



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 17, 2016.

Jackson, MS – As we move into the final two weeks of the regular waterfowl season, weather patterns have continued the trend of warming during the mid-week and cooling down over the weekends. The quality of waterfowl hunting reports have also somewhat tracked this pattern. The weather forecast for the remainder of this week predicts another brief mid to late week warm up, followed by another short-duration cold front over the weekend. Snowfall is also predicted to increase at northern latitudes through the week. Wetland habitat availability has remained high, primarily due to the levels of the Mississippi River and tributaries. Hunters are reminded to continue using extreme caution during this time of high, 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 pair bonding. While hunting reports in other types of wetlands have reported some success for duck harvest in general, reports from forested wetlands have generally consisted of more mallards in the bag. Gadwall, northern shoveler, and northern pintail made up a large proportion of hunter harvest last week. Migrant goose numbers have continued to grow in the Mississippi Delta, and hunters are reminded to take advantage of the Light Goose Conservation Order after the regular waterfowl season closes. Deep water habitats such as active catfish ponds and oxbow lakes are still holding abundant northern shovelers and a variety of diving ducks. Deep wetlands are particularly important for all ducks when temperatures cause ice to form on shallow wetlands. Waterfowl will typically exploit shallow areas quickly after thawing to feed on high food abundances.

The regular waterfowl season will continue through January 31. The late January aerial waterfowl survey is scheduled to begin January 25, and 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 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	85%	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.