

# Canada Geese



Resident Canada goose populations in Wisconsin have increased dramatically over the past 25 years. This increased population has resulted in human-goose conflicts across the state. Nuisance geese make a mess on lawns and in parks, cause vehicle accidents and have been known to be aggressive during the nesting season. Geese can be managed through an array of methods.

## Don't Feed Wildlife

- Bread has low nutritional value for geese and feeding leads to geese being unafraid of human and even following humans for handouts. This can result in aggressive birds and pose human health and safety risks.
- Congregating geese in public green space can result in decreased use of public areas, aggressive geese, shore erosion and water quality concerns from the feces runoff that occurs. Additionally, congregating geese can spread diseases which can impact both humans and other birds.

## Protect Your Pet

- Geese can be aggressive and injure dogs, so dogs should be kept on leashes when in any public area. Keep cats indoors. While legal to allow your dog to harass geese causing conflicts, they cannot harm them in any way.



## Discourage Geese

- Scare tactics such as predator decoys, sticks and fences decorated with Mylar® flagging, and noise machines can encourage geese to locate to new, friendlier habitat. Change the environment by moving objects frequently to keep geese on edge. Trained dogs from a professional nuisance wildlife control company can also be used to haze geese.
- Altering habitat along the water's edge is a long-term technique to discourage geese. A strip of tall native vegetation (the wider the better) can obstruct geese sight lines and discourage them from an area.
- Fencing such as chicken wire or plastic snow fence at least 30 inches high erected between water's edge and feeding areas is a cost-effective way to reduce goose access to feeding and loafing areas.
- Chemical goose repellents at the feeding site create a slight discoloration geese equate to the bad taste, and geese will move to an alternate feeding site. Multiple applications are necessary to achieve longer term benefits.
- Egg oiling and addling, and goose trapping are all useful tools for goose population management when other methods fail to achieve desired results, though permits are required. Contact Wildlife Services for more information.



## Quick Facts

- We have two populations of Canada geese that frequent Wisconsin. The migrants raise their young in Canada and stop in Wisconsin in the fall and spring. The identical resident birds raise their young here and create the majority of conflicts.
- Geese like to feed in short grass so they can watch for predators. This makes manicured lawns and golf courses especially appealing.
- Wildlife professionals band geese so they are able to track the migration of geese in both the U.S. and Canada.
- Goose hunting is legal during the regulated hunting season with a hunting license and the necessary stamps. Many municipalities in Wisconsin have specific regulations regarding the discharge of firearms, check local ordinances.
- Urban bowhunting for geese is a cost-effective method to reduce nuisance geese in areas that do not allow hunting with firearms. Please check with your local government and local biologist to ensure adherence to local ordinances.
- If you have nuisance goose issues, contact USDA-Wildlife Services at 1-800-433-0663 (in southern Wisconsin) or 1-800-228-1368 (in northern Wisconsin).

For more information, visit our webpage:  
[dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov)

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