



January 21, 2025 Weekly Waterfowl Report

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

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The following report is a compilation of public and private land reports and habitat assessments during the week ending January 19, 2025.

Relatively cold temperatures, which were welcomed by Mississippi waterfowl hunters, persisted throughout most of last week across the Midwest and into the deep South. Harvest reports from public and private lands last week remained relatively stable from the previous week, with a decrease in hunter participation likely caused by icy conditions in some areas. However, by the weekend reports of increased duck numbers, particularly mallards, were received from several properties.

This week is off to an even colder start and is forecasted to maintain overnight lows well below freezing. Although Mississippi will typically receive “new” birds from weather like this, when almost all the shallow flooded habitat freezes over it becomes unusable for waterfowl. The deeper wetlands such as rivers, oxbow lakes, barrow pits, and flood control reservoirs may become highly utilized not only by waterfowl but also by waterfowl hunters during this time. During this type of weather event, waterfowl will concentrate in search of thermal cover, refuge from hunters, as well as food since most of their typical foraging areas are inaccessible. As weather and habitat conditions change, waterfowl concentrations and behaviors will most likely change as well. Following a freeze, waterfowl will generally feed more actively on grains and other sources high in carbohydrates to restore energy levels. When shallow wetlands with high food densities become available again, waterfowl are expected to return to these areas to feed. Increased temperatures and chances of rain are forecasted for this weekend, which should provide a significant increase in habitat across much of the state. Waterfowl will likely disperse into these newly available areas in search of food.

The late January aerial waterfowl survey is underway and a report will be posted on mdwfp.com and on MDWFP social media accounts as soon as it is available. For more information regarding waterfowl in Mississippi, visit our website at www.mdwfp.com/waterfowl or call us at (601) 432-2199. The Waterfowl Program web

page lists links to hunting regulations and habitat information for specific WMAs and other public lands throughout the state.

Table 1: Duck harvest and WMA visits reported over the past week for WMAs where harvest of at least one bird was reported. Note: this data does not necessarily represent the total number of hunters and harvest for each WMA. Hunters are reminded of the requirement to check in prior to hunting and to check out upon leaving the WMA.

WMA	WMA Visits	Harvest	Avg. Harvest/Day
Canal Section	41	11	0.27
Caney Creek	3	7	2.33
Charlie Capps	24	28	1.17
Chickasaw	4	3	0.75
Divide Section	9	8	0.89
Howard Miller	56	54	0.96
Lake George	68	41	0.60
Mahannah	145	92	0.63
Malmaison	79	28	0.35
Muscadine Farms	77	45	0.58
Okatibbee	16	12	0.75
O'Keefe	67	45	0.67
Old River	17	1	0.06
Pascagoula River	110	81	0.74
Pearl River	14	36	2.57
Phil Bryant	33	43	1.30
Sky Lake	8	2	0.25
Sunflower	162	214	1.32
Tallahala	3	2	0.67
Tuscumbia	57	35	0.61
Twin Oaks	11	21	1.91
Upper Sardis	16	107	0.63
Ward Bayou	27	7	0.26
William C. (Billy) Deviney	82	119	1.45
Totals for the Week	1,129	1,042	0.92

Note: Trim Cane WMA does not currently have sufficient water levels for waterfowl hunting.

Table 2: 2024-25 season totals to date for waterfowl harvest on WMAs.

WMA	Season Total Harvest
Bienville	67
Black Prairie	39
Canal Section	351
Caney Creek	47
Charlie Capps	297
Chickasaw	16
Chickasaway	10
Copiah County	7
Divide Section	71
Howard Miller	712
John Bell Williams	35
John W. Starr	1
Lake George	307
Leaf River	7
Mahannah	1,871
Malmaison	741
Muscadine Farms	1,070
Nanih Waiya	44
Okatibbee	209
O'Keefe	368
Old River	98
Pascagoula River	823
Pearl River	205
Phil Bryant	229
Red Creek	8
Sandy Creek	3
Shipland	100
Sky Lake	241
Stoneville	21
Sunflower	2,669
Tallahala	43
Tuscumbia	391
Twin Oaks	235
Upper Sardis	127
Ward Bayou	101
William C. (Billy) Deviney	1,071
Yockanookany	12