

Steps to Minimize Canada Goose Overpopulation

The overabundance of resident Canada Geese did not happen overnight and reducing their population is a multi-step process. Here's what we're doing to help.

Habitat Modification

By mowing less and allowing taller grass to establish along shorelines, geese do not feel as welcome. Taller grass impedes a goose's ability to exit the water.

Public Education

Most people are unaware of the damaging effects of feeding wildlife. Watershed Rangers and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife can provide information to help people understand why they should not feed wild animals.

Signage

Posting of "No Feeding" signs in key spots will address the most problematic areas where feeding usually occurs.

Fence Barriers

Some areas of the park have been so decimated by the geese it is necessary to fence them off to allow vegetation to regrow.

Egg Addling

Working under a permit from ODNR Division of Wildlife, authorized personnel can sterilize eggs in the spring, resulting in fewer hatchlings.

For more information on the negative effects of feeding waterfowl, please contact the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife (614) 644-3925.



Keep Wildlife Wild!



Feeding Wildlife Causes...

Unnaturally Large Populations

Decreased Wildlife Health

Human Health & Safety Concerns

Environmental Damage



Don't Be Part of the Problem

Problems Caused by Feeding Waterfowl:

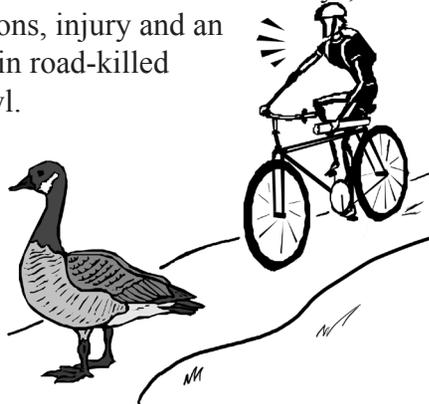
Wild animals are well adapted to finding food and surviving on their own. However, people often believe they are helping wild animals by providing them food. It is important to resist this temptation because the opposite is true. Negative effects from feeding include:

- Loss of Survival Instincts
- Unnaturally Large Populations
- Decreased Wildlife Health
- Human Health & Safety Concerns
- Environmental Damage

Loss of Survival Instincts

Birds relying on human handouts delay or avoid their migration as natural food sources diminish. As a result, these birds suffer when food is not available.

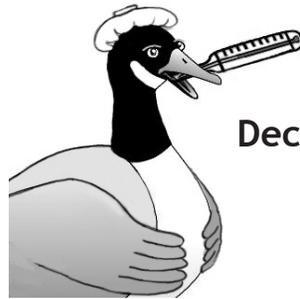
When fed by people, waterfowl lose their fear of humans, bikes and cars. Feeding draws animals closer to roads and bikeways, resulting in collisions, injury and an increase in road-killed waterfowl.



Unnaturally Large Populations

Ohio's population of resident (non-migratory) Canada Geese has increased dramatically in the last 25 years. Feeding by humans and a lack of natural predators have caused goose populations to grow to unhealthy and unnatural levels.

Large populations can have a decoy effect, attracting even more birds to already over-populated sites.



Decreased Wildlife Health

When large numbers of birds compete for limited food supplies, crowding and competition increase the spread of life-threatening diseases like avian cholera, duck plague, and avian botulism.

Natural waterfowl diets consist of highly nutritious plants and insects. Bread, corn, and other unhealthy foods can cause deformities, malnutrition, and illness. Birds that eat moldy bread can develop lung infections. These foods thrown near water can turn toxic in the heat of summer, causing avian botulism.

Avian botulism spreads quickly and results in waterfowl death and suffering. In 2005, an outbreak of avian botulism killed hundreds of birds at Griggs Reservoir.

Human Health & Safety

Goose feces can contain human pathogens such as e. coli, Salmonella, and Listeria. On average, a goose produces 1.5 lbs of feces per day. With an average of 250 geese living in the Hoover Marina Park – this equals over 375 lbs of feces per day!

The large amount of goose feces is not only unhealthy, it is unattractive and unsafe. Droppings on bike paths create slick surfaces that lead to accidents and injuries.

Humans also put themselves at risk for harm when they interact closely with wildlife. At anytime, wildlife can attack humans or pets, especially during nesting season

Environmental Damages

Hoover, Griggs and O'Shaughnessy Reservoirs are important drinking water sources for Central Ohio. Large goose populations can negatively affect water quality in several ways.

Excess nutrients from goose droppings create algal blooms and low oxygen levels. Geese moving in and around shallow water stir up mud and create turbidity.

Grasses and other vegetation are destroyed by geese grazing, walking, and leaving large quantities of feces, resulting in bare soil and erosion problems. Damage can also occur on neighboring agricultural and private properties.

Recreational areas are reduced because people do not want to picnic, play, or walk in areas where there is feces.