



Weekly Waterfowl Report
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
Houston Havens (662)299-0273, email: houstonh@mdwfp.state.ms.us

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The following report is a compilation of WMA reports and habitat assessments during the week ending January 4, 2015.

Jackson, MS – The report below is a compilation of on-the-ground observations from biologists, as well as public and private land managers. In general, the past week continued a slight increase in waterfowl abundance and harvest reports across the state. Abundant rainfall across much of the state flooded rivers and smaller tributaries to produce the first significant pulse of naturally flooded habitat for this season. The long-range forecast predicts temperatures to reach well below the freezing mark this week. These weather conditions should push more southward migration activity into the state, as more northern latitudes experience a hard freeze, making wetland habitats unavailable for waterfowl. Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) across the Mississippi Delta are still holding ducks, and several area managers have recently reported increasing numbers, particularly mallards, ahead of the incoming weather front. Harvest reports are still showing a large proportion of green-winged teal and gadwall, and some hunters are still taking advantage of an abundance of white-fronted geese. Large flocks of migrant geese continue to be observed across the Delta region, primarily using rice and soybean fields. Deep water habitats such as production catfish ponds and oxbow lakes continue to hold ducks, and bird numbers on these areas should increase as shallow wetlands begin to freeze this week. When shallow wetlands thaw, biologists expect waterfowl to quickly begin using flooded agricultural fields again for quick energy sources.

The early January aerial waterfowl survey is underway this week. Survey summary reports will be posted to the MDWFP Waterfowl Program website (www.mdwfp.com/waterfowl) soon after completion. This site also lists links to regulations, hunter harvest, and habitat information for specific WMAs throughout the state, as well as other general waterfowl information as it becomes available.

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

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