



## **January 11, 2022 Weekly Waterfowl Report**

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

Houston Havens (662) 299-0273, email: [houston.havens@wfp.ms.gov](mailto:houston.havens@wfp.ms.gov)

Darrin Hardesty (662) 588-2596, email: [darrin.hardesty@wfp.ms.gov](mailto:darrin.hardesty@wfp.ms.gov)

The following report is a compilation of public and private land reports and habitat assessments during the week ending January 9, 2022.

Jackson, MS – Mississippi finally received another round of winter-like weather that waterfowl hunters had been waiting for last week, as a system swept in from the north. Along with cooler temperatures, some areas received much needed rainfall which helped to maintain or add to wetland habitat availability in the Mississippi Delta. Although habitat availability has increased, much of the state is still below normal levels for this time of year. The Mississippi River level has seen a steady rise since the beginning of the new year, and although it is still below flood stage, water levels have begun to reach many areas preferred by both ducks and duck hunters. River systems in the interior Delta have fluctuated throughout the season but have stayed well within their banks. This week's weather outlook for Mississippi predicts another warm week, followed by a front with rain and colder temperatures (from Winter Storm Izzy to the north) over the weekend and into early next week. While this winter storm is not currently predicted to impact much of Mississippi directly, it could be significant enough to cause migration of waterfowl from the northern portions of the Mississippi Flyway into more southern latitudes.

Hunting reports improved overall last week, as temperatures temporarily returned to a more seasonable range. Although duck harvest reports continue to be dominated by species like green-winged teal, northern shovelers, and gadwall, reports of mallard harvest increased over the last week. Snow, blue, Ross's, and white-fronted geese remain very high in number in the Mississippi Delta, and hunters continue to report success in harvesting geese, even when hunting over setups that are focused on ducks. As always, availability of quality wetland habitat and weather conditions will greatly influence waterfowl harvest on both private and public lands.

Mississippi's regular waterfowl seasons are currently open and will continue through Monday, January 31. The early January waterfowl aerial survey experienced some weather delays, but has recently been completed. Preliminary reports indicate an increase in both waterfowl numbers and wetland habitat. Full survey results and distribution maps will be posted on MDWFP's website and social media platforms. For more information regarding waterfowl in Mississippi, visit our website at [www.mdwfp.com/waterfowl](http://www.mdwfp.com/waterfowl) or call us at (601) 432-2199. The Waterfowl Program web page lists links to hunting regulations, migration reports, and habitat information for specific WMAs and other public lands throughout the state.

**Table 1:** Waterfowl harvest and WMA visits reported over the past week for selected Wildlife Management Areas. 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.

<b>WMA</b>	<b>WMA Visits</b>	<b>Harvest</b>	<b>Avg. Harvest/Day</b>
Bienville	8	4	0.50
Black Prairie	8	4	0.50
Canal Section	72	36	0.50
Caney Creek	7	1	0.14
Charlie Capps	15	24	1.60
Divide Section	11	11	1.00
Howard Miller	102	186	1.82
John Bell Williams	7	6	0.86
Lake George	16	10	0.63
Little Biloxi	1	1	1.00
Mahannah	215	309	1.44
Malmaison	120	88	0.73
Mason Creek	3	1	0.33
Muscadine Farms	75	126	1.68
Nanah Waiya	26	18	0.69
Okatibbee	49	18	0.37
O'Keefe	80	96	1.20
Old River	38	34	0.89
Pascagoula River	138	117	0.85
Pearl River	19	3	0.16
Phil Bryant	39	39	1.00
Shipland	14	11	0.79
Sky Lake	8	8	1.00
Sunflower	148	182	1.23
Tallahala	10	12	1.20
Trim Cane	8	1	0.13
Tuscumbia	27	55	2.04
Twin Oaks	34	44	1.29
Upper Sardis	19	9	0.47
Ward Bayou	41	19	0.46
William C. Billy Deviney	25	9	0.36

## **Sunflower WMA Flooding for 2021-22 Waterfowl Season**

Water control structures in the Long Bayou and Dowling Bayou green-tree reservoirs (GTRs) will be closed to capture water for the 2021-22 hunting season on Sunflower WMA. Hunters are reminded that there are approximately 5,200 acres of low-lying sloughs, lakes, and other wetlands scattered across Sunflower WMA. Most of these areas have water control structures in them and will be the first areas to flood on the WMA. These natural, low-lying areas often provide better habitat and hunting opportunities than the GTRs. Other GTRs may also eventually flood from winter rainfall and backwater. A map of Sunflower WMA wetland areas can be found here:

**<http://www.mdwfp.com/media/256111/sunflower-wma-gtrs-and-slough-areas.pdf>**