

Canada Geese in Winter: Whose Turf Is It?

Canada geese love turf as much as we do, but for different reasons. While humans love to run and play on turf, Canada geese love to eat it.

Because Canada geese love turf so much, it is nearly impossible to keep them away from it, particularly in winter.

Tips for sharing our turf with geese:

- Do not feed geese, it encourages them to congregate
- Remember that many of the geese will leave for the summer months as they migrate north to raise a family
- It is not legal to harass or harm geese
- Remember the important role goose predators such as coyotes, foxes, snakes, and raccoons play in controlling goose populations

Waterfowl feeding

Feeding waterfowl is not healthy for the birds or your local park.

- Human food does not provide the nutrition necessary to keep waterfowl warm and feathers healthy.
- Feeding ducks and geese concentrates these birds unnaturally, which increases waste and damage.
- Increased waste degrades water quality and the aesthetics of ponds and adjacent areas.

Waterfowl need the protein and fiber that can only come from their natural food sources like seeds, plants, invertebrates, and small fish. Fats, protein, and fiber from natural foods keep feathers healthy and fat stores high. Bread and other human handouts provide empty calories, reducing birds' ability to stay warm, alert, and healthy.

Feeding waterfowl also fouls the water. As the ducks and geese congregate, they leave behind more waste, which reduces water quality. The resulting algae, smell, and mess makes your park less healthy and enjoyable for everyone, including the birds.

Canada goose diet information:

Vegetation preferences:

A scientific study of Canada goose vegetation preferences indicated the only vegetation they prefer over Kentucky bluegrass was a mixture of brome and dock. (Pochop, Cummings, Wedemeyer, Engeman, and Davis, 1999)

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