

January 5, 2018 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

Happy New Year! This is the winter waterfowl ground count for January 1-5, 2018. An arctic blast hit Kentucky last week and has set up camp, hanging around just like my wife's unemployed cousin does each year at Christmas. With sub-zero temps and life threatening wind chills, it is safe to guess that the majority of the state's water is frozen. Birds are congregated in the areas that still have open water. Our WMA's are running wells and ice eaters if available, in an effort to keep some hunt units open, but much of the huntable water we have will be locked up this week. Moist soil plants still look great across the state. Planted crops favored well in most places, and there is still plenty of food available to ducks and geese, other than what is covered by ice. Plan for the cold, and take extra precautions to stay safe. Getting wet in these conditions can prove deadly. If you are hunting from a boat, be sure you have and are using your life jackets!

The second segment of duck season is now open and will remain open until Sunday, January 28. The goose season will remain open until Monday, February 15, 2018. The Western KY youth waterfowl dates are February 3-4, 2018. Remember that adults that are taking youth out for the youth hunt can still hunt geese, but may not take any ducks. The future of the sport will always be reliant on kids being introduced to waterfowling. Please try to take a kid hunting whenever possible. Good luck to all, and remember to be safe whenever you are out pursuing birds this hunting season.

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard WMA	38,623 Ducks 300 CA geese 7,000 WF geese 20,000 Snow geese	99% Mallard, 1% GW Teal, Gadwall, Shoveler and Pintail.	Area is 95% locked up with ice. The only open holes are where a well/pump is continuously running or birds are sitting tight. Hunting is very slow for the time being. Over the weekend, snow geese and ducks utilized winter wheat spots and standing crops. Had to turn off big pump due to dropping river levels. Water in some areas will drop out due to dropping river levels as well. There is still an abundance of MSU

			food and standing crops available to waterfowl.
Boatwright WMA	No Birds observed on area.	All units are frozen.	MSU's have an abundance of food available. Planted crops are still available. Adding water to some resting areas in hopes to catch ducks in the thaw out this weekend.
Birdsville Island	Not surveyed		
Kentucky/Barkley Lakes	Not surveyed		
Duck Island	Not surveyed		.
Barren River Lake	8,548 Sandhill Cranes		Lake is 70% frozen.
Doug Travis WMA	6,700 ducks	95% mallards and 5% mixed dabblers including gadwalls, pintails, and green-winged teal.	Ducks were found primarily on 2 open holes in ice. One large hole near the north end of willow slough, and one hole at the south edge of Town Creek moist soil unit. We are holding open water in standing corn and moist-soil veg in 2 pools in Indian Camp Rest Area, and in standing corn and moist-soil veg from Blind 11 back to the water outlet from Well 2.
Cave Run Lake	Not Surveyed		50% Ice covered
Clear Creek WMA	Not surveyed		
Peabody WMA	2,614 Ducks 682 CA Geese 3 Tundra Swans	2,030 Mallards, 583 divers (mostly ring-necked ducks).	All shallow water is frozen. Some of the larger strip pit lakes have a little open water.
Sloughs WMA	17,085 Ducks 220 CA geese 10,500 WF geese	98% mallard, 2% mix of green-winged teal, northern	Nearly all of the area locked up under 3-5 inches of ice. All of the

	20,000 Snow geese 11 Swans	shoveler, pintail, and black ducks.	Pond Creek marsh complex and natural cypress sloughs on the refuge are frozen, with no waterfowl being observed at these locations with the exception of one small area of Anderson Pond. Most of the ducks seen were on areas where well outlets have provided pockets of open water. Approximately 1000 ducks were observed loafing at well outlets in the Hardy Slough moist soil complex, while the remaining ducks were concentrated in one impoundment south of Highway 268, where the combination of a well outlet and ample amounts of standing corn afforded an impressive number of mallards. Geese continue to be observed feeding in fields of standing corn or winter wheat.
Yellowbank WMA	0 Ducks		100% ice cover on the WMA. Ducks and geese are using the Ohio River, but none were seen on the survey route.
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
Herrington Lake	170 ducks 2,000 CA geese	90% Mallard, 10% Pintail, GW teal, Gadwall, Bufflehead and Ring-necked duck.	50% Ice cover on KU pond.
Taylorsville Lake	Not surveyed		70% Ice cover

Cedar Cr./Dix R. WMA	Not surveyed		75% Ice Cover
Green River WMA	179 Ducks 100 Mergansers 200 CA Geese 35 WF Geese.	100 Mergansers (Hooded and Red-breasted), 75 Mallards, 4 Shoveler.	Lake is 60% frozen.