



Weekly Waterfowl Report
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
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The following report is a compilation of WMA reports and habitat assessments during the week ending January 10, 2016.

Jackson, MS – Weather patterns continued to improve over the past week, apparently leading to a southerly migration of ducks into Mississippi, as harvest reports from public and private lands have improved. The weather forecast for the remainder of this week predicts another brief mid to late week warm up, followed by another cold front over the weekend and into early next week. Wetland habitat availability has remained high, primarily due to the rising of the Mississippi River and tributaries. Hunters are reminded to continue using extreme caution during this time of high, swift-flowing water.

Aerial waterfowl surveys for early January were recently completed, showing an increase in mallards and overall duck numbers in the Mississippi Delta. Mallard use of forested wetlands has increased recently, as ducks seek dense areas for sanctuary from hunting pressure, cover from harsh winter weather, and pair bonding. Recent harvest reports have included an increase in the proportion of mallards harvested. Gadwall and green-winged teal also continue to make up a large proportion of hunter harvest. Blue-winged teal were commonly reported last week, which is somewhat unusual for January in Mississippi. Migrant goose numbers have continued to grow in the Mississippi Delta, particularly greater white-fronted geese. Deep water habitats such as active catfish ponds and oxbow lakes are still holding abundant northern shovelers and a variety of diving ducks. These deeper wetlands are important for all ducks when temperatures cause ice to form on shallow wetlands. Waterfowl will typically return to shallow areas quickly after thawing to feed on high food abundances.

The regular waterfowl season will continue through January 31. The early January aerial waterfowl survey results and distribution maps are now posted on MDWFP's website and social media. 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 general 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%	Low-Medium
Malmaison**	100%	Low-Medium
Muscadine Farms	90%	Medium
O'Keefe	100%	Medium-High
Sunflower	100%	Medium
Twin Oaks	100%	Low
Trim Cane	80%	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.