

## November 23, 2022 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the ground count survey for November 21-23, 2022. We received some much needed rain, however we still need a lot more. We had a good growing season for our crops and moist soil habitats throughout most of the state. The bad news is that at the start of the waterfowl hunting season, habitat will mainly be limited to areas that have the capacity to pump water.

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 begins on Thanksgiving Day, with the first segment running from November 24 – 27. The second segment of duck season opens on December 7 and will run until January 31, 2023. Goose season opens 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>11/17/2022</i>	9,609 ducks 6 CA geese	99% mallard, wood duck and hooded merganser.	After a long dry Summer & Fall, the Ohio River has risen and we have been pumping from the river. Ground wells have not been able to make much water because of the dry conditions and low water tables. We have seen several new birds arrive on the area.
Boatwright <i>11/17/2022</i>	1,546 ducks	67% mallard, 29% ring-necked duck, 4% wood duck & BW teal	Habitat is looking great. Many units with moist soil and annual grains will provide for excellent waterfowl opportunity. All wells are running within hunt units, and we are slowly building water depth.
Duck Island	5,100 ducks 50 CA geese	90 % mallard	Habitat conditions at the moment are excellent

11/22/2022		10% gadwall, ringneck, GW teal, pintail, wigeon and black ducks.	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.
Doug Travis WMA 11/21/2022	1,600 Ducks	80% mallard 15% GW teal 5% wood duck, gadwall, shoveler, and ring-necked ducks.	Habitat across the WMA is fair to excellent. All 3 wells are running, although dry conditions are making it difficult to gain water in most units. All seasonal blind sites have huntable water except for Blinds 18 and 19 - we need substantial rainfall to raise water in Town Creek Moist Soil Unit. There is huntable water in the Baldy's Woods walk-in unit, although no other walk in sites have appreciable water.
Sloughs WMA 11/21/2022	9,700 ducks 25 CA goose 3,800 WF goose 5,000 Snow goose  110 Tundra Swan  5 Sandhill cranes	75% mallard 25% gadwall and widgeon	The region continues to be dry. Local sloughs and drainages have little available water and poor habitat conditions. With available pumping capabilities, water is available within most of the hunt units and the refuge. Bird numbers increased substantially from the previous week and were concentrated around Muddy Slough, Hardy Slough complex and numerous reports of birds within Jenny Hole. Pond creek marsh is still dry.
Peabody WMA 11/16/2022	7 ducks 192 CA goose	5 Mallard 2 ring-necked ducks	Conditions are much drier than usual. Lakes are very low and moist

			soil units are still without water at this time due to the lack of rain.
Yellowbank WMA  <i>11/22/2022</i>	190 Ducks	80% mallard 15% wood duck 5% gadwall	Excellent moist-soil plant response and crop production in waterfowl units. Pumps are running but slowly gaining sheet water with the dry soil conditions. Most of the units are dry due to lack of substantial rainfall.
Barren River WMA  <i>11/21/2022</i>	124 ducks 183 CA geese  548 Sandhill cranes	50% divers/50% dabblers  mallards, mergansers, wood ducks, gadwalls, blackducks, redheads	Very dry conditions persist. Peters Creek MSU 10% full, Long Creek- Calvert Springs main unit 70% and units above and below the main spring 25%, MSUs off HWY 100 are 0% full. Food in abundance, with both corn and moist soil plants in great condition.  Lake level: 531.9'
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
Cave Run Lake  <i>11/16/2022</i>	195 Ducks 40 mergansers 275 CA geese 100 Coot	100 mallard, 30 buffelhead, 20 wood duck, 5 pintail, 15 common merganser, 25 hooded merganser.	Lake level: 725.6'