

## December 8, 2017 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the winter waterfowl ground count for December 4 - 8, 2017. The warmer weather that has persisted into this week has left us with stale birds that do not need to move around much. With a small cold front that hit on Thursday, we may see some increases across the state. Most waterfowl WMA's are reporting a fair number of birds still, especially considering the warmer weather experienced the last two weeks. There are still impressive numbers of ducks being reported from aerial surveys on the Mississippi and Illinois rivers; however, the numbers decreased from last week's flight. Hopefully the cold front has some of those heading to us.

Overall, most of the states wetlands are in above average condition, though somewhat dry for this time of year. Moist soil plants look great across the state, and water levels are getting to where they need to be. Crops favored well in most places, and conditions for ducks should only improve with additional precipitation.

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	17,221 Ducks 30 CA geese 1,600 WF geese 2 Swans	88% Mallard, 7% Gadwall, 2% Ring Neck, 3% Pintail, GW Teal, Shoveler and Wigeon	Habitat is looking great! We are adding new water everywhere we can to enhance food availability.
Boatwright WMA	7,630 Ducks 5 CA geese	85% Mallard, 13% GW teal & 2% Ring-necked duck.	We are adding water to any spot that we can to increase food availability.
Birdsville Island	Not surveyed		
Kentucky/Barkley Lakes	Not surveyed		
Duck Island	Not surveyed		Overall habitat is good. Planted crops are poor, but moist-soil vegetation is good to excellent. Water levels are right on schedule at approximately 50% of full pool.
Barren River Lake	Not surveyed		

Doug Travis WMA	3,100 Ducks	75% mallards, 10% ring-necked ducks, 10% GW teal, 5% mixed dabblers	The area is 60% flooded and 2 wells are running.
Cave Run Lake	109 Ducks 97 CA Geese 2000+ Coots	40 Bufflehead, 24 Gadwall, 23 Mallard, 2 Scaup and 20 unknown ducks.	
Clear Creek WMA	Not surveyed		
Peabody WMA	220 Ducks 10 CA Geese	54% Mallards	
Sloughs WMA	10,057 Ducks 45 CA geese 3,800 WF geese 20,000 Snow geese 101 Swans	60% Mallard, 40% mix of gadwall, ring-necked duck, green-winged teal, pintail, and widgeon.	After over a week of unseasonably warm weather, a major cold front pushed through overnight, bringing falling temperatures and North winds. Despite the 0.5 inch of rain that came with the cold front, the area remains dry for the season. Portions of the Pond Creek marsh complex and several natural cypress sloughs are still at low levels. Ducks continue to be observed roosting in flooded corn and moist soil impoundments in large numbers. Goose numbers have varied from hour to hour, with birds moving between the WMA and into Indiana depending on the time of day.
Yellowbank WMA	300 Ducks	60% Mallards, 30% Wood Duck, 5% Pintail, 5% other puddle ducks	Most units are at 50% water capacity. Well pumps are running

			until those units are at maximum water capacity.
Blue Grass Army Depot (all lakes and ponds)	Not surveyed		
Herrington Lake	50 Ducks	40 Mallards and 10 GW Teal.	
Taylorsville Lake	Not surveyed		
Cedar Cr./Dix R. WMA	Not surveyed		
Green River WMA	Not surveyed		