Loons communicate among themselves using a variety of visual displays and calls. There are several ways in which loons communicate distress if people approach loons too closely, especially those with chicks or those on the nest.

Loons are heavy-bodied birds and normally float low in the water. However, when a loon senses a threat it expels air from between its feathers causing it to sink even lower.

The Loon Preservation Committee’s mission is to restore and maintain a healthy population of loons throughout New Hampshire; to monitor the health and productivity of loon populations as sentinels of environmental quality; and to promote a greater understanding of loons and the natural world.
If you approach too near a nesting loon or a loon with chicks it might give a “tremolo” alarm call that sounds like crazy laughter. If the loon is very agitated it may rear up and thrash about in the water.

If you are close to a loon that is calling or displaying, please move away!

Nesting is a vulnerable time for loons, who typically incubate eggs between late May and early July. Normally a loon on the nest stays in a relaxed position with its head upright.

A loon with its head craned forward or down senses a threat and might abandon its nest, leaving the eggs to be taken by a predator or destroyed by chilling or overheating.

If you see a loon in this head-down posture, please back away!

For more information about loons and the Loon Preservation Committee, please visit our website at www.loon.org, or call The Loon Center at (603)-476-LOON.