

Sports Turf Manager

FOR BETTER, SAFER SPORTS TURF. SUMMER 2013. VOL. 26. NO. 2.

Understanding Canada Goose Management

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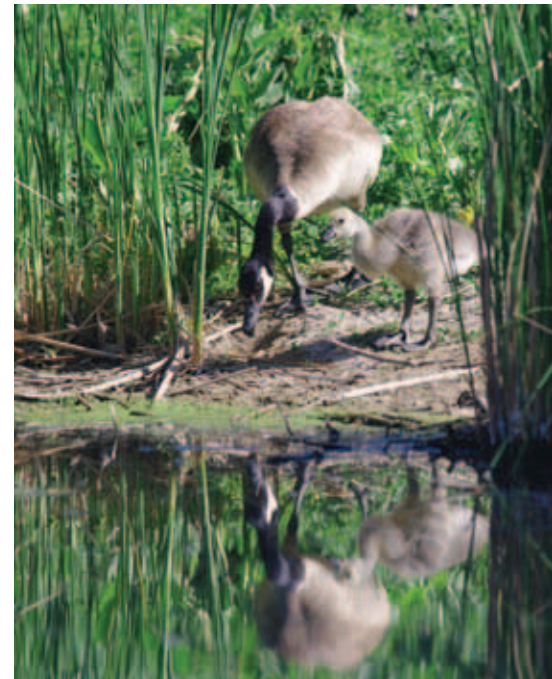
The Canada goose — is it an iconic symbol of our nation or a pest that plagues our green spaces? Just as opinions of this bird vary, so does the goose itself — not all Canada geese are created equal. And thus come the challenges of Canada goose management. No singular management technique is effective or even appropriate to relieve the pressure these birds can apply to our landscapes. To improve our ability to manage geese and goose related conflict, we must know more about the issues and the birds themselves. It is not the intention of this article to describe the different methods of management (and there are many), but to identify some considerations important to understanding Canada goose management.

Taxonomy

The first issue is basic taxonomy — understanding the differences in subspecies

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and how they are categorized. Canada goose taxonomy is a dynamic classification system — one that has evolved and will likely continue to do so. Recently, the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU; the body responsible for naming birds in North America) divided Canada geese into two species — large bodied (Canada geese; *Branta canadensis*) and small bodied (Cackling geese; *Branta hutchinsii*). Within each species are several subspecies, such that 12 different subspecies of Canada and



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