



Weekly Waterfowl Report
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
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January 26, 2016 Edition

The following report is a compilation of WMA reports and habitat assessments during the week ending January 24, 2016.

Jackson, MS – The final week of the regular waterfowl season has arrived, and many waterfowl harvest reports over the past week have improved significantly. Weather over the majority of the week brought temperatures below normal for this time of year, combined with significant north winds and even some snowfall, all of which likely helped both waterfowl migrations into Mississippi as well as daily waterfowl activity levels. The weather forecast for the remainder of this week predicts a short duration cold front moving in tonight through Thursday, with a warm end to the season over the weekend. Wetland habitat availability has remained high, maintained by recent rainfall. Hunters are reminded to continue using caution when hunting deep or swift-flowing water.

Mallard use of forested wetlands has remained high, as ducks seek dense areas for sanctuary from hunting pressure, cover from harsh winter weather, and isolation for pair bonding. Gadwall, northern shoveler, and northern pintail made up a large proportion of hunter harvest last week. Migrant goose numbers are high across much of the Mississippi Delta, and hunters are reminded to take advantage of the Light Goose Conservation Order after the regular waterfowl season closes. Light geese will often use agricultural fields soon after being drained at the conclusion of duck season. Deep water habitats such as active catfish ponds and oxbow lakes are still holding abundant northern shovelers and a variety of diving ducks. Landowners and managers are encouraged to keep wetlands flooded after waterfowl season until ducks no longer use the areas, or at least until land management requires drainage.

The regular waterfowl season will end January 31. The late January aerial waterfowl survey was delayed due to weather, and is scheduled to begin January 27. Results and distribution maps will be posted on MDWFP's website and social media soon after completion. The Waterfowl Program website (www.mdwfp.com/waterfowl) lists links to regulations and habitat information for specific WMAs and other public lands throughout the state, as well as other waterfowl information as it becomes available.

Table 1: Water levels and general duck abundance ratings for selected Wildlife Management Areas.

WMA	Water Levels*	Bird Abundance
Charlie Capps	100%	Medium-High
Howard Miller	100%	Medium-High
Indianola	100%	Medium
Mahannah	100%	Medium
Malmaison**	100%	Medium
Muscadine Farms	90%	Medium
O'Keefe	100%	Medium-High
Sunflower	100%	Medium
Twin Oaks	100%	Low
Trim Cane	90%	Low
Tuscumbia	100%	Medium

*Indicates percentage of impoundments with water levels sufficient enough to hunt.

**Malmaison WMA green-tree reservoir is being managed at a lower water level than in past years.