

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
**WATERFOWL SURVEY: 2024 Fall Migration Summary**

During 2024, duck counts were within the 10-year average for 12 out of 17 weeks of the fall, and below the 10-year average for 5 weeks. The peak count occurred between November 18<sup>th</sup> and November 22<sup>nd</sup>. The fall total ranked as the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest total in the last 10 years. Mallards were the most observed duck, accounting for 43.9% of ducks counted (Table 1).

**Table 1. The percent of ducks by species counted in Iowa during fall of 2024.**

	Species	Percent of ducks counted
<b>Dabbling Ducks</b>	Mallard	43.9%
	Gadwall	4.7%
	American wigeon	1.7%
	Northern pintail	10.7%
	Green-winged teal	15.4%
	Blue-winged teal	7.3%
	Northern shoveler	2.4%
	Wood duck	8.7%
<b>Diving Ducks</b>	Redhead	0.3%
	Canvasback	0.2%
	Ring-necked duck	2.0%
	Scaup	0.5%
	Goldeneye	0.4%
	Ruddy duck	0.3%
	Bufflehead	0.2%
	Merganser	1.5%
<b>Less common in Iowa</b>	American black duck	0.01%
	Scoter (white-winged, surf)	0.0%

Canada goose counts were within the 10-year average for 10 out of 17 weeks of the fall, and below the 10-year average for 7 weeks. The peak count occurred between December 23<sup>rd</sup> and December 28<sup>th</sup>. The fall total ranked as the lowest count in the last 10 years. Canada geese were the most observed goose, accounting for 96.9% of geese counted (Table 2).

**Table 2. The percent of geese by species counted in Iowa during fall of 2024.**

	Species	Percent of geese counted
<b>Dark Geese</b>	Canada goose	96.9%
	White-fronted goose	2.9%
<b>Light Geese</b>	Snow goose	0.2%

The figures on the following pages summarize duck and goose abundance by week and zone, changes in species composition throughout the fall, and duck migration by zone and hunting seasons.

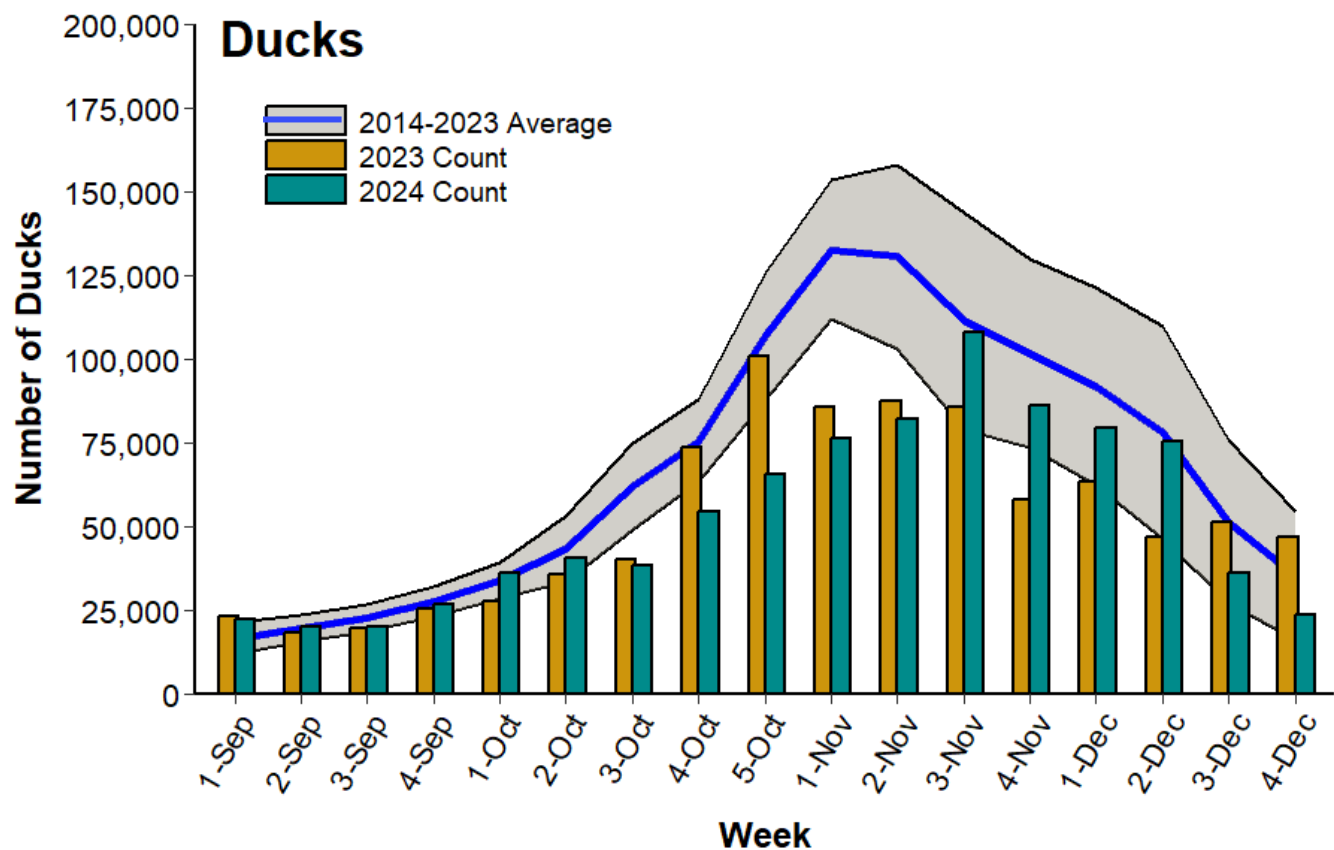


Figure 1. The number of ducks surveyed in 2024 (turquoise bars) and 2023 (gold bars) compared to 2014-2023 average (blue line).

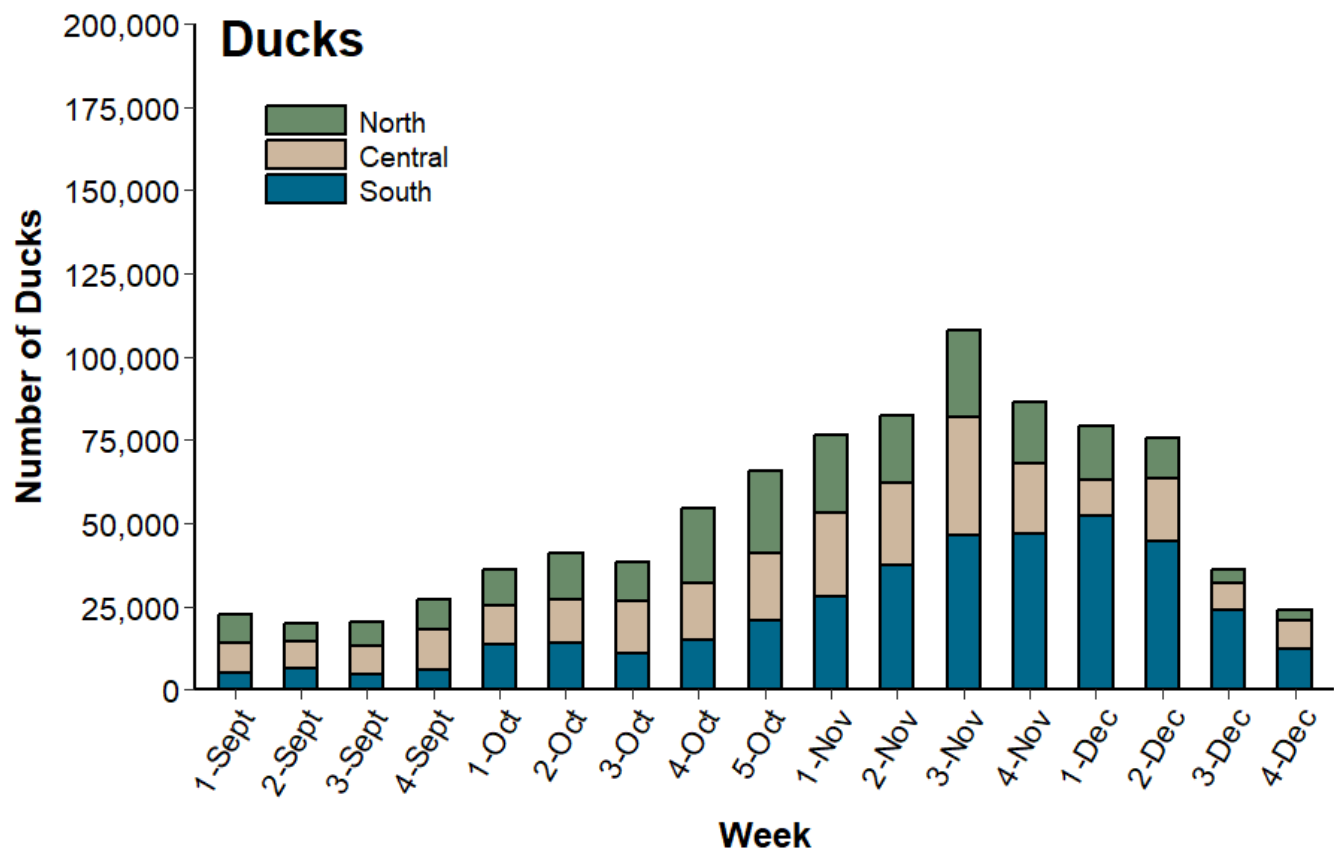


Figure 2. The number of ducks counted each survey week by waterfowl hunting zone in 2024.

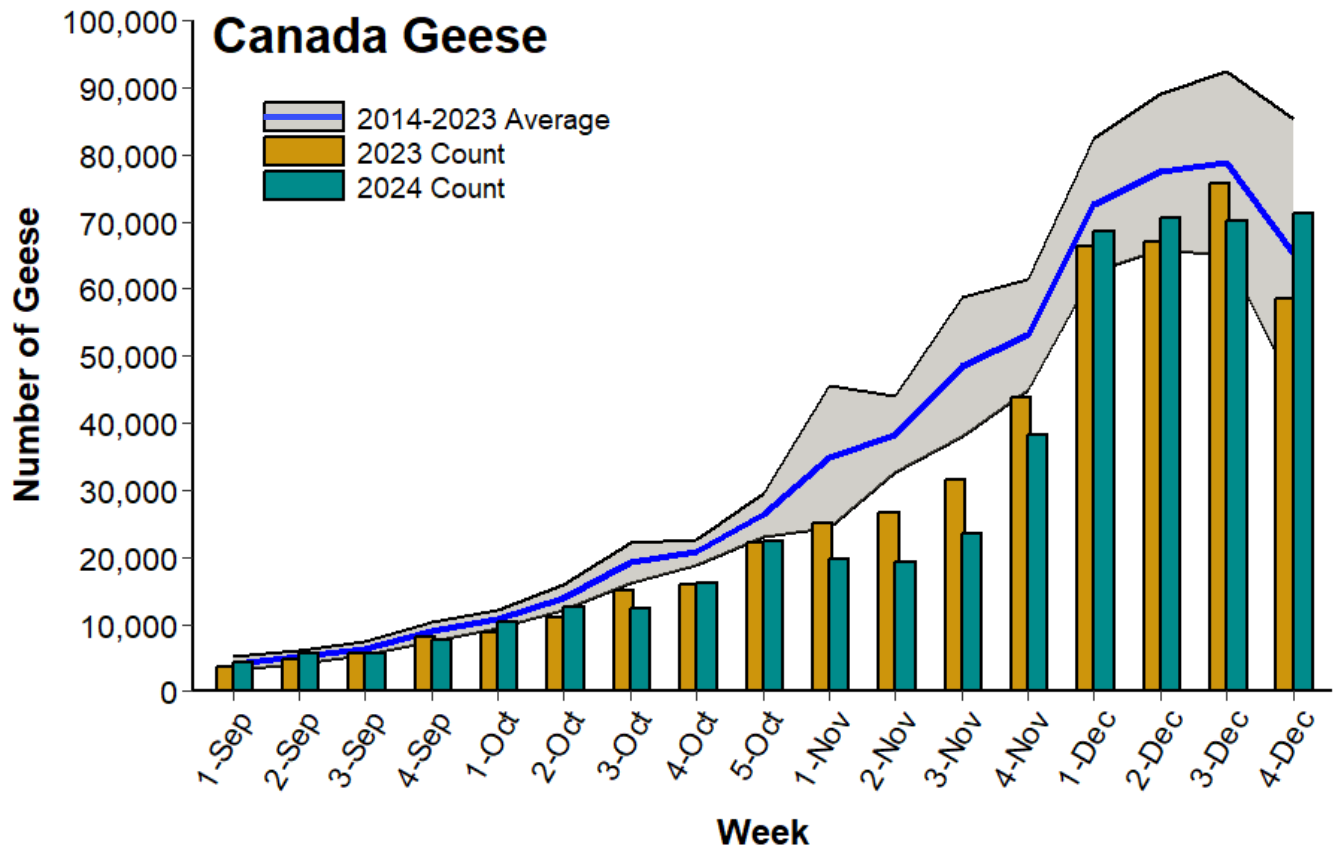


Figure 3. The number of Canada geese surveyed in 2024 (turquoise bars) and 2023 (gold bars) compared to 2014-2023 average (blue line).

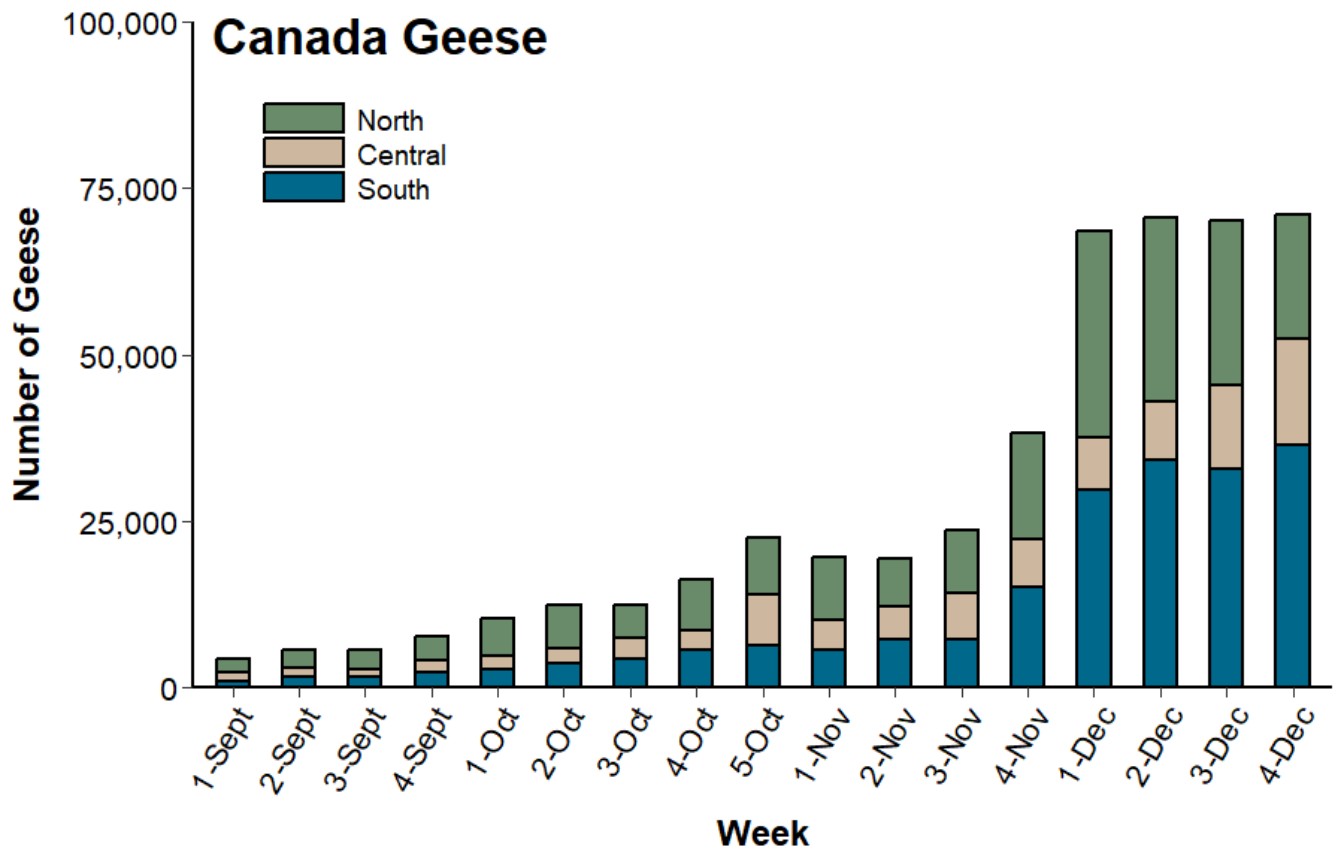


Figure 4. The number of Canada geese counted each survey week by waterfowl hunting zone in 2024.

**Table 3. Statewide duck and goose species composition by week during fall 2024. Cells highlighted in orange indicate the most abundant species in that week.**

**Species composition by week**

DUCKS	Pre-teal season	1-Sep	2-Sep	3-Sep	4-Sep	1-Oct	2-Oct	3-Oct	4-Oct	5-Oct	1-Nov	2-Nov	3-Nov	4-Nov	1-Dec	2-Dec	3-Dec	4-Dec
Mallard	13%	12%	11%	12%	13%	15%	13%	18%	18%	21%	29%	42%	42%	67%	88%	86%	85%	82%
Gadwall	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	2%	3%	5%	7%	9%	10%	9%	7%	5%	1%	1%	0%	1%
American Wigeon	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Northern Pintail	0%	1%	1%	2%	4%	12%	16%	23%	24%	23%	24%	16%	9%	5%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Green-winged Teal	2%	7%	6%	8%	15%	23%	21%	23%	25%	24%	19%	16%	27%	14%	4%	3%	4%	1%
Blue-winged Teal	39%	43%	41%	35%	31%	21%	19%	8%	6%	4%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Northern Shoveler	1%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	5%	4%	5%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Wood Duck	44%	33%	38%	41%	32%	24%	21%	14%	9%	6%	5%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Redhead	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Canvasback	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Ring-necked Duck	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	2%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Scaup	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Goldeneye	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Ruddy Duck	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Bufflehead	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Mergansers	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	7%	8%	13%
American Black Duck	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Scoters	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GEESE																		
Canada Goose	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	91%	83%	89%	92%	95%	97%	98%	99%	99%	99%
White-fronted Goose	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	9%	17%	11%	8%	3%	3%	1%	1%	0.4%	1%
Snow Goose	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0.2%	0%

Figure 5. The number of ducks counted in each zone by date during 2024 (black line). Hunting seasons for 2024 are represented by gray boxes in each respective zone.

