

January 3, 2019 Kentucky Waterfowl Ground Counts

This is the winter-waterfowl ground count survey for January 2-4, 2019. Hunting reports continue to be “less than desirable”... The Christmas and New Year’s holidays have delayed reporting on some of our management areas, but most are back to work and back on our regular schedule. Mild weather continues to our North, so we will continue to be hopeful that conditions will improve soon.

Ohio and Mississippi river levels continue to rise, **closing Ballard WMA**, but bringing favorable backwater to other areas. Most of the lakes across the state are well above winter pool. Most of the state’s wetlands are still in above average condition. Moist soil food is still in abundance across the state. Crops favored well in most places, although many areas struggled to get corn planted last summer. Overall, conditions for ducks are good, and we are set to manage as needed throughout the season.

The Kentucky 2018-19 duck and goose seasons open Thursday, November 22. The first duck season segment closed on Sunday, November 25. The second segment of duck and season opened December 3 and the duck season will remain open until Sunday, January 27. The goose season will remain open until Friday, February 15, 2019. Good luck to all waterfowl hunters, and remember to be safe and enjoy your time afield this hunting season.

Location	Number	Species Composition	Comments
Ballard WMA	Not Surveyed due to flooding.		Ballard WMA <i>is closed</i> due to flooding. By regulation, Ballard WMA becomes entirely refuge during backwater events.
Boatwright WMA	Not Surveyed		Survey not possible due to flooding. Boatwright WMA hunters must still check in each day, as the area remains open during backwater. See the hunting guide online for specific backwater rules on the area.
Duck Island	Not surveyed		
Doug Travis WMA	800-1000 ducks	80% mallards and 20% mixed dabblers. *incomplete count due to flooding*	All roads to the WMA are cut off by flooding. Boats can be launched in the roadside of Fish Lake Road and Laketon Road. Hunters can access blind sites 18 and 19 by launching boats at the end of Drew Road where the water begins.

Sloughs WMA	Ducks: 15,843 CA geese: 254 WF Geese: 4,250 Snow Geese: 0	75% mallards, 25% mix of pintails, gadwall, green-winged teal, northern shoveler, and black ducks	Ohio River is still rising and expected to crest at 39.5 on Saturday. The abundance of water across the landscape combined with mild temperatures, has kept hunting success low. Birds have spread out and are not moving during shooting hours. A surprising number of pintails were observed during the survey. All white-fronted geese were found loafing in Muddy Slough. No snow geese were observed at the time of the survey; however, large numbers of snow geese return to the area from the northwest to roost. Interestingly, all of our tundra swans have left the area.
Barren River Lake WMA	Not Surveyed		
Peabody WMA	Not Surveyed		
Yellowbank WMA	Not Surveyed		
Cave Run Lake	38 ducks	20- bufflehead, 10 hooded mergansers, 6 ruddy ducks and 2 ring-necked ducks.	Lake level is approaching summer pool, and the river is full as water is being pulled out of the lake.
Blue Grass Army Depot	Not surveyed		
Herrington Lake	Not surveyed		