

Canada Goose Nesting Season – Are You Ready?



February 4, 2022 - Robert Batterson, Wildlife Research Technician, Email: Robert.Batterson@dnr.ohio.gov

It may not seem like it right now, but Canada goose nesting season is right around the corner. In central Ohio, Canada geese begin pairing and searching for nesting territories in late February and begin laying eggs in late March. This is the time when most conflicts with geese occur. Geese that are fed will lose their fear of humans and attack adults, children and pets during the nesting season.

DO NOT FEED GEESE. In just a few years, a pair of geese can easily become 50 to 100 birds. The feces will foul the surrounding area and damage lawns, beaches, boat docks and walkways. Goose feces are also a major contributor to the growth of green algae blooms and e Coli bacteria.

It is imperative to begin harassment of any geese showing up on your property now! This will hopefully dissuade them from nesting on your property and surrounding areas. **You do not need a permit to harass geese on your property.** The ODNR, Division of Wildlife has released Goose Harassment Guidelines and Techniques <https://ohiodnr.gov/wps/portal/gov/odnr/discover-and-learn/safety-conservation/wildlife-management/nuisance-wildlife/nuisance-geese>

Key points in the ODNR's 17 page Goose Harassment Guidelines:

- **Consistency and persistence are the keys to success.**
 - Remember, the geese you chase off today may not be the same geese you chased off yesterday. Don't get discouraged.
- **Harass the geese until they fly off.**
 - Geese would rather walk or swim away and will return as soon as you leave the area. Causing them to fly will increase the chances of them finding a more suitable area to set up a territory.
- **Work with your neighbors.**
 - Simply chasing them to the water or the neighbor's lawn will not keep the geese off your property (and is actually counterproductive).
 - Work with your HOA and community groups to devise a goose harassment strategy.
- **April 1st is an important date.**
 - Whatever geese you have on your property after April 1st are the ones you will likely be stuck with for the next month and a half or more. So, harassment in March is paramount to address your problem later this year.
- **Now is the time to get fencing or a string line out** if you had aggressive geese last year.
 - Placing a barrier between the area where the nest is and where people walk is usually all it takes to stop aggression issues. If you know you will have a problem by a door, in a parking lot, or other location get your fencing in place now.
- **File a complaint if necessary**
 - If your harassment is working, stick with it and there is no need to file a complaint. Only file a complaint if you need a permit. Complaints can be filed online at <https://apps.ohiodnr.gov/wildlife/goose/>.