

## **December 6, 2013 – Aerial Waterfowl Inventory Blog**

I flew the Illinois River waterfowl survey on Friday. We had about 125,000 ducks which was down about 40% from last week and about 50% below the 10-yr average; see [www.bellrose.org](http://www.bellrose.org) for more details. Many of the refuges had significant ice coverage on Friday, and with the low temperatures and projected forecast, I anticipate many areas are completely iced up by Sunday morning. This doesn't mean that all the ducks have left the Illinois River. Mallards are keen at finding open water and keeping it open. Those duck hunters that have the ability to maintain open water will continue to harvest mallards, but the rest of us will have to hit the corn fields to duck hunt.

Good Luck and stay warm....it's cold out there! Stay tuned for more updates next week.....