

January 22-26, 2018 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the winter waterfowl ground count for January 22-26, 2018. Following two cold fronts over the last couple weeks, the extreme cold and ice has been replaced with 50° & 60° days and above freezing nights (check local listings). The rain that came in ahead of the south wind helped melt a lot of ice, uncovering some much needed duck food. Moist soil impoundments across the state are still providing above average food, and planted crops are still hanging in as well. Some winter wheat fields have been hit hard, but plenty of other food is still available. River levels are predicted to stay high enough to keep water levels manageable at Ballard, Boatwright and Doug Travis WMA's, and snowmelt has recharged some wetlands at the Slough's WMA, bringing water levels closer to where they should be. The warm weather has scattered birds quite a bit, so I suspect that the counts given are not representative of the actual number of birds in the area.

This is the last weekend of duck season, which will end Sunday, January 28, 2018. 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	29,706 Ducks 396 CA geese 3,500 Snow geese	99% Mallard, 1% Merganser, Pintail, Shoveler, Black Duck, Wigeon and GW teal.	With temps in the low 60's this week, the area has really thawed out. Ducks are utilizing moist soil impoundments, and have spread out over most of the area. The big pump is running, as well as all our wells and re-lift stations. With the Ohio River projected to be above 20' for the remainder of season, we will be able to hold water in all impoundments.
Boatwright WMA	11,284 Ducks 11 CA geese	95% Mallard, 5% GW teal, Pintail, Wigeon, Gadwall and Black Duck.	The rest area was still partially frozen on Wednesday. Planted crops and moist soil vegetation are available

			in abundance with the newly opened water.
Birdsville Island	Not surveyed		
Kentucky/Barkley Lakes	Not surveyed		
Duck Island	Not surveyed		.
Barren River Lake	Not surveyed		
Doug Travis WMA	7,950 ducks 150 CA geese 25 WF geese	7250 mallards, 650 green winged teal, & less than 25 each of pintails and gadwalls.	Water is open on all lakes as of Wednesday.
Cave Run Lake	975 Ducks 3,000 CA geese	700 unknown ducks that were too far out to see. 200 Canvasback, 50 buffelhead, 18 Pintail, 3 Redheads, 3 Scaup and 1 shoveler.	Ducks were stacked up on the open holes in the ice. The lake has significant ice cover, and viewing birds for accurate ID was difficult.
Clear Creek WMA	Not surveyed		
Peabody WMA	258 Ducks 160 CA Geese	98 puddle ducks and 160 diving ducks	
Sloughs WMA	16,358 Ducks 1,926 CA geese 2,300 WF geese 2,475 Snow geese 0 Swans	98% mallard, 2 % mix of black ducks, gadwall, northern pintail, and green winged teal.	Temperatures have risen substantially since Saturday, with much of the snow accumulation gone by Sunday afternoon. Despite the warm-up, much of the natural cypress sloughs continue to have a substantial amount of ice, while impoundments with little wind or sun protection are primarily ice-free. Rainfall on Monday morning, combined with recent snow-melt

			<p>has caused water levels in the Pond Creek Marsh complex to rise substantially, thereby flooding a substantial amount of new acreage that has been dry throughout the winter. A majority of the ducks observed during the survey were seen feeding in these newly flooded areas within the Pond Creek Marsh complex. A push of Canada Geese was observed in the area Tuesday afternoon following the winter storm, and it appears they have remained. Today was the highest number of Canada Geese observed on the ground count in the last 4 years. Light goose numbers on the area are likely higher than what was observed, as larger numbers of light geese have been seen moving on and off the refuge over the past several days.</p>
Yellowbank WMA	590 ducks	70% mallard, 20% pintail, 5% black duck & 5% assorted dabbling ducks.	Ducks are primarily on the Ohio River but are starting to use the moist-soil units..
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
Herrington Lake	12 ring-necked ducks		
Taylorville Lake	Not surveyed		
Cedar Cr./Dix R. WMA	Not surveyed		
Green River WMA	Not surveyed		

