

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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NORTH AMERICAN GOOSE POPULATIONS AT HIGH LEVELS

North American goose populations are generally "in good shape," the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife reports. Although some Canada and white-fronted flocks require protective regulations, goose numbers in many areas are at high levels.

Canada geese that winter on the Atlantic Coast are at a record high, the Bureau's 1970 winter survey revealed. Canada geese are also in record numbers in parts of the Mississippi and Central flyways, while numbers in mid-continental blue and snow goose populations are about average. "Average" would describe Pacific flyway snow geese, too.

Production was good in 1970--better than in 1969 due to early breakup and warmer spring weather in Alaska and Canada's western and central Arctic. An exception to this was in the lowlands south of Hudson Bay and west of James Bay, where snow covered breeding grounds during part of the critical nesting period.

The good nesting weather should have been beneficial in the Pacific and Central flyway populations, while bad weather in the Hudson Bay lowlands probably reduced production in Mississippi flyway Canada geese. Information is scanty on breeding conditions for the Atlantic Coast's Canada geese, but this population will be at a high level even with normal production.