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# 2023 MID-ISLAND CANADA GOOSE WINTER COUNT

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Guardians of our Salish Estuaries



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[estuaryguardians.org](http://estuaryguardians.org)

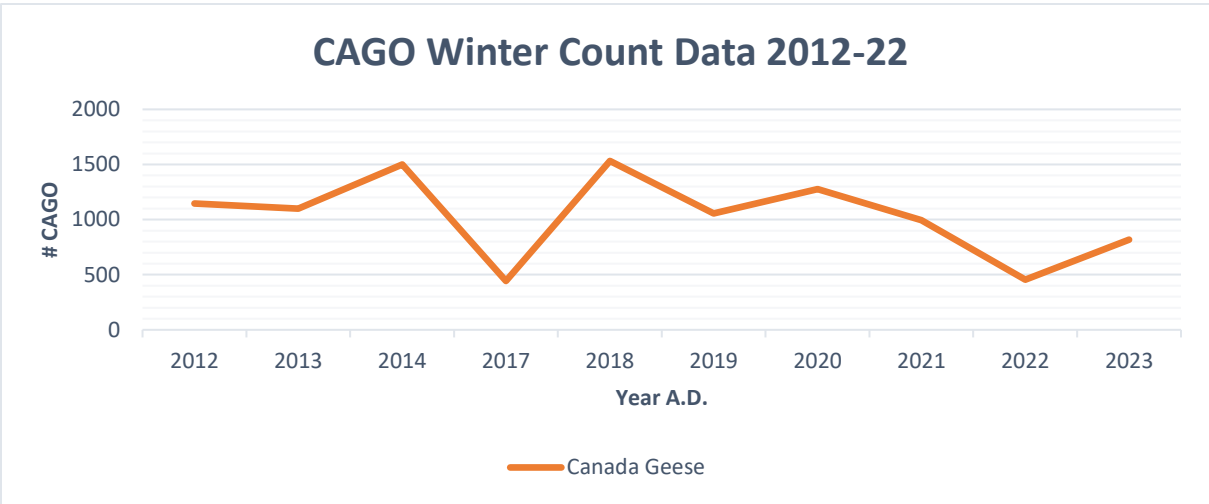
## Summary

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2023, Guardians of our Salish Estuaries' (GooSE) wildlife biologist Garreth Ashley and President John Cooper conducted a Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) winter population survey in the Mid-Island region of Vancouver Island. The survey was done by direct count. Pre-assigned areas were given to surveyors before the day of the count. Binoculars and spotting scopes were used to count CAGO, results were tallied at the end of the day at a meeting via telephonic communication.

During the survey 817 Canada Geese were observed from approximately Lantzville to Qualicum Bay during the count. This number is number was an increase from last year's count which tallied at 476. The annual average of CAGO winter counts since 2012 is now 1032.5. Our 2022 addling data shows that nesting numbers are once again on the rise in the Englishman River estuary. In 2016 there were 72 active nests in ERE after our initial First Nations led adult CAGO harvest which specifically targeted the ERE nesting population, the number of nests fell to 26. In the several years following the number was reduced to 18 nests due to annual addling. However in the last two years the nesting numbers have been climbing again, collar-tag data shows that this is primarily from maturing birds from Nanaimo moving into the newly available habitat freed up by mitigation efforts. A 2023 harvest will be needed in Parksville to fully address the rising trend in nesting and GooSE will be recommending to the City of Nanaimo that they host a harvest in the 2023 as well.



**Photo 1:** a gaggle of Canada Geese graze in Parksville Community Park.



**Figure 1:** Winter count totals since 2012-23, 2015 and 2016 had no count conducted.

**Table 1:** Historical data from GoMIES’ CAGO winter counts. Mid-Island Region

Year A.D.	#CAGO	Weather Conditions
2012	1146	N/A
2013	1100	N/A
2014	1500	N/A
2015	No count	
2016	No count	
2017	446	10°C West light wind
2018	1532	17°C SE light wind
2019	1056	6°C East winds
2020	1276	8°C North winds, overcast, flooding
2021	996	5°C E, SE winds overcast light rain
2022	456	4°C very light W wind Overcast, no rain
2023	817	8° overcast, slight breeze, picking up in the afternoon

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<b>Annual Average</b>	<b>1032.5</b>	Vancouver Island British Columbia
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Source: Guardians of Mid-Island Estuaries Society