

Making Peace with Geese



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Geese: What's the Problem??

Resident Canada Geese populations have become a significant and growing problem in Rhode Island posing:

- Economic Impact to Landowners
- Impacts on Environmental Quality
- Public Safety Concerns
- General Nuisance

There is a recognized need to address the problem on a scale wider than site-by-site.

Overall Goals

Manage resident Canada geese through various methods including:

- Population Stabilization
- Habitat Modification
- Alternative Agricultural Practices
- Site Aversion

In an effort to achieve the following results:

- Numbers of geese in balance with other wildlife
- Geese no longer pose a significant problem in agricultural lands, parks, public areas, and recreational facilities
- Improve water quality

Integrated Approach

“Persistent application of a combination of methods is usually necessary and yields the best results” – RIDEM

Geese can become acclimated to one mitigation method used repeatedly by itself.

What Can I Do?

Discontinue Feeding



Allow Hunting

What Can I Do?

Install Fencing or Low Wires



Visual Scaring Devices

What Can I Do?

Use Noisemakers



Modify Habitat

What Can I Do?

Chemical Repellants



Chasing by Trained Dogs

What Can I Do?

Capture & Removal



What Can I Do?

Nest Control



Egg Treatment

The RI Resident Canada Goose Abatement Project

The RI Conservation Districts, in partnership with USDA-NRCS and RI DEM, have developed a Two-Phase project aimed at addressing and mitigating local Resident Canada Goose impacts.

Phase I

- Provide Education & Outreach workshops on Geese history, behavior, biology, risks and available abatement and mitigation methods.
- Assist landowners by providing the information needed to develop site-specific geese management plans.
- Connect landowners with various resources, including technical and financial assistance available through NRCS programs for habitat modification.

Phase II

- Provide workshops and trainings to the public in a egg treatment method developed by GeesePeace www.geesepeace.com and recognized as humane by PETA and the US Human Society.
- Coordinate property owners and volunteers in fieldwork, data collection and reporting related to locating resident nesting geese and implementing the GeesePeace egg oiling protocol.

GeesePeace Program

The GeesePeace Program consists of three strategies:

- humane Population Stabilization
- Site Aversion and
- Public Education

The effectiveness of the program is dependant on a balance within these strategies that is unique to each site.

GeesePeace Program

Population Stabilization through egg oiling is important because it:

- contributes to long term reduction in overall numbers of resident geese
- reduces adult loyalty to one site because there are no goslings to protect
- significantly improves the effectiveness of the nuisance abatement strategies

GeesePeace Method

- Teams A & B approach 15 feet from nest.
- Team A opens umbrella(s) and slowly approaches nest, holding the open umbrella(s) low. Team B fills bucket with at least 6 inches of **fresh water** (Salt water provides different buoyancy and is not appropriate for this method.)
- Team A stands facing mother goose and gander with umbrella(s) open, moving as they move to place themselves between geese and nest. Team B waits for geese to be moved a safe distance from the nest area and approaches the nest.
- Team B feels eggs for warmth and make notes as appropriate. Each egg is marked with an “x” to indicate nest has been tested.
- Team B tests one egg by placing it in water to perform the “float test”.
- If the egg floats, Team B does not oil eggs!! Place the wet egg back and retreat from the nest.
- If the egg sinks, Team B dries the test egg with paper towel then places 1-2 tablespoons of oil on the egg, making sure to coat entire egg surface. The egg is placed back in nest.
- Team B oils all remaining eggs, replacing each egg in nest after it is oiled.

GeesePeace Method

- When oiling is complete, Team A allows Team B to collect materials and retreat from nest. Team A can then carefully back away careful to avoid the nest) while still watching the approaching geese until Team A is 5-10 feet beyond the nest.
- When appropriate, place flag 10 feet to the north of the nest if possible. If not, place flag within 10 feet of the nest.
- Record data on Egg Oiling Data Sheet and record location on map or GPS unit if available.



Note: Team A does not assist with oiling. This is Team B responsibility. Team A must focus on keeping gander and mother goose away from the nest.

Note: If eggs did not feel warm or if goose was off nest when team arrived. This nest must be revisited after 10 days.



Partners

- US Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- US Department of Agriculture – Animal & Plant Health Inspection Services
- RI Department of Environmental Management – Division of Fish & Wildlife
- RI Department of Environmental Management – Division of Water Resources
- RI Conservation Districts
- Save The Bay
- Town of Bristol, Department of Parks & Recreation
- Save Bristol Harbor
- Mount Hope High School
- City of Newport, Department of Utilities – Newport Water
- City of Providence, Parks & Recreation – Roger Williams Park
- Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
- URI Watershed Watch
- Woonsocket High School Expanded Learning Program
- Town of Charlestown
- And **MANY** passionate and dedicated volunteers!

For More Information Contact:

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