



December 23, 2025 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 December 21, 2025.

Jackson, MS – Last week's weather in North Mississippi fluctuated from fairly cold at the beginning of the week to much warmer conditions as the week progressed. Precipitation was intermittent through the middle of the week. There was no significant rainfall, so many wetland areas that are rainfall dependent still remain low or dry. The Mississippi River has remained low for the entire waterfowl hunting season thus far, and many interior rivers and oxbows are also very low.

The combination of mild daytime temperatures and cold nights tends to keep birds active while still encouraging consistent feeding patterns. Cold overnight lows increase energetic demands, prompting ducks and geese to feed more aggressively during daylight hours. Many parts of the north Delta were frozen over during the beginning of last week and many waterfowl hunters found themselves having to break ice to open up surface water in duck holes. Waterfowl were found concentrating in wetlands with high food availability and areas where they were keeping the water open. These varying weather conditions caused varying success for waterfowl hunters across the state, with some reporting tremendous success immediately following the two days of icy conditions. Typically, when waterfowl hunters think of freezing temperatures, they think of increasing waterfowl numbers. However, these short-lived freezing temperatures in Mississippi may influence waterfowl behavior more than overall abundance, and the effects can be temporary and localized rather than dramatic. More sustained, below freezing temperatures with frozen precipitation coming from the north may still be needed to continue southward migrations of waterfowl, particularly mallards.

The upcoming week will begin with unseasonably warm conditions, with daytime highs well above normal and mild overnight lows. During this period, waterfowl movement is likely to remain limited. Warm temperatures reduce energetic stress, allowing birds to feed at a relaxed pace and remain widely dispersed across available habitats. Shallowly

flooded fields and moist-soil units should stay ice-free and fully accessible, encouraging ducks to spread out rather than concentrating.

The December aerial waterfowl survey is completed, and survey results will be posted on MDWFP's website and social media platforms soon. 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 and habitat information for WMAs and other public lands throughout the state.

Table 1: Duck harvest and WMA visits reported for this past week and compared to the same timeframe over the past 5 years. We are currently working to get the WMA user and harvest data for individual WMAs from the new license system. Once this issue is resolved, we will resume reporting weekly WMA waterfowl harvest numbers as we have in past years. Note: this data does not necessarily represent the total number of hunters and harvest for all WMAs. Hunters are reminded of the requirement to check in prior to hunting and to check out upon leaving the WMA.

Year	WMA Visits	Harvest	Avg. Harvest/Day
2025	2085	1709	0.82
2024	1673	1221	0.73
2023	2859	3769	1.32
2022	1601	2200	1.37
2021	1538	1744	1.13
2020	1263	1881	1.49