	<p>Water conditions have not changed much since the last survey. Wells are running and pumping as much water as possible.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: Anyone hunting from a numbered blind spot must have a waterfowl blind permit on their person while hunting. These permits are found on the website on the Waterfowl Quota Hunts page, or at the information kiosk located next to the Doug Travis office.</p>
<p>Sloughs WMA</p> <p>12/6/2022</p>	<p>6,700 ducks 0 CA goose 5,000 WF goose 9,000 Snow goose</p> <p>150 Tundra Swan</p> <p>13 Sandhill cranes</p>		<p>The region continues to be dry with local sloughs and drainages still with little available water and poor habitat conditions. With available pumping capabilities, most of the hunt units and the refuge has water. Duck numbers increased from the previous week along with Snows and White Fronted Geese. Pond creek marsh is still dry.</p>
<p>Peabody WMA</p> <p>12/7/2022</p>	<p>246 ducks 156 CA goose</p>	<p>54% ring-necked ducks, 28% GW teal, 17% mallard and gadwall.</p>	<p>Conditions on the area have changed very little. Water levels on all bodies of water continue to remain very low due to limited rainfall and drier than normal conditions.</p>

Yellowbank WMA <i>12/5/2022</i>	425 Ducks	85% mallard 5% wood duck 5% gadwall 5% black duck	Excellent moist-soil plant response and crop production in waterfowl units.
Barren River WMA <i>12/5/2022</i>	101 ducks 102 CA geese 913 Sandhill cranes	50% divers/50% dabblers scaup, mergansers, mallards, wood ducks, ruddy ducks, canvasback, redheads, ringnecks	Peters Creek MSU 10% full, Long Creek- Calvert Springs main unit 100% and units above and below the main spring 50%, MSUs off HWY 100 are 0% full. Food in abundance, with both corn and moist soil plants in great condition. Lake level: 528.2'
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds) <i>11/21/2022</i>	397 ducks	161 ring-necked duck 85 mallard 52 GW teal 31 gadwall 27 black ducks 16 ruddy ducks 12 wood duck, bufflehead & hooded merganser	Moist soil habitat looks great. All lakes and impoundments have water.
Cave Run Lake <i>12/7/2022</i>	33 Ducks 117 CA geese 119 unknowns	20, bufflehead, 11 mallard, 2 northern shoveler	Extremely dense fog across the entirety of the lake and warm temperatures. Birds were unable to be seen unless very close to the shore due to fog. Lake level: 724.2'