



# GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION

### CANADA GOOSE CONTROL

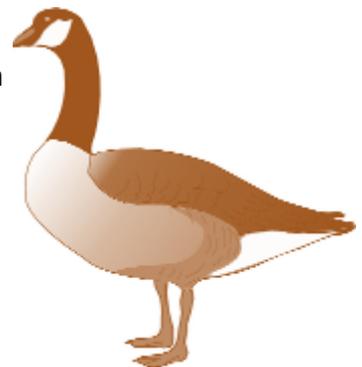
#### LEGAL AND EFFECTIVE METHODS FOR DEALING WITH NUISANCE CANADA GEESSE IN GEORGIA

#### ABOUT THE CANADA GOOSE

When sounds of their “honking” fill the air, hunters and wildlife enthusiasts look to the sky in search of Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*). These remarkable birds have become more common in Georgia, and in some areas they have developed into pests.

The Canada goose is extremely adaptable and can live in a variety of locations, from open farmland and rural reservoirs to suburban and urban ponds, parks and developed areas. For this reason, geese are often found in areas heavily used by people. Geese grazing on lawns, golf courses, recreation areas and agricultural fields or leaving behind a collection of feathers or feces in unwanted areas are among the leading complaints the Department of Natural Resources’ Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) receives about geese each year.

Although WRD has established a hunting season for Canada geese, these birds can sometimes continue to be a nuisance in some areas. Despite that, it is important to remember that Canada geese are a protected species under state and federal law. It is illegal to hunt, kill, sell, purchase or possess Canada geese except according to Georgia's migratory bird regulations.



The following guidelines provide legal means to help repel Canada geese. This can be a trial and error process requiring patience and persistence. The best way to prevent issues is to take early action. Suggestions and methods are detailed below.

## PHYSICAL BARRIERS

Because geese usually walk from water to feeding areas, physical barriers are effective tools for solving many nuisance goose problems. People living near golf courses, parks, lakes or other developed areas can build low wooden or wire fences or plant dense hedges to limit access to feeding areas.

Canada geese prefer landing in water before they walk to their feeding area. Placing a temporary barrier fence of wire or monofilament 18 in. high and located at or slightly inside the water's edge will deter geese from coming out of the water and into your yard. This technique is especially useful on small ponds.

Temporary barriers to keep geese out of gardens or yards can be built from twine, nylon cord or fishing line attached to stakes. The string should be 18 in. high and marked with colored flagging or Mylar tape to prevent geese crossings.

## CHANGES IN FOOD SOURCES

Many people, especially those in subdivisions, feed bread, corn or other grains to Canada geese. In addition to promoting nuisance problems, this type of feeding can lead to serious waterfowl diseases. To prevent these problems, do NOT feed geese.

Geese prefer to feed on cool-season grasses, such as rye. People living in areas where geese are a problem should not plant cool season grasses if they want to prevent geese from feeding in their yard during fall and winter.

## REPELLANTS

Chemical repellents are another option, especially for golf courses or well-maintained yards. Several chemical repellents are commercially available for use with nuisance geese. Apply according to label directions for proper effectiveness. In general, repellents are sprayed on the grass to make it less attractive to geese.

Some repellents are water-based and should be reapplied following routine mowing or rainfall. Repellents can be effective, but can get expensive if used for extended periods of time. Repellents are most effective on geese that are using an area for the first time, and not on those that have become habituated to the site.

***TAKING ACTION NOW CAN  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE FUTURE!***

## SCARE DEVICES

Scare devices and techniques can help rid areas of nuisance geese. Some common methods include: scarecrows, flagging, explosives or noise makers (scare pistols), balloons and dogs. These techniques are easy to use, but are more effective and last longer if several methods are used together. Harassment devices also work better if their location is changed within the nuisance area once or twice a week. When properly applied, these techniques can be effective within 3-5 days. More difficulty is encountered when geese have been using an area for long periods of time.

- ◆ **Flagging:** A cheap and effective method, especially when paired with an alternate technique. Flags consist of a 3' x 2' piece of black plastic or Mylar stapled to a wooden stake. The plastic will flap in the breeze and scare geese away.
- ◆ **Balloons:** Helium-filled, Mylar balloons can be attached to a wooden post with 10-20 lb monofilament, and placed around the area where geese are causing problems. The balloons will flap in the breeze and scare geese away. This method is effective, but can be expensive when covering large areas.
- ◆ **Noise Makers:** Explosive devices fired from shotguns or scare pistols can be used to scare geese away. Shells should be fired in the air directly above the geese when they are feeding or approaching the problem area. This tactic is especially effective when paired with flagging or balloons. Extra precautions should be taken when using this method. Check with neighbors and consult local ordinances prior to use of any firearm.

## TRAINED DOGS

Trained dogs are an effective, yet expensive technique. Dogs have proven effective on golf courses and developed areas in urban settings where noisemakers or other scare devices may be unsuitable. Herding breeds can be trained to chase geese. Groundskeepers or landscape personnel can keep dogs with them, and release the dogs to chase any geese they encounter. Repeated harassment by dogs will deter geese from using the area, and eventually move off the site completely.

## HUNTING

Hunting is an effective method for reducing local goose populations and deterring geese from your property. Check with neighbors and consult local ordinances prior to use of any firearm. For more information on hunting season dates, regulations and license requirements, call the WRD office near you or refer to the Late Season Migratory Bird Regulations pamphlet available online at [www.gohuntgeorgia.com](http://www.gohuntgeorgia.com).

## SPECIAL PERMITS

There are permits available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or WRD for use in certain nuisance cases during specific times of the year. Landowners wishing to reduce Canada goose reproduction on their property can apply for an authorized permit to destroy goose nests and eggs by visiting the USFWS Website at <https://epermits.fws.gov/eRCGR/>. In other situations, WRD staff may be able to issue special permits to have geese removed from the property. For more information, please call the WRD office near you.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

For more information on any of the techniques or tactics described here, contact the WRD game management office near you.

Many of the items or products mentioned in this brochure may be purchased at your local hardware/home improvement store or found online when using search terms such as "Goose Repellents," "Nuisance Canada Geese," or "Nuisance Goose Products."

## GEORGIA WRD REGION OFFICES

### **Region 1**

2592 Floyd Springs Rd.  
Armuchee, GA 30105  
706-295-6041

### **Region 2**

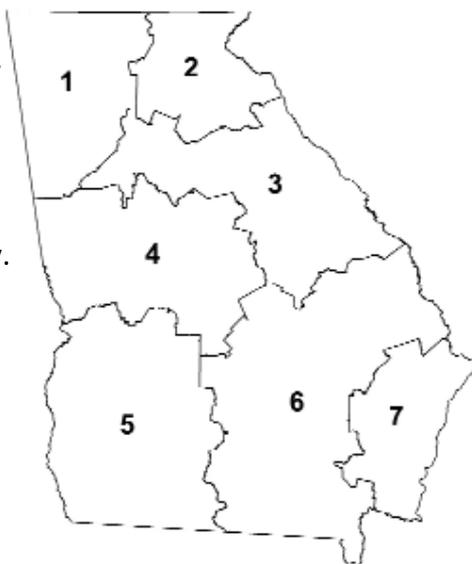
2150 Dawsonville Hwy.  
Gainesville, GA 30501  
770-535-5700

### **Region 3**

142 Bob Kirk Rd.  
Thomson, GA 30824  
706-595-4222

### **Region 4**

1014 Martin Luther King Blvd.  
Fort Valley, GA 31030  
478-825-6354



### **Region 5**

2024 Newton Rd.  
Albany, GA 31701  
229-430-4254

### **Region 6**

1773-A Bowen's Mill Hwy.  
Fitzgerald, GA 31750  
229-426-5267

### **Region 7**

One Conservation Way  
Brunswick, GA 31520  
912-262-3173