

Canada Goose Damage Management and Control Information in New Jersey

Background

Canada geese are migratory birds which occur throughout most of the continental United States. Although Canada geese are a valuable natural resource, their overabundance can cause property damage in some cases. There is a suite of non-lethal and lethal techniques for managing Canada goose damage which can be found at the web pages below. Integrated Management Programs that use several techniques are usually the most successful to manage goose damage. This information can be found:

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/reports/Wildlife%20Damage%20Management%20Technical%20Series/GeeseDucksCoots-WDM-Technical-Series.pdf

There are several federal Depredation Orders and Permit Take options, depending on the damage and time of year, described below that are available for various property managers that can be used to manage Canada goose damage.

Homeowners and Property Managers

Nest and Egg Management

If you are a homeowner or property manager experiencing problems with Canada geese, you can obtain a free permit to destroy nests and/or treat eggs on your property at any time. Simply register on-line with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) at <https://epermits.fws.gov/eRCGR/geSI.aspx>.

Individuals must register prior to destroying nests or eggs. Considerable flexibility is allowed regarding who can do the nest and egg work and on which types of properties. Check the “Frequently Asked Questions” tab on this web site for further information. You can obtain detailed information on how to destroy nests and/or treat eggs on this web site by clicking on the “Management of Canada goose nesting” tab. Nests and eggs may be taken at any time. You must return to the web site by October 31, to report the number of nests and eggs destroyed, even if none were destroyed that year.

USFWS Depredation Permits for Lethal Control

A federal depredation permit can be issued for the lethal control of Canada geese that are causing damage to property, such as lawns or beaches. The application for a federal depredation permit can be downloaded from www.fws.gov/forms/3-200-13.pdf and should be submitted online. The application must be accompanied by a Form 37 which can be obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services (USDA WS). For more information on applying for federal depredation permits issued to control geese that are causing property damage in New Jersey, contact the USDA WS office at 908-735-5654.

Airports

To resolve or prevent hazards caused by Canada geese, airports may employ the following control methods: nest and egg destruction, gosling and adult trapping and culling programs, firearms, and other lethal or non-lethal control strategies.

Nests and eggs may be destroyed at any time by registering at <https://epermits.fws.gov/eRCGR/geSI.aspx>. A more liberal depredation order for lethal control can be employed between April 1 and September 15 when only Resident Population Canada geese are present. Additional details concerning the airport depredation order can be found at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-21/subpart-D/section-21.159>

For airports wishing to control geese throughout the year, permits issued by the USFWS will continue to be required. The application for a federal depredation permit can be downloaded from www.fws.gov/forms/3-200-13.pdf and should be submitted online. The application must be accompanied by a Form 37 which can be obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services (USDA WS). For more information on applying for federal depredation permits issued to control geese that are hazards at airports in New Jersey, contact the USDA WS office at 908-735-5654.

Farmers

Farmers and their employees who are actively farming may control geese by destroying nests and eggs, by trapping and killing geese, by firearms, or with other lethal and nonlethal wildlife-damage management strategies, when geese are causing damage to agricultural crops, and to prevent damage to agricultural crops. Geese may be taken only on land which the farmer personally controls and where geese are causing damage to agricultural crops. Nests and eggs may be destroyed at any time by registering at <https://epermits.fws.gov/eRCGR/geSI.aspx>.

A federal depredation permit can be issued for the lethal control of Canada geese that are causing damage to farm crops on a year-round basis. The application for a federal depredation permit can be downloaded from www.fws.gov/forms/3-200-13.pdf and should be submitted online. The application must be accompanied by a Form 37 which can be obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services (USDA WS). For more information on applying for federal depredation permits issued to control geese that are causing crop damage, contact the USDA WS office at 908-735-5654.

New Jersey Fish and Wildlife may issue a free permit to farmers for the lethal control of geese between April 1 and August 31. The permit must be obtained prior to implementing any control program. Additional information on the agricultural depredation order can be found at:

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-21/subpart-D/section-21.165>

Contact Kate Szostak at Katherine.Szostak@dep.nj.gov for more information on an agricultural New Jersey Fish and Wildlife permit valid for the April-August period.

Lake Communities

Municipalities, lake associations, and county/town parks may apply to New Jersey Fish and Wildlife for a free permit to control Canada goose when the geese are causing a direct threat to human health in lakes or ponds that are used for swimming. The permit applicant must submit a letter from the state, county or local health department stating that Canada geese are causing the health threat by creating conditions conducive to the transmission of pathogens. The permit applicant must describe the control method to be used, the agent carrying out the control method, agent qualifications and method of disposal or donation of geese. Control techniques under this permit can only be exercised during April 1 – August 31. Culled geese may be by donated to museums or public institutions for scientific or educational purposes, processed for human consumption and subsequent distribution free of charge to charitable organizations, or buried or incinerated. Euthanasia must be by means approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines on Euthanasia. Additional information on the Public Health depredation order can be found at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-21/subpart-D/section-21.168>

For additional assistance on a New Jersey Fish and Wildlife permit contact Kate Szostak at Katherine.Szostak@dep.nj.gov.

Hunting Seasons

Hunting can be used in many locales for reducing numbers of Canada geese. Canada goose hunting seasons are very liberal during September, when only Resident Population geese are present, and generally more restrictive in the fall and winter when migrant population geese from the arctic are also present. Hunting seasons change annually and requirements for hunting as well as annual season dates and bag limits can be found on the New Jersey Fish and Wildlife webpage:

<https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/hunting/waterfowl-and-migratory-birds-in-new-jersey/>

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