



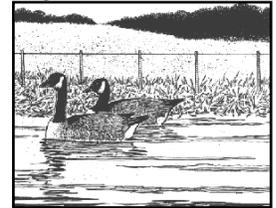
West Chester Fact Sheet Goose Control Techniques

The following is a summary of the various control techniques used to deter geese from occupying ponds. These techniques can be effective if used properly. Typically, one technique alone will not deter geese, as they will adapt to adverse conditions. Multiple techniques should be utilized at the same time.

◇ ALTERED HABITAT

- **PHYSICAL BARRIERS** – This method is intended to deter geese from entering the pond directly from flight and from walking into the pond.

- Rocks – *Boulders approximately 2 feet in diameter can be placed haphazardly around the perimeter of the pond to prevent geese from easily moving to and from the water to the grassy feeding areas. This creates additional potential predator hiding spots which increases a goose's wariness. Probably the most aesthetically pleasing method of deterring geese, but a goose will often find ways around it.*
- Wire – *A single strand of 16 gauge galvanized wire can be positioned approximately 8 inches above the ground around the perimeter of the pond to deter geese from walking in and out of the pond. Can be more effective if additional wires are added at different heights (6in & 12in). Probably as effective as rocks, if rocks are not desirable.*
- Wire Grid – *A wire grid can be constructed approximately 12 inches above the water's surface and on 20-foot centers, to deter geese from landing directly in the water from flight. Probably effective, but will detract aesthetically from the pond.*
- Fence – *The use of a fence around the perimeter of a pond can deter geese from walking in and out of the pond. Probably effective, but will detract aesthetically from the pond.*



- **VEGETATIVE BARRIERS** – This method is intended to deter geese from occupying a pond due to increased fear of predators.

- Tall Grass – *By allowing the grass immediately surrounding the pond to grow several feet tall, geese may be wary of occupying the pond because the increased threat of predators. It is recommended that a 20- to 30-foot wide strip be maintained around the pond. Effective, but not aesthetically pleasing.*
- Cat Tails, Wildflowers, Shrubs, Ivy – *Similar to tall grass, other tall and dense plants will increase the threat of predators and deter geese. Effective, can be aesthetically pleasing but makes it difficult for human interaction with the water's edge.*



- **UNPALATABLE VEGETATION** – This method is intended to encourage geese to leave an area that they usually occupy, due to a lack of desirable food.

- Tall Fescue Grass – *Geese usually do not like this type of grass, as opposed to Kentucky Blue Grass, which is a goose favorite. Grass that has been fertilized will also taste better to geese.*
- Repellents – *Certain chemicals can be applied to the feeding area to make the grass undesirable to eat, causing them to search elsewhere for a food source. ReJeX-iT is typically a successful repellent that has methyl anthranilate, which is an artificial flavoring used in grape bubble gum, grape popsicles, and grape Kool-Aid, that does not harm the geese, but they find it repulsive. The drawbacks to such repellents are that they may repel other types of wildlife and the chemical typically has to be applied every time it rains or the grass is cut. **Effective, but very high maintenance.***



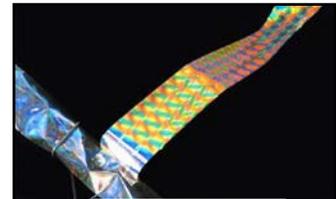
- **PROHIBIT FEEDING** – One of the biggest contributors to geese attraction is when people feed them. Once they are fed, they will return looking for more food, often with more geese.

- Signs – *Instructions to not feed the geese can be posted near the pond.*
- Education – *An effort to educate the public on reasons for not feeding the geese will raise awareness. Newsletters, bulletin board postings, etc.*

◆ SCARE TACTICS

- **Visual Scare Tactics** - Most visual scare tactics require them to be moved every 3-4 days to be effective, or the geese will learn that they do not present a danger.

- Streamers – *Reflective tape can be strung between posts around the perimeter of the pond. The reflection from the sun can startle nearby geese. **Not aesthetically pleasing. Can be effective, but the tape isn't very durable and will often break creating a big maintenance and clean-up issue.***
- Balloons, Flags – *Objects that move in the wind may stimulate a goose's innate fear response causing them to leave. May be more effective if they contain a graphic that resembles a predator. **Not aesthetically pleasing.***
- Owl Decoy, Dead Goose Decoy, Alligator Head Decoy – *Objects that resemble a predator or goose danger may deter geese from occupying a pond. **Can be effective, but the decoys have to be moved regularly.***



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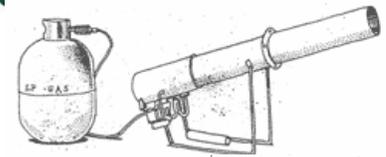
- › Scare Windmill – *An object that is shaped like a large bird that has propellers on each side that will spin and simulate the flapping of wings of other geese taking off in fright. The propellers are often painted with a reflective material so it is more visible. Can be effective, but the windmill should be moved regularly.*

- **Audio Scare Tactics** - *Most audio scare tactics are unpopular in residential areas because they are disruptive to people too.*

- › Goose Distress Calls – *Pre-recorded sounds of potential danger can be played to scare the geese. Other deterrents should be used to be effective. Not practical in a residential setting.*



- › Propane Cannon – *This generates a loud bang to scare geese away from the area. More effective if multiple cannons are used and they are moved around regularly so the geese don't become comfortable with it and ignore it. Not practical in a residential setting.*



- › Pyrotechnics – *Similar to fireworks (ie. whistlers, noise bombs, shellcrackers, etc.), they are ignited to create loud noise. Not practical in a residential setting.*



- › Firearm Blanks – *Shot off to scare away any geese. Not practical in a residential setting.*

- **Physical Scare Tactics** - *Most physical scare tactics need to be prompt and persistent to be effective*

- › Water Spray Devices – *Pressurized water sprayers that are operated by a motion detector to spray any nearby geese and scare them off. Can be effective, if repositioned regularly.*

- › Dogs – *A dog can be trained to herd off geese. Border Collies and English Setters are the recommended breeds for this purpose. Not practical in a residential setting.*



- › Radio Controlled Aircraft/Boat – *Can be used to harass geese and herd them away from the pond by air and water. Effective, but requires persistent human efforts.*

- ◇ **INTERVENTION**

- **Local Authorities** – *When other goose control techniques have consistently failed, local organizations can be contacted for assistance. Permits are usually required for these methods.*

- › Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife
- › U.S. Department of Agriculture

- **Egg Destruction** – *It is illegal to destroy the eggs since geese are protected by federal migratory bird laws, but eggs can be tampered with to ensure that they don't hatch. Eggs can be vigorously shaken to make the embryos unviable, and returned to the nest. Mineral oil can be sprayed on the eggs blocking oxygen transfer, which will have the same effect as egg shaking.*

- *Removal of Nesting Materials – If it is observed that nests are being constructed, the nesting materials can be removed immediately to deter geese from laying eggs around the pond. Once a goose lays eggs in a nest, the nest may not be disturbed since it is protected by federal migratory bird laws.*
- **Relocation** – *Geese can be captured and physically removed from certain ponds if human safety and health concerns are present. Geese often return to the pond, even if relocated several hundred miles away.*
- **Hunting** – *Goose population can be reduced by such lethal forms. Usually only an option in rural settings. **Not practical in a residential setting.***

