

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

2008 Bird Strike Committee USA/Canada, 10th
Annual Meeting, Orlando, Florida

Bird Strike Committee Proceedings

8-1-2008

The Geese of Queens: Movement and Management of Canada Geese in Relation to New York City Airports

Scott E. Clemons
USDA Wildlife Services

Allen Gosser
USDA Wildlife Services

Martin Lowney
USDA Wildlife Services

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/birdstrike2008>

 Part of the [Environmental Health and Protection Commons](#)

Clemons, Scott E.; Gosser, Allen; and Lowney, Martin, "The Geese of Queens: Movement and Management of Canada Geese in Relation to New York City Airports" (2008). *2008 Bird Strike Committee USA/Canada, 10th Annual Meeting, Orlando, Florida*. Paper 11.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/birdstrike2008/11>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Bird Strike Committee Proceedings at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in 2008 Bird Strike Committee USA/Canada, 10th Annual Meeting, Orlando, Florida by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

The Geese of Queens: Movement and Management of Canada Geese in Relation to New York City Airports

Scott E. Clemons, Allen L. Gosser, and Martin S. Lowney

USDA Wildlife Services, 1930 Route 9, Castleton, NY 12033 USA

Thomas W. Seamans

USDA Wildlife Services, National Wildlife Research Center, 6100

Columbus Avenue, Sandusky, OH 44870 USA

Non-migratory Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*) populations are increasing and pose a significant threat to civil aviation as aircraft components and engines are not built to withstand the strike of a bird weighing in excess of 4 kg. Since 1995, 10 aircraft have incurred substantial damage after striking Canada geese while landing or departing from LaGuardia (LGA) or John F. Kennedy (JFK) Airports, New York City. As part of a research program to determine the origin of geese that threaten aircraft in New York City, we neck-collared 300 Canada geese within 8 km of either the JFK or LGA in 2006. After 2 years of systematic observations, approximately 39% of the geese were still recorded in the New York City study area. Birds that left have been reported in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. Geese remaining within the study area moved an average of 5 km (range 3 – 15 km) from their original banding locations and had home ranges averaging about 20 km² (range 10 – 30 km²). JFK was within the movement patterns of the marked geese. Two locations within the study were subject to harassment as part of a Canada goose control program conducted by the USDA Wildlife Services (WS) and a private company (Geese Off). Geese in these areas did not leave the study area but moved <5 km from the harassment sites. In addition to the neck-color study, WS conducted a goose removal program at Rikers Island, adjacent to La Guardia Airport from 2004-2008. The number of geese removed from Rikers Island decreased yearly (2004, n=518; 2005, n=288; 2006, n=200; 2007, n=166; 2008, n=77) and the number of goose strikes at La Guardia decreased by 80%. Our study indicates that a) geese within 8 km of the New York City airports do pose a threat to aircraft operating out of

Abstract of poster presentation at Bird Strike Committee USA/Canada Meeting, Lake Mary and Sanford, Florida, August 18–21, 2008.

the airports; b) harassment programs shift geese within an area but do not necessarily reduce the threat; and c) a removal program near LGA did eliminate problematic geese and result in reduced strikes.