



Canada Goose Nesting Season

Frequently Asked Questions

March 2021

Updated February 2022

Canada Geese nested on my building last year. Will they be back?

Canada Geese mate for life and will return to the same location to nest year after year.

Any approach to controlling geese nesting ideally should be in place before the nest building starts—or quickly thereafter—as it is much more difficult to discourage geese after they have become attached to a site. After nesting has started, moving or scaring geese off a nest is against the law. Canada Geese are protected under the Migratory Bird Convention Act and it is illegal to tamper with a nest, eggs or birds without a permit.



Should I deter Canada Geese from nesting on my building?

There is much to consider. The lack of available natural nesting sites means these birds have limited spaces to raise their young. Deterring them from your building may mean they choose an even less desirable location. However, in some cases, the rooftop may be dangerous for the goslings or it may be impossible to safely remove the family once the babies have hatched. If this is the case encouraging the family to choose another nesting site may be the best option.

My rooftop is not an appropriate nesting site. How can I deter Canada Geese from nesting on my condo building/in my water feature before they lay eggs?

Below is a list of deterrents that may help in diverting a goose pair to a more appropriate nest site. Please note that a combination of deterrents will typically be required to have success in diverting them to another nest site.

- Shrubs and trees to change the levels of the landscape - geese prefer open areas for nesting so they can see predators approaching. A varied landscape does not give them this visual advantage.
- Scare balloons/kites – mounted so they move in the wind. Give eyespots to emulate a predator. Place them in multiple locations and move them around from time to time.
- Flagging/mylar tape/garbage bags attached to stakes, placed so they also move in the wind. The less predictable it is the more uncomfortable it makes nesting geese.
- Ultrasonics - sounds that are uncomfortable for birds but do not impact humans/pets.
- Lights that annoy geese, e.g. [Away With Geese Roof Unit](#)
- Motion-activated sprinkler system, e.g. [Contech ScareCrow Animal Deterrent](#)
- Inflatable scarecrows, e.g. [AirCrow Blackbird Inflatable Scarecrow](#)

Why are Canada Geese nesting on my building?

Human encroachment has led to a significant reduction in natural habitat for Canada Geese. These birds naturally nest on a slightly elevated area near water. They prefer sites where they have an unobstructed view so they can easily see approaching predators.

The lack of available natural nesting sites has resulted in Canada Geese nesting on rooftops, even in busy urban environments. They typically still nest in the vicinity of water, though families may have to cross busy streets to get there. Green roofs have become particularly attractive to nesting Canada Geese.



Where will the goslings go once they have hatched on my building?

Once all the eggs have hatched, the parents will attempt to lead the babies to water. This means the goslings may start jumping off the building to follow the parents. Goslings can usually safely jump as many as two storeys onto the pavement without injuring themselves and up to four storeys onto grass. They will then follow the parents to water. Along the way, they may need assistance to find a safe pathway. Never put yourself in danger, but if you are able to safely help them cross roadways by pushing pedestrian lights, etc this may assist them in safely reaching their destination.

Why don't the parents carry them down?

Even if they wanted to, adult geese are unable to carry their goslings. Their beaks are not adapted to hold onto large, squirming goslings. Instead, goslings instinctively follow their parents wherever they go.



I have noticed goslings with no parents. What should I do?

If there are no adult geese, that you can see or hear:

1. Grab a box and gather the goslings one by one containing them in a deep enough box so they cannot jump out/escape.
2. Wait in the area for as long as possible to see if mom or dad returns. Keep them peeping!
 - a. If adults do not return, call our Helpline at 604-526-7275 or email wildlife@wildliferescue.ca.
 - b. If an adult goose returns (or both), let the goslings out of the box near the water, stand back and observe to make sure the parent(s) reunite.



Need more help?

Call your local wildlife rehabilitator for assistance.

Wildlife Rescue Association of British Columbia
5216 Glencarin Drive, Burnaby, BC V5B 3C1
Support Centre: (604) 526-7275
wildlife@wildliferescue.ca

If you are not located in the Lower Mainland, please contact your nearest wildlife rehabilitator.



Goslings in care at Wildlife Rescue.

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