



January 17, 2023 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 15, 2023.

Jackson, MS – The beginning of the week started out unseasonably warm but was followed by strong winds and much colder temperatures leading into the weekend. Much like the majority of January, the weather and temperatures have been consistently inconsistent. A small rain event helped to increase wetland habitat availability and birds were reported to be using newly flooded areas. Hunting reports followed the trend in general, with improved success being reported later in the week as temperatures decreased. Throughout the waterfowl hunting season, the Mississippi River and many interior river systems in the Delta have remained well within their banks. However, several precipitation events in the upper Mississippi River valley caused a quick rise in the river, which helped to increase wetland habitat availability and hunting opportunities along the western part of the state. Another winter weather system is predicted to produce significant snowfall in the upper Midwest this week, which could cause further southern movements of waterfowl.

Waterfowl hunting success on many public and private lands has continued slow down with warm temperatures and rainy weather dominating. However, some areas have still experienced localized success. Mallards, green-winged teal, and gadwall have made up a significant portion of recent waterfowl harvest reports. The availability of quality wetland habitat and weather conditions will continue to influence waterfowl harvest on both private and public lands as Mississippi's hunting season continues.

The early January survey was completed, and survey results and distribution maps have been posted on MDWFP's website and social media platforms. The final waterfowl survey of the season is underway this week, and results are expected to be available next week. 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, 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 Wildlife Management Areas 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. Waterfowl hunters are also reminded to review all regulations and any applicable draw hunt procedures for any WMA they plan to hunt.

WMA	WMA Visits	Harvest	Avg. Harvest/Day
Bienville	9	4	0.44
Black Prairie	13	5	0.38
Canal Section	75	57	0.76
Caney Creek	13	18	1.38
Charlie Capps	19	20	1.05
Chickasaw	3	7	2.33
Copiah County	2	1	0.50
Divide Section	7	1	0.14
Howard Miller	111	341	3.07
John Bell Williams	2	3	1.50
John W. Starr	9	4	0.44
Lake George	24	8	0.33
Mahannah	226	409	1.81
Malmaison	114	138	1.21
Muscadine Farms	75	42	0.56
Nanih Waiya	9	15	1.67
Okatibbee	15	6	0.40
O'Keefe	91	121	1.33
Old River	24	6	0.25
Pascagoula River	57	23	0.40
Pearl River	38	28	0.74
Phil Bryant	19	13	0.68
Sandy Creek	2	1	0.50
Shipland	19	29	1.53
Sky Lake	21	21	1.00
Sunflower	96	59	0.61
Tallahala	7	6	0.86
Theodore A. Mars	6	5	0.83
Trim Cane	7	20	2.86
Tuscumbia	38	28	0.74
Twin Oaks	16	19	1.19
Upper Sardis	13	10	0.77
Ward Bayou	32	17	0.53
William C. Billy Deviney	42	70	1.67

Sunflower WMA Flooding for 2022-23 Waterfowl Season

Water control structures in the Long Bayou and Dowling Bayou green-tree reservoirs (GTRs) will be closed to capture water for the 2022-23 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>