

KENTUCKY PERIODIC WATERFOWL INVENTORY

Conducted January 3,5, & 10 2022

This is the 2022 Mid-Winter Waterfowl survey, flown January 3, 5 & 10. The Eastern KY route could not be flown this year. The survey period started with mild(ish) to average temperatures and then moved towards a massive cold front that brought quite a bit of snow and low temps to much of the state. Weather has been considerably mild again this year, and most areas were still dryer than normal throughout November and December. Considerable rain fell on the 1st day of the year though, and filled small oxbows and wet areas, and sent the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers out of their banks, along with all of their tributaries. Reservoirs across the state varied in depths from are at or just slightly above winter pool, to depths far enough above summer pool to leave their banks in the headwaters, creating an abundance of flooded timber and cropland. Moist soil units, beaver impoundments and ponded depressions in crop fields provided ample habitat again this year. These areas were free of ice during the Western surveys, and completely frozen during the Central KY survey. All the lakes and most waterbodies were free of ice for most of the surveys. Waterfowl habitat across the state looked better than average, despite the dry conditions in the fall and early winter. Food plots and moist soil units appeared to have an abundance of high quality food still available to ducks and geese, especially in areas that were dry in December.

Listed below, are the individual survey data obtained during our Mid-Winter Waterfowl Survey across the state. We wish you the best during the remainder of the hunting season. As always... stay safe and happy hunting!

Mid-Winter Survey Report for Western Kentucky - Purchase Region

Flown by: Pat Hahs on January 3, 2022

Site	Dabblers	Divers	Total Ducks	Canada geese	Snows/Blues	WF Geese	Coots	Eagles	Sandhill Crane
Bayou De Chien	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Obion Creek	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Mississippi River	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Mayfield Creek	25	0	25	0	0	0	0	-	0
Reelfoot NWR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Ballard	11,925	3,800	15,725	0	2,000	2,250	0	-	0
Boatwright WMA	2,955	575	3,530	25	0	0	0	-	0
Ohio R. (Wickliffe-Paducah)	275	0	275	0	0	0	0	-	0
Ohio R. (Paducah-Golconda)	5,065	302	5,367	0	0	0	0	-	0
Barkley Lake (N of 68)	0	1,452	1,452	0	0	0	0	-	0
Barkley Lake (S of 68)	0	1,050	1,050	0	0	0	0	-	0
duck Island	1,260	150	1,410	0	0	0	0	-	0
Kentucky Lake	75	875	950	150	0	0	0	-	0
Kaler Bottoms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Birdsville Islands	2,378	0	2,378	0	0	0	0	-	0
Doug Travis WMA	45	0	45	0	0	0	0	-	0
Obion Creek (Travis Slough tract)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Obion Creek (L.E. Schaaf tract)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Totals	24,003	8,204	32,207	175	2,000	2,250	0	-	0

Notes from Pat... Overall, noticeably low numbers for this time of year. Species composition was generally normal, with the exception of one large flock of teal. Also, few goldeneyes were observed on the lakes, though they normally peak around the time of this survey. Though the big river tributaries had abundant water, virtually no ducks were observed. The water was fairly new, and birds may find their way there possibly before the water recedes. The amount of water on the landscape is lower than normal, other than units with pumped water. Overall habitat conditions were good where water was available. The dry Fall had made pumping large areas difficult. There was an abundance of underutilized habitat with the recent headwater flooding.

Lower Ohio River & Western Coalfield

Flown by: Thomas Young on January 5, 2022

Site	Dabblers	Divers	Total Ducks	Canada geese	Snows/Blues	WF Geese	Coots	Eagles	Sandhill Crane
Ohio R. (Owensboro-Green River)	25	0	25	0	250	200	0	0	0
Ohio R. (Green River-Henderson)	75	0	75	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio R. (Henderson-Sloughs WMA)	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sloughs WMA	6,012	400	6,412	25	9,000	6,000	50	3	0
Ohio R. (GPPL & JHHC)	50	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio R. (Uniontown-Shawneetown)	75	0	75	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio R. (Shawneetown-Tradewater R.)	10	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio R. (Tradewater R.-E. end of Hurricane Isl.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio R. (Hurricane Isl.-Golconda)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hovey Lake WMA (Indiana)	360	100	460	0	0	0	0	1	0
Pond River-White City WMA	80	0	80	50	150	50	0	4	0
Tradewater River	150	0	150	25	0	0	0	0	0
Peabody Coal Property	55	40	95	75	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	6,992	540	7,532	175	9,400	6,250	50	4	0

Rough River – Yellowbank WMA

Flown by: Thomas Young on January 7, 2020

Site	Dabblers	Divers	Total Ducks	Canada geese	Snows/Blues	WF Geese	Coots	Eagles	Sandhill Crane
Rough River	0	0	0	75	0	0	0	2	0
Yellowbank WMA	445	0	445	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio R. (Brandenburg - Owensboro)	25	0	25	25	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	470	0	470	100	0	0	0	2	0

Notes from Thomas... The mid-winter survey flew in clear skies in temps just above average for the region. Temps began near 40° and stayed there all day. Habitat within the survey route was good to excellent, finding all moist soil and shallow hunting units open and full. The Ohio River and its tributaries were at minor flood levels and were increasing. Flood waters were present on most of the survey area.

Mid-Winter Survey Report for Central KY

Flown by: Wes Little on January 7, 8 and 11, 2021

Site	Dabblers	Divers	Total Ducks	Canada geese	Snows Blues	WF Geese	Coots	Eagles	Sandhill Crane
Herrington Lake	57	2	59	109	0	0	0	0	0
Cedar Creek Lake	80	0	80	46	0	0	0	1	0
Lake Cumberland	335	12	344	0	0	0	0	2	0
Dale Hollow Lake	321	51	372	0	0	0	0	0	0
Barren River Lake	40	3	43	0	0	0	0	2	196
Green River Lake	45	0	45	0	0	0	0	1	0
Taylorville Lake	0	0	0	75	0	0	0	1	0
Central Ohio River	819	110	929	1,398	2	0	0	3	0
Blue Grass Army Depot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Licking River (Southern)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cave Run Lake	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grayson Lake	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yatesville Lake	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ohio River- (Ashland to Scioto R.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scioto River	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ohio River (Scioto R. to Licking R.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Licking River (Northern)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Campbell County Lake	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kincaid Lake	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	1,694	178	1,881	1,628	2	0	0	10	196

Notes from Wes... The Central flight was delayed three times, and finally flown on Jan 10. The Eastern flight was also delayed several times, and finally had to be cancelled all together. Regional temps saw considerable swings before, during and after the survey period. Record highs gave way to a foot of snow, just to warm up and then plummet again. Before January however, the winter has been extremely warm and dry. Temperatures began around 20° during the survey and did not get much warmer than 35°. During the survey there were many rivers and tributaries that had been or were out of their banks. Habitat conditions were excellent in natural wetlands and flooded hunt units. Ice was only found in shallow ponds and wetlands protected from wind. All lakes and streams were free of ice, and backwaters were also keeping ice out of low areas. Most fields with low areas and oxbows around the rivers though frozen, showed good moist soil or flooded crop habitats leaving plenty of food for ducks on the landscape.

The most abundant dabbling ducks were mallards and black ducks. Gadwall and green-winged teal were the only other noted puddle duck. Very few divers were seen this year, but most species were accounted for. Canvasback, Redhead and Bufflehead were most abundant, but Ring-necks and goldeneye were also counted. The Ohio River held most of the Canada geese counted, as well as the only 2 Snow geese that were seen. All other areas showed fairly low numbers. Waterfowl numbers on the central route were a little higher than previous years, but still have been lower than normal for the time of year.

Another unexpected surprise was the lack of waterfowl found on Taylorsville Lake. Our hunters must be some of the most skilled in the nation... Despite the absolutely mind-boggling reports of hundreds of thousands of ducks and geese that have been spotted and harvested there, not one single duck was left on the lake during the survey. The few geese that were there, were found on a private pond adjacent to the lake who no-doubt does not allow hunting. Great job guys and gals!

There is another cold front heading this way, so get out and enjoy your time afield. Stay safe, and I wish you the best for the remainder of your season.