

Canada Goose

Branta canadensis

General Information:

-Found in every province and state at some time of the year, this is the most common, familiar, and widespread goose in North America. Breeding programs in the 20th century established or reestablished populations in the southern part of the range. Size varies tremendously over the vast range, from 22-inch Mallard-sized birds to some giant geese reaching 45 inches and 24 pounds.

Song:

-Small races make high rapid cackle; large races make deep, musical *honk-a-lonk*.

Behavior:

-Mates for life. Unlike most waterfowl but like most other geese, family units remain together through winter and until they return to breeding grounds. Dabblers and grazers; feed on variety of aquatic and terrestrial plants.



Breeding:

-Monogamous.

Nesting:

-Incubation of 25-30 days by the female. Precocial young leave the nest at 1-2 days, have their first flight at 42-49 days for smaller races, 56-63 days for larger races. The young feed themselves with their parent's help.

Population:

-Common to abundant. The species as a whole is probably still increasing.

Conservation:

-Widely harvested as a tasty game bird; highly managed on breeding grounds, wintering areas, and migratory staging areas.

Shoreline Restoration Issues:

-If you would like to create an environment friendly to Canadian Geese on your shoreland property I would recommend that you make your effort twofold. The number one thing that I would do is to plant a lot of nice emergent aquatic vegetation such as Rushes, Sedges, White and Yellow Water Buttercup, Sago Pondweed, and Wild Celery. The second thing that I would concentrate on would be to keep them off my lawn you avoid "unwanted presents". The best way to keep them off of your lawn is to plant your buffer zone thickly with shrubs. I suggest Sweet Gale, Sandbar Willow, High-Bush Cranberry, Snowberry, Winterberry, Hawthorn, Pussy Willow, Staghorn Sumac, Red-Osier Dogwood, Silky Dogwood, American and Beaked Hazelnut, Wool-Grass, Blue Flag Iris, and Sweet Flag.