

November 22, 2017 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the winter waterfowl ground count for November 20-24, 2017. Mild weather in Kentucky has slowed down the action somewhat, but has left conditions to hold birds in KY in time for the Thanksgiving opener. With a mild long-term weather outlook, I do not expect much change in migration in the next couple of weeks. The good news.... aerial surveys along the Illinois and Mississippi rivers are still finding more than 800,000 birds congregated along the survey route, which is four times greater than the average late November surveys. These birds are staged up and waiting for a North wind to blow them to us!

Overall, most of the states wetlands are in above average condition. Moist soil plants look great across the state. Crops favored well in most places, and conditions for ducks should only improve with additional precipitation.

The Kentucky 2017-18 duck and goose seasons opens Thursday, November 23. The first duck season segment will close on Sunday, November 26. The second segment of duck and season will open December 4 and the duck season will remain open until Sunday, January 28. The goose season will remain open until Wednesday, February 14, 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	29,162 Ducks 17 CA geese 1,000 WF geese	77% Mallard, 9% Green wing teal, 8% Gadwall, and 6% Shoveler, Wigeon, Pintail, Wood duck and Black Duck.	Ducks are spreading out on the newly flooded hunt units on the area, and ducks are utilizing the abundant moist soil vegetation and invertebrates
Boatwright WMA	4,3045 Ducks	65% Mallard & 35% GW teal.	Ducks and geese are both using Long Pond and Arrowhead with water levels being shallow.
Birdsville Island	Not surveyed		
Kentucky/Barkley Lakes	Not surveyed		
Duck Island	Not surveyed		
Barren River Lake	Not surveyed		
Doug Travis WMA	3,800 Ducks	60% Mallard, 15% Ring-necked duck and assorted divers, 10% Wood ducks, 10%	The area is 55% flooded and 2 wells are running

		GW Teal, and 5% mixed dabblers.	
Cave Run Lake	Not surveyed		
Clear Creek WMA	Not surveyed		
Peabody WMA	100 Ducks 320 CA Geese	80% Mallards	
Sloughs WMA	7,105 Ducks 100 CA geese 12,525 WF geese 10,425 Snow geese 131 Swans	60% Mallard, 40% mix of green winged teal, shovelors, gadwall, and pintails.	Water levels remain fairly low in the natural cypress sloughs and throughout Pond Creek marsh complex. With the sunshine and high winds, most waterfowl were concentrated along wooded edges of flooded natural marshes and sloughs. Consequently, duck numbers were difficult to count, and are likely higher than estimated in the survey.
Yellowbank WMA	750 Ducks	40% Mallards, 40% Wood ducks, 10% Gadwall, 10% GW Teal and Black Duck.	
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
Herrington Lake	92 Ducks	50 Mallards, 25 Ring-necked ducks, 12 GW teal, and 5 Shoveler.	
Taylorville Lake	Not surveyed		
Cedar Cr./Dix R. WMA	Not surveyed		
Green River WMA	Not surveyed		