

BEHAVIORAL TRAITS OF A CANADA GOOSE

Range and Habitat:

This goose breeds from Alaska east to Baffin Island and south to California, Illinois, and Massachusetts. It winters south to northern Mexico and the Gulf Coast. As a semi-domesticated bird, it is widespread in city parks and on reservoirs. Preferred habitat includes lakes, bays, rivers, and marshes. Canadian Geese often feed in open grasslands and stubble fields.

Breeding and Nesting:

Four to eight whitish eggs are laid in a large mass of grass and moss lined with down. The nest is usually on the ground near water or on a muskrat lodge, but sometimes it is in a tree in an abandoned Osprey or Bald Eagle nest. Incubation ranges from 25 to 30 days and is carried out by the female.

Foraging and Feeding:

When on land, these geese eat a variety of grasses including Bermuda grass, salt grass and wild barley. Geese are able to grab a hold of each blade and pull it out with their bills by jerking their heads. They also eat wheat, beans, rice, and corn. In the water, the birds stick their head and upper part of their body into the water leaving their tail and back end extending in the air. They also eat a number of aquatic plants such as eel grass, sea lettuce and sago.

Vocalization:

In larger races, this goose will emit a rich musical honking, while in smaller races will emit a high-pitched cackling.

Similar Species:

The smaller Brant Goose is similar, which has a black breast, white flanks and a small white neck patch rather than a large white throat and cheek patch.



Breeding Locations:

Forest edge, Grasslands, Marshes, freshwater, Swamps

Breeding Type:

Abundant, Increasing

Breeding Population:

Forest edge, Grasslands, Marshes, freshwater, Swamps

Egg Color: White

Number of Eggs: 4 - 6

Incubation Days: 13 - 16

Egg Incubator: Female

Nest Material:

Dried grass and plant stems, Lined with down.

Migration: Migratory