

Canada Goose behavior calendar & best times/techniques for successful dispersal –

A summary guide by Dr. Philip Whitford.

Note: Canada geese have strong traditions of reusing the same sites. As such, if they have used a site in prior years, they will be harder to move than new arrivals that never have been there before. This is also the reason it is important to prevent even a few birds from nesting and resting on the property. The site use tradition is passed on to the young, causing yearly increase in both numbers and resistance to moving. Please see full Instructions accompanying your GooseBuster unit for further details on use & deployment.

Months & difficulty of goose dispersal		Goose behavior	Recommendations for use & settings of GooseBuster	Recommendations for other harassment techniques to accompany GB
January	Fairly easy	Migrants and resident pairs search for food & safety from disturbance. Little to no territoriality – geese move on if made uncomfortable.	GB use discourages geese from remaining on property and scares away any new arrivals. Extra harassment occasionally called-for in the case of stubborn resident infestations, especially if you are just now beginning your program.	GB alone may be fully effective. Discourage obstinate geese by chasing.
February	Becoming more difficult	Migrants start to return North. Nesting behavior begins. Territories are claimed and defended. Geese reluctant to leave established territories.	Begin with settings at shortest intervals till successful; increase intervals & decrease hours of operation once geese have dispersed to maintain deterrent effect.	Make every possible effort to harass and disperse nesting pairs before they construct nests. Discourage obstinate geese by chasing. Occasional dog use permissible if wished. Use of lasers or spotlights after dark, and pulling ropes across ponds also useful techniques.
March	Non-territorial birds – fairly easy.	Non-territorial birds will move on if harassed by GB and/or chasing. Nesting pairs very hard to remove. Eggs are laid and defended. Established nests abandoned only via constant harassment and nest disturbance.	GB use makes property less attractive to nesting birds, who will go elsewhere if they can. Will discourage any new arrivals from staying. Established nest sites present special challenges. Extra harassment essential for success. Settings: short intervals, long hours of operation till successful.	If nests have been established despite harassment efforts, cover with sticks to discourage egg-laying & associated aggression.
April	Nesting pairs – very difficult.			
May	Possible: goose families may be encouraged to move, but only to areas they can reach on foot.	Geese become flightless due to molt of primaries and tail feathers. Nonbreeding geese moving to feather molting sites. Disperse them as quickly as possible on arrival. They must be gone by no later than June 1 or they won't be able to fly away. Eggs hatch, territories are abandoned. Families seek open grassy areas near water. Will only move where they can walk. If excluded from water, geese may seek other nearby areas instead.	GB use discourages geese from remaining on any property they can leave without flight. Extra harassment essential for success.	Flightless geese & goslings may be chased off property to nearby areas. Dogs should not be used for harassment in the presence of very young goslings (protected). Excluding geese from water by low fencing may force them to find other bodies of water for refuge when threatened.
June				
July	Improving chance of dispersal. Good chance to prevent new encroachments.	Goslings begin flying, and adults regain ability to fly. Resident birds return to normal fall and wintering sites. Readily seek other areas if harassed.	GB use discourages geese from remaining on property and scares away any new arrivals.	Discourage obstinate geese by chasing. Occasional dog use permissible if wished. Use of lasers or spotlights after dark, and pulling ropes across ponds also useful techniques.
August				
September	Not too difficult. Excellent time to discourage any new arrivals from getting comfortable.	Migrants from Canada appear. Numbers climb throughout fall. Arriving geese easily moved on if spooked – begin program now for best results.	Extra harassment occasionally called-for in the case of stubborn infestations of geese with strong traditions of use of the site, especially if you are just now beginning your program.	
October	Fairly easy. Good time to start or keep up dispersal efforts. Discourage any transient geese from settling in for the winter.	Peak of migration = November. Best prevention is to have removed resident geese from property before migrants arrive. New geese may be discouraged from settling quite readily.	Begin with settings at shortest intervals till successful; increase intervals & decrease hours of operation once geese have dispersed to maintain deterrent effect.	GB alone may be fully effective, depending on location. Discourage obstinate geese by chasing. Occasional dog use permissible if wished, though not essential. Strobe lights at night and pulling ropes across ponds also useful techniques.
November				
December				