



February 17, 2026

Dear Canada goose depredation permittee,

Enclosed is your Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) permit for the destruction of Canada goose nests and eggs issued under the authority of the Wildlife Code [520 ILCS 5/2.37] or Illinois Administrative Code [17 Ill Adm Code Ch I Sec 525] and applicable Federal regulations. You must follow all of the provisions on your permit. In addition, please note the following:

- 1) In accordance with State and Federal regulations, IDNR permits have been issued to cover the time period when most Canada geese will be nesting in Illinois. **If you need a permit for later dates due to differing nesting chronology, please contact me.**
- 2) The Wildlife Code requires that a report of your activities is **received by the date indicated on the permit.** Therefore this report must be received by me at the location below by **the indicated date.** In the space provided on the back of your permit please provide: 1) the number of Canada goose nests and eggs that were destroyed, 2) an update of the non-lethal goose control activities you have used, and 3) indicate whether or not you would like to renew your permit next year. If you do not perform any activities this year, you must still submit a report reflecting that no nests or eggs were destroyed. If you do not submit a report, you may not be issued a permit the following year. When finished, please mail or E-mail a copy of the report to me at the location below and retain a copy for your records. Your permit may be renewed for 2027 if you submit all of the above information by **the due date** and you check the renewal box on the report form. Please contact me if you don't receive your renewal.
- 3) This permit only authorizes you to destroy the nests and eggs of Canada geese on your property or on the property described in the permit if permission has been granted by the appropriate landowner. You may not perform this activity on lands where you do not have permission from the appropriate landowner or have appropriate jurisdiction over. **Do not remove more than the number of nests authorized on your permit. Please contact me prior to removing additional nests.** You are also responsible for being aware of and complying with any local restrictions or association rules. Thank you for your cooperation. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Williams, Urban Waterfowl Project Manager
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANADA GOOSE EGG AND NEST DESTRUCTION

In order to minimize adverse impacts of Canada Geese in urban environments, it is sometimes recommended that population increases be controlled by preventing successful nesting attempts.

Small residential flocks of Canada Geese can increase rapidly if on-site production is not controlled. Canada geese normally produce an average of 4 - 6 goslings with excellent survival capabilities. Geese have an affinity for the site where they were hatched and fledged. Upon reaching sexual maturity, Canada geese will usually attempt to nest at the site or in the vicinity of where they learned to fly. Though competition for nesting sites may prevent or delay their reproductive efforts, their continued utilization of the site is likely. Large flocks can develop from the annual reproductive efforts of just a few pair.

The eggs and nests of Canada Geese are protected by federal and state regulations. Their destruction is illegal except as authorized by permit. The object of the permit is to allow you to control the population of Canada Geese on your property by preventing reproduction. This can be accomplished by rendering the eggs non-productive and at the same time, preventing re-nesting attempts.

The following instructions are provided for individuals or institutions holding valid permits to destroy the eggs and nests of Canada Geese in most conflict situations. However, if the problem involves a pair of geese that are overly aggressive towards humans, the eggs should be removed, the nest destroyed, and an object such as a traffic cone or box should be placed over the nesting site. The geese should then be continually harassed until they leave the site. In this situation the goal is to solve the problem quickly and get the geese to move on. The geese will likely re-nest, but hopefully in a location where they will not cause a conflict. If the geese continue to stay in the vicinity and be aggressive towards humans, then contact USDA-Wildlife Services (217) 241-6700 for additional options. For all other goose conflict situations, use the following instructions:

The permittee is directed to render the eggs non-productive at the earliest possible stage of embryo development. The initiation of incubation can occur at any time between early March and early May. Most years, this activity peaks during mid-March to mid-April. An indication that nesting has commenced is the presence of a single bird at a location formerly occupied by a bonded pair. **Your permit does not authorize the possession of the eggs by you or by others. They are to be disposed of by burial after removal from the nest.**

Canada geese can be very aggressive towards humans when their nest is threatened. Although not equipped with beak capable of serious injury, their bite can feel like a hard pinch. The birds can also use their wing or body to deliver a heavy blow or use their claws to scratch. Nest visitations might best be accomplished by two persons, one to work with the eggs, and the other to ward off attacks. The person standing guard might carry an object (ie. a boat oar, broom, garbage can lid, etc.). There should be no need to strike the bird; merely hold the object between yourself and the bird to prevent physical contact. **You are not permitted to strike or injure the geese.**

1. The first step is to locate the nest. Canada goose nests are not usually hard to find. They are normally constructed in open view and in close proximity to water. Nests are often positioned on an elevated site, such as a muskrat house, dike, or hummock. Sometimes they are located in the edges of brushy areas. Islands are highly preferred nesting sites.

Canada Geese are very aggressive towards other geese when defending their nesting territory, which includes the nesting site and an associated peripheral area. Both birds will participate in territorial defense by attacking intruders. When not under attack, non-breeders may be observed in small flocks, away from the defended territory. Usually the repeated presence of one bird in a general area indicates that there may be a nest hidden nearby. Small ponds normally support only one nesting pair while large bodies of water may contain the territories of several pairs. Observations during late February and early March should produce a reliable estimate of the number of pairs that will attempt to nest. In many urban situations, the birds utilizing water areas at one location are produced on the property owned by another. While it is possible to get a permit to destroy nests on the property owned by another, the permission of the landowner is required. It is the responsibility of the permittee to obtain that permission.

2. Once the nest is located, the objective is to prevent a successful hatching. This can be accomplished by rendering the eggs non-productive in a manner that will prevent a re-nesting attempt. Canada geese will generally not attempt to re-nest if they have been incubating for more than three weeks. Therefore, it is necessary to know the age of the embryo (i.e., the number of days the egg has been incubated.) When eggs feel cool, incubation has not begun, and the clutch may not be complete. Take no action. Wait a few days and visit the nest again. When the eggs feel warm, incubation has begun and the embryo can be aged by the flotation method. Place one egg in standing water. Any available water will do, even that contained in a bucket or pail, provided the water is deeper than the length of the egg. Reference the following chart to determine the age of the embryo.

3. If the eggs are in flotation stage 1 through 4, the goose has not incubated for the period required to prevent a re-nesting attempt. The eggs should be rendered non-productive by vigorously shaking (for at least 60 seconds) or by completely coating them with corn oil and should be replaced in the nest. **100% food grade corn oil is the only oil approved by the US EPA for this use! See the info at this link before applying egg oil:**

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/nwrc/publications/Tech_Notes/TN_EggOil.pdf

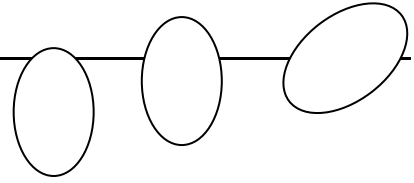
If these non-productive eggs are not later removed from the nest, the goose will continue to incubate them for an inordinate period of time. Therefore, it is necessary to return at a later date to terminate the incubation effort by removing the eggs and destroying the nest. The attached chart specifies the waiting period for returning to the nest for egg removal and nest destruction.

If the eggs are in flotation stage 5 or 6, incubation has progressed for more than two weeks. Remove the eggs and destroy the nest. The embryos may be destroyed by freezing. Eggs that are in flotation stage 6 may be on the verge of hatching, and one or more of the eggs in this stage may be pipped (chick has broken the shell). If pipping has occurred, you are **not authorized to destroy or remove any eggs in the nest or the nest itself.**

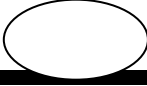
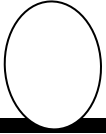
AGING CANADA GOOSE EMBRYOS

Flotation Method

Water surface



Egg Flotation

						
				bottom		
Flotation Stage	1	2	3	4	5	6
Approximate Embryo age in days	0-3	4-8	9-13	14-18	19-23	24-27
Waiting period (days) prior to egg removal and nest destruction	20	15	10	5	0	0

For further information, contact:

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 or
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