



Loon Preservation Committee **NEWSLETTER**

P.O. Box 604, Lee's Mill Road, Moultonborough, NH 03254; www.loon.org

FALL 2012



Photo Courtesy of Kittie Wilson from her "Little Loons in Feather Beds" 2013 calendar available at The Loon's Feather Gift Shop

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The Loon Preservation Committee

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The Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) is a non-profit, self-directed and self-funded affiliate of the Audubon Society of New Hampshire (ASNH). Autonomous in membership and fundraising, LPC works to preserve loons and their habitats in New Hampshire through monitoring, research, management and education.

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Loons in the Crosshairs

Late in a sunny day this past August, the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) got an odd call. Residents of Back Lake in Pittsburg, New Hampshire were hand-feeding small fish to a loon that had approached them at the water's edge. We were a little skeptical – you would be surprised how many times these kinds of reports turn out to be mallards, mergansers, cormorants, even once a guinea fowl – but we soon learned that this odd duck was, in fact, a loon. Soon after, the loon began to beach itself. That behavior is usually not a good sign, and we asked Will Staats, a NH Fish and Game Biologist in the North Country, to investigate.

Will picked up the loon and transported it to the New Hampton Fish and Game office. LPC Staff Biologist Chris Conrod took it from there and quickly arranged for a radiograph at the Whitefield Animal Hospital to look for ingested lead fishing tackle (standard practice, since that is the cause of half of dead adult loons collected in New Hampshire). What we found instead was 23 pieces of buckshot in the head, neck and left wing of this unfortunate loon. Chris transported it to Kappy Sprenger, an experienced wildlife rehabilitator, but this poor bird had run out of options. After a short attempt to nurse it back to health, it was euthanized as a result of its injuries.

This loon became national news – a reporter at a Boston television station described the shooting as "A maddening case of animal cruelty." The willful harming of a loon (we know it was not simply mistaken for a duck, because it was shot outside of hunting season) is troubling and not as rare as you might think; since 1989 we have lost four loons to gunshot wounds, and another 12 loons that died of other causes were found to be carrying shot in their bodies.

People shooting loons is a serious thing, but the larger issue by far in loon mortality remains ingested lead fishing tackle. I find it odd that one shot loon can engender national outrage, when we have lost **30 times** more loons to lead fishing tackle than to shot in New Hampshire with, apparently, far less concern. No one put their gunsights on those 120 lead-killed loons, but they are just as dead as that unfortunate Back Lake bird.

Loons are a scientifically important species in part because their presence or absence on a lake, and the health and breeding success of the population, are an indicator of the health of our lakes and ponds. But they indicate a lot more, including our care for our fellow animals. People who continue to fish with lead sinkers or lead-headed fishing jigs when there are safe and effective non-toxic alternatives should know better by now. I wish that our rightful outrage about the act of cruelty on Back Lake was mirrored by equal outrage at acts of carelessness that cause death just as surely, and far more often, than putting a loon in the crosshairs.



Summer 2012 Field Season Summary

Seacoast and Northern Monadnock Regions Sustain the State

This year's monitoring revealed a slight increase in the breeding loon population but a pretty lackluster nesting season. After a mild spring and no major storms or heat waves, a bumper crop of loon chicks seemed imminent by mid-June. Instead, we saw only mixed success, with the Seacoast and Sunapee areas leading the way, and other regions, especially North Country and southern Monadnock, trailing more than usual. The 134 loon chicks fledged this year was 14 less than last year, in spite of an increase in the number of nesting pairs. We were surprised to see a record number of nest failures, with no single factor prominent. Predated nests appeared more common, but without more obvious trends interpretation will require a case-by-case look at the particular outcomes in individual loon territories. Pending those results, see the chart on page 4 for more state-wide highlights and the regional summaries that follow for details.

Loon Recovery Plan Results in Most Intensive Nest Site Management Ever

Loon nesting success this year was the product of the most intensive state-wide nest site management in almost thirty years. LPC volunteers and staff floated a record 79 rafts, with another dozen placed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service at Lake Umbagog. Floating signs were placed at 83 nest sites or brooding territories. In total, over half of all chicks hatched this year came from these managed territories,



Photo Courtesy of Alexander Constan

the highest proportion since 1984. Since the total number of nests and chicks has more than doubled since the 1980s, we are now floating more than twice as many rafts and signs. This increase has relied on the commitment of an ever-expanding group of volunteers. Thanks go to all who have helped; your work had a particularly big impact this year!

We also carried out a second round of outreach to dam owners around the state, alerting them to the risk that fluctuating water levels pose to nesting loons. The work was led by volunteer Dana Duxbury-Fox and inspired by the memory of LPC board member Joe Kabat, who helped spearhead an initial effort in 2010. In May we mailed a joint letter with the Department of Environmental Services (DES) Dam Bureau to 71 dam owners, covering all 127 impounded lakes with recent loon nesting activity. State agencies (Fish and Game and DES) own and operate over 40 of these dams, and Dana and LPC staff met with these agencies in April

to discuss water level management and identify priority lakes where water-level nest failures are common. DES Dam Bureau Director James Gallagher and Engineer Steve Doyon helped develop management guidelines included in the mailing. Many thanks for their support and to Dana Duxbury-Fox!

Record Survey Effort

We had an exceptionally experienced and dedicated field staff this season, with several decades of combined field experience for our eight-person crew. With the help of our volunteer network, field surveys covered a record 351 lakes and 491 occupied or potential territories. About 40% of the surveyed lakes are not yet occupied, but the extra leg work (or paddling effort!) to survey them helps assess potential habitat and track re-colonization, ensuring a complete count of the population.

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Results and Highlights for 2012 Common Loon Breeding Season in New Hampshire

Population and Productivity	2012	Pre-Loon Recovery Plan (2005-2009 ave.)	2012 vs. Pre-Loon Recovery Plan
Adults-Paired/Territorial/Breeding	560	462	+21%
Adults-Unpaired	78	82	-0.5%
Immatures	8	5	+54%
Nesting Pairs	188	155	+21%
Chicks Hatched	170	138	+23%
Chicks Surviving to mid-August	134	105	+28%
Nest Failures	99	78	+28%
Chicks Surviving/Territorial Pair	0.48	0.46	+4%

Management Activity

Rafts (including Umbagog NWR)	91	56	+63%
Signs/Ropes	83	61	+37%
Successful Rescue/Releases	1	2.4	-58%



1st Nesting Pairs	Franklin Pierce Lake, Sawyer Lake, Winnisquam-South
1st Successful Hatch	Conway Lake/No Man's Land, McDaniel's Marsh, Little Island Pond
1st Time Pairs	Dublin Lake, Pleasant Lake (Henniker), Smith Pond (Washington)(since the mid-1990s); Goose, Success Ponds and Lake Francis-North Cove all had an additional pair this year.
Pairs Absent	Silver Lake (Madison), Indian Pond, Weare Reservoir, Second Connecticut-West, Newfound Lake, Trio Ponds, Squam Lake (Piper C.), Umbagog (Stateline C.), Winnepesaukee (Copps Bk., Hurricane and Poplar Islands)
Nest Failures	More nest failures from predation than usual and a record high number of nest failures from all causes. Nest failures by cause (2012 vs. 5-yr. ave.) included predation (23), water-level change (10), human disturbance (5), other loons (2), and unknown causes (59).

The dramatic increases in LPC's management and outreach to support New Hampshire's loons (record numbers of rafts, signs and ropelines, and educational programs in 2012 among other accomplishments) were made possible in large part by donations to LPC's Loon Recovery Plan. We would like to thank all who contributed for their support of this important initiative!

LAKES REGION:

This season in the Lakes Region we counted 48 breeding loon pairs, hatching and fledging 24 chicks. This was an increase of one pair over 2011 and a slight increase over last year's 20 chicks. There were successful nests on some consistent lakes, like Bearcamp Pond, Duncan Pond, and Chocorua Lake. We were excited by a second year of success at Iona Lake in Albany and a return to successful nesting at White Oak Pond and Lake Winnisquam. Other pairs continued to struggle. For example, there was no nesting at Ossipee and White Lake and another failed nest at Conner Pond. Several lakes that usually produce chicks were either missing their pair, like Silver Lake in Madison, or did not nest, like Long Pond in Benton.

Winnisquam Sees a New Nest and Non-Maternal Brooding Female

Winnisquam loon watchers discovered a new nesting pair this year. In July, former LPC Director Betsy Ayotte (Poirer in the early 1990s) found a nest within a dozen feet of her family's island camp, well hidden under shore-line shrubs. This was the first known nesting on this part of the lake. Unfortunately, the nest was abandoned. An inviable egg was collected and submitted to LPC.

An exceedingly rare instance of non-pair brooding behavior was the news at the north end of Winnisquam, the usual breeding territory. The loon pair hadn't nested since 2008 but this year hatched two chicks in mid-July. Immediately following the hatch, intruding loons were an almost constant presence, with a posse of as many as nine loons entering the territory daily, and much aggression and calling witnessed by volunteers Winnie and Dave



Photo Courtesy of Gail Colozzi

Bill Greene and LPC Senior Biologist John Cooley, along with students from the Community School, tend to a loon nesting raft on Bearcamp Pond.

McCullough, Janette Richardson, and Janette's neighbors. Shortly after we captured and banded the adult loons in late July, volunteers confirmed that the banded female loon had been displaced by intruding loons and one of the two chicks was missing. A close volunteer watch and follow-up surveys by LPC staff confirmed that during the month of August, the banded male foraged for the remaining chick and was joined by a second unbanded adult loon in the brooding area. At first, the newcomer kept its distance from the chick, warding off at times by the male loon. After reports of an eagle diving at the chick in August, the chick was seen beaching itself and frequently back on the nest raft. By the end of August, it became clear that the new, unbanded loon had assumed the displaced female's role. Both adult loons were observed feeding the chick in early September. This collective or non-pair mem-

ber brooding at Winnisquam is an exciting discovery, since the behavior has been reported in loons only a handful of times, all in the Midwest. The network of volunteer loon watchers and interested residents was essential to establishing the presence of a brooding newcomer to the territory.

MONADNOCK-NORTH:

The Dartmouth-Sunapee region tallied 27 breeding loon pairs and 28 surviving chicks, the most productive year we've recorded for this set of lakes. This included another season with three successful pairs on one 300-acre lake, an additional pair on Goose Pond in Canaan, and a new nesting site on McDaniel's Marsh in Springfield. A well-coordinated loon-watching network on Sunapee Lake set a stellar example and was a good complement to volunteer activities on other lakes. We were disappointed to find no evidence

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of a nesting pair this year on Newfound Lake, after several recent years when one or two pairs appeared well established.

MONADNOCK-SOUTH:

We saw 41 territorial loon pairs in the Monadnock region this year, producing only 13 surviving chicks. This poor showing rivals the three big lakes (Winnepesaukee, Squam, and Umbagog) and is a 40% drop from 2011. At least at first glance, the nest failure causes here appear to be miscellaneous, as they were in other parts of the state. For example, a storm in early June flooded the nest at Granite Lake, one of relatively few flooded nests this year, but the pair re-nested successfully. A nesting pair at a busy location on Kezar Lake in Sutton failed because of human disturbance, in spite of nest protection efforts. At Willard Pond, the first nest was flooded in early June, and a second one failed in mid-July because of intruding loons.

Finally, A Nesting Pair at Franklin Pierce Lake

In early July, a reportedly beached and tangled loon on Franklin Pierce Lake in Hillsboro turned out to be a banded loon on the nest, an exciting first for that lake and much anticipated after several years of loon presence there without nesting. With a white or silver band on the left leg, the loon was probably banded as a juvenile in the late 1990s! A strong network of volunteers formed quickly to protect and monitor the nest. Although the nest was not successful, we are hoping that next year the nesting (and nest protection) efforts will pay off. Thanks to Edie Currier, Frank Malinoski, Robin Loveland and others for their efforts at Franklin Pierce Lake this year!



Photo Courtesy of Edie Currier

Edie Currier and LPC Field Biologist Kathy Gunther on Franklin Pierce Lake.

NORTH COUNTRY:

North of the notches we counted 55 loon pairs this year, up two from last year. These raised only 23 surviving chicks, five fewer than last year and below average for the state. Lake Francis was an exception, with a new territorial pair and four successful nests, including one territory that was already nesting when the rafts were floated in early May. In June, field biologist Mary Raikes was startled to stumble upon an active nest near the State Park. The lake level had dropped more than a foot, and the nesting loon was sitting amid tall grass and shrubs, at least 10 feet from the water. Subsequent rain raised the water level back up, and the nest hatched in mid-June. In contrast to Lake Francis, Second Connecticut Lake was down a pair, and the two remaining pairs failed to hatch chicks; a storm in June blew the north end raft nest and its cinder-block anchors all the way up on shore. Mary enjoyed the support of numerous volunteers, like the

Morins on Dummer Pond, Tinker, the State Park Ranger at Little Diamond, and Kathleen Domanico in Clarksville. She drew on this local knowledge to compile a new and much improved set of lake directions, which will be a huge asset for the many North Country ponds where GPS and Mapquest (or maps, period) don't apply.

SEACOAST:

Seacoast lakes were the success story of the season, for the second year in a row. We counted 47 territorial pairs and 33 loon chicks, a breeding success rate more than 50% better than the rest of the state. Only the northern Monadnock region was more successful. Individual lakes contributing to the standout year included Bow Lake, where three pairs fledged chicks. Part of the state-wide increase in nest management came at some new Seacoast nest sites. At Sawyer Pond, in Gilmanton, the loons nested right at the public swimming beach. A floating sign in front of the nest

seemed to distress the loons, and the alternative, a hastily-rigged fence post and sign in the sand, was not enough to buffer the nest from human disturbance; the nest failed. A nest near a footpath on Halfmoon Lake had a similar outcome.

First Documented NH Case of Nesting Loon Depredation by Bald Eagle

At Baxter Lake in Rochester we have been fortunate in recent years to count on Joe Roy to keep a close watch on the loon nest, just across a narrow cove from his house. When field biologist Alexis Rudko visited in early July, Joe was concerned about an eagle he'd seen hanging around that end of the lake. "Do eagles eat loons?" he asked. Alexis reassured him that while bald eagles are a familiar source of harassment for loons (and other fish-eating birds like osprey) and a known threat to exposed loon eggs and chicks, adult loons weigh about as much as an eagle and are therefore a very unlikely target. Unfortunately, within a few days Joe called to report that the loon had apparently been attacked and the nest destroyed. Alexis returned and indeed found the dead loon just in front of the nest. A necropsy confirmed that the injuries from the attack killed the loon and that the loon was otherwise in good health. While eagle attacks on nesting loons have been reported from as far away as Minnesota and Montana, this is the first documented case in New Hampshire. Fair to say that in spite of this exceptional case, Alexis' initial advice to Joe holds true. Even in the Pacific Northwest and Midwestern states where eagles and loons are both common, actual eagle attacks on adult loons are much rarer than dive bombing harassment and op-

portunistic predation of eggs and chicks.

MASSABESIC:

Massabesic Lake saw the same eight territories occupied this year, but only one chick fledged, with only half of the pairs nesting. An immature loon was present on the lake in June and July. John Rockwood and other nature photographers like Jamie Pringle and Peter Broom helped re-sight nine banded loons, over half of the breeding population and very close to 100% of all the banded loons now present on the lake. We appreciated the coordinated volunteer census effort on Massabesic and the support of Manchester Water Authority staff to survey this large lake (2,560 acres).

SQUAM:

On the Squam Lakes, the population of territorial loons dropped by one pair this year, to fourteen. The proportion of territorial pairs that nested was unusually low, and several pairs abandoned their eggs within a week of laying them. These factors contributed to low overall productivity, with only three chicks fledged between Big and Little Squam.

In addition, four of Squam's banded adult loons did not return this past spring and were not sighted elsewhere, while another banded adult and one unbanded loon died during the summer. This is an abnormally high mortality rate for adult loons. One of these loons died from ingesting a legal-sized lead fishing jig, while the cause of mortality for the other loons is unknown. As part of LPC's Squam Lake Loon Initiative – our intensive research, monitoring, management, and outreach effort to address the recent declines on Squam Lake – we will be examining the data from

this year closely to investigate the stressors facing loons on Squam Lake.

UMBAGOG:

We counted 14 occupied loon territories on Umbagog this year, one less than in 2011, and for the most part clustered in the northern half of the lake and tributaries. We also saw a high number of nest failures and re-nests, with a nest failure rate greater than one per nesting pair. In the end, only four chicks hatched and survived. Thus 2012 marked another poor year both in terms of abundance and productivity on Umbagog. See this newsletter's section on banding and band returns for an exciting band sighting by Umbagog field biologist Michael O'Brien (page 8).

WINNIPESAUKEE:

We saw 26 territorial loon pairs on Winnepesaukee this year, with only seven successful nests and five chicks surviving (Black Cove, Cow Island, Green's Basin, Langdon Cove, and Spring/Whaleback). This gave Winnepesaukee the lowest breeding success of any monitoring region, in spite of intensive management: 12 rafts floated and eight used, and sign protection for 16 of 19 nesting pairs.

Some nest sites on Winnepesaukee continue to seem jinxed. For example, this was the seventh straight year of nest failures at Black Island, with a raft and sign/floatline throughout that period. At Ragged Island, the 2012 nest failure marked the seventh consecutive failure in nine years. To investigate these failure-prone sites, field biologist Liz Jackson conducted a pilot study using game cameras to track possible nest predators. Camera installation and siting proved even more

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important than we expected, and we were disappointed to find that most cameras did not produce useful pictures. All was not lost, though. The picture above shows some of the unique disturbances (a white-tailed deer) that did trigger a memorable photo.

Capture and Banding

An expanded banding effort in 2012 resulted in 23 newly banded adult loons and five recaptured loons, covering 20 territories on 15 lakes. The LPC crew perfected their canoe technique on Iona, Purity, and Pawtuckaway Lakes, and Knowles and Jenness Ponds. Banding in the Seacoast region supported the initial year of a federally-funded project led by BioDiversity Research Institute to track the benefits of reduced mercury emissions in this part of the state. A big thanks to the crew from BRI and to Vincent Spagnuolo for his cameo appearances as veteran boat driver and loon

bander, and many thanks to LPC field biologists who volunteered extra time, as well as volunteers who hosted and participated.

It was an exciting year for band re-sights and recaptures. For example, when we captured the loon pair at Jenness Pond this summer, we discovered that they were both the same age, 13 years old, originally banded as juveniles in 1999. And they were hatched a long way apart: the male was from Swains Pond, about 10 miles away, and the female was hatched at Perch Island on Squam Lake, roughly 35 miles north of Jenness. The longer female dispersal distance for this pair is consistent with findings from studies in the Midwest and true for many other bird species, too.

Throughout the state, re-sights of older loons – banded as adults before 2000 – accounted for close to 15% of our band sightings this year. For example, on Squam Lake, four of the 18 re-sighted loons this year were at least 16 years old. Undoubtedly the most

exciting of these old-timers was the Sweat's Meadow female on Lake Umbagog, who was banded as an adult in 1993, making her one of the oldest banded loons known. Field biologist Michael O'Brien emailed the day he saw her: *I picked up some band combos on the Harper's Meadow pair from Rt. 16 today. Looks like the same pair as last year, with the Sweat's Meadow female definitely returning. This is fantastic news, given that she produced an egg this year and may have even re-nested (still searching for that one). The male is most likely the 1994 Magalloway chick again, with confirmation needed on the lower R-leg band (should be yellow, but I first mistook it for silver - which it cannot be since I had definitive looks of orange/silver on the L-leg). Well, I think that's about it. Now that I just reviewed my notes here, the news about the Sweat Meadow's female is incredible. She's at least 22 and laid an egg. Is there any evidence of an older egg-producing loon? (Not that we know of! ~JHC)* Note that the mate of the Sweat's Meadow female is no spring chicken either. He was banded as a juvenile in 1994, making him 18 years old in 2012. As it should, the return each year of these oldest banded loons seems to add to rather than detract from their mystery. Will they be back next spring? What have they seen in their decades on the lake and ocean? And how many years had they been around before they were first banded? For every 22-year old banded loon whose age we know, how likely is it that the unbanded loon you saw today off of your dock, or diving past your canoe, is older still?

Census

This year's July volunteer loon census covered 122 lakes and involved 518 participants, with coordinated counts on 16 lakes. A

total of 492 adult loons, 17 immature loons, and 73 loon chicks were counted. The number of adult loons and chicks was lower than last year, probably in part because census turnout was down about 10 percent. Regardless of turnout, the census coverage on each lake is an important contribution to our season-long tally, helping to confirm not only adult abundance but chick hatches and survival and the presence of non-territorial loons on many lakes. The census reports are also a good chance for participants to send in sightings from other times during the season, in addition to the census hour. We had new census coverage on several lakes, including Elbow Pond in Andover, McDaniels Marsh in Springfield, and Mountainview Lake in Sunapee. The Vermont census, conducted on the same day as New Hampshire's, covered 144 lakes and counted 276 adult loons, tracking continued growth in the adult population, a worse-than-average nesting year, and a great volunteer turnout. In New Hampshire, 80 census reports – over half of the total – were submitted on-line. We hope to get more participants using the on-line form for next year's census, to be held July 20th, 8-9 a.m. Please save the date!

Volunteer Linda Howes Leads Lake Host Program in Western New Hampshire

We'd like to recognize the land, lake, and loon stewardship of long-time LPC volunteer Linda Howes. Linda received the Society for the Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF) 2012 Volunteer of the Year Award as a land steward for SPNHF conservation land around the pond near where she lives. But her award-winning work is centered on the lake, and you are more likely to encounter

Linda on the water than on land. She has been a kayaking loon ranger for years, doing informal outreach to an increasing number of boaters as this nearby pond lost its best-kept secret status and became a kayaking, canoeing, fishing, nature-watching, you-name-it destination for thousands of visitors each year. In 2012, with the help and encouragement of a friends-of-the pond group and SPNHF, Linda spearheaded the first year of a new Lake Host program. The results are amazing: over 450 paid and volunteer hours during 35 days and 2837 boater surveys, with 216 surveys on the single busiest day. The lake host surveys showed that boaters came from more than 40 NH towns, six other states, and Switzerland, and all this activity on a pond that is just over 300 acres, with a no-gasoline motor restriction! Linda's program deliberately combines the invasive-weed boat checks of most lake host programs with education about brooding and nesting loons and leave-no-trace ethics on the pond. With this program and Linda as local champions, the loons have the best possible chance of thriving in spite of the heavy human use the pond now sees. Thank you, Linda!

Field Volunteer Overview

The best way to convey the importance of volunteer involvement in LPC work is perhaps through individual stories, and we've tried to mention a few at other points in this newsletter. But we also wanted to emphasize the role of volunteers with some overall numbers, a little drier than the stories but impressive in their own right. This year we recorded the active involvement of 414 field volunteers, contributing over 2500 hours of volunteer time. Census-only participants represented an

additional 421 people, bringing the total number of volunteers to over 800. Interestingly, only about a quarter of the active field volunteers participated in the loon census, and about a fifth of the census volunteers were otherwise active. Field and census volunteers alike extend LPC's monitoring and management activities many times over. See the text box (page 10) for excerpts from a season of volunteer loon watching on a pond in Whitefield.

Volunteers Key to Re-sighting Banded Loons

Anyone who has tried to glimpse the colored plastic leg bands on marked loons knows how hard it is. It takes just the right combination of good binoculars or camera, calm water and good light, cooperative (e.g., preening) loons, and a bit of luck. The more time you have, the more chances you'll get, and in many cases our best source of band re-sights are volunteers who get out for daily tours of the lake or spend many hours shooting photos of their lake and loons. For example, this September I realized that our field surveys had not confirmed the band status of loons on Pawtuckaway Lake, where a female loon banded in 2005 had returned each year since. My email inquiry to the Pawtuckaway loon network was answered within a couple of days by not one, not two, but three independent confirmations of the band return. Many thanks to Liz Kotowski, Susan Medeiros, Maria Morales and other volunteers on Pawtuckaway and around the state for supplying this incredibly valuable information.

Another interesting band sighting came from the Mudd family on Whitton Pond, in Albany, who

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Some of the amazing detail from volunteer Diane Wile's almost daily observations at a lake in Whitefield, NH:

April 20th. (page 3) 1000 am, 51 deg F. Two loons in sanctuary area, one osprey appears to be nesting. A fisherman got into trouble when his black lab saw a fish and jumped into the pond after it. The water was cold but the man couldn't get the dog back in the boat, so he called out to us for help. Then he jumped into the frigid water after the dog...a group effort (and a lot of good luck) got the dog [and the owner] back into the boat. Easy to see how quickly a peaceful day on the water can turn life-threatening.

June 13th. (page 6) 400 pm 72 deg F after rain. Sun and clouds. Windy! White caps! One osprey on nest, mate on branch. Feeding chicks. One loon on nest, mouth open. Riding the waves on a nesting raft! 2nd loon in center of pond, then appears to be following a fishing boat...

July 16th (page 12!) 830 am 66 deg F. Cloudy, hazy, calm. Pond is very low, perhaps the lowest I've seen in the last nine years of kayaking. One adult loon joins mate and two chicks closer to boat launch. Both chicks are diving and splashing with their feet and swimming underwater, and rising up and flapping their little wings! The family turns toward the sanctuary co...from the middle of the pond I am still able to hear the adult loons cooing all the way from deep within the sanctuary area. At times they all go underwater together. They look and sound healthy and content.

July 19th (page 13) 1000 am. Alarm calls and yodeling. Lots of rising and flapping and splashing and running on water. It goes on and on... I kayak closer to see if the chicks are in danger. The chaos stops abruptly. Several kayakers are afraid we are all seeing a loon on the shore as we watch an intruder coming out of the water. [but] closer visibility reveals the perceived "loon" to be a pile of black and white clothes, discarded by the intruder, a naked man, who finally puts his shorts on. The man said he was swimming 100 yards out when a loon began to totally freak out, running on the water close to him and screaming at him. Once we determined that the loon (and the man) were uninjured we began looking for the chicks to make sure they were ok—and found them safely hidden in the middle of a patch of lily pads at the back of the sanctuary area... [Today] a good demonstration of loon interaction with intruders [!]. They do not like things swimming in the water but are [more] tolerant of kayaks and small boats...

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happened to get just the right view of a preening loon and could see bands on both legs. The band colors were a good match for a male loon banded as an adult on nearby Silver Lake in 1998 (at least 15 years old now) or, less likely, a loon banded as a juvenile (also in 1998) from Millen Pond in southwestern New Hampshire. We may only find out for sure which loon it was if it returns next year and a volunteer or field biologist catches another lucky glimpse.

We remind all loon watchers to make sure that band observations are attempted from a safe distance (usually 50 yards or more), without pursuing the loons. Your presence should not affect the loon's behavior.

Mortalities and Rescues

To date we have collected 18 adult and seven chick mortalities in 2012, more than the usual number of adults. Adult mortality causes included: lead fishing tackle (3), infection (3), monofilament (fishing line) entanglement (1), gunshot (1), foreign object (1, nail), other loon (1), bald eagle attack (1), blunt trauma (1), unknown/pending (6). Given an estimated annual mortality rate for loons of 8% and a New Hampshire population of 638 adults, this year's mortality collections represent 35% of all the mortalities we would expect in the population over the course of the year. This is a very high collection rate for a wild bird population and provides a high-resolution picture of mortality causes. We appreciate the many hours of attention that volunteers and members of the public around the state devote to reporting their finds and helping us make timely recoveries and rescues.

We recovered 10 injured or

beached loons this season, with a higher than usual number of loon chicks involved. These rescues took place on Coniston Lake, Little Squam, Harvey Lake, Crystal Lakes (in Enfield and Gilmanton, within a couple of days of each other), Back Lake, Conway Lake, and the village of Canaan. The one successful rescue and release this season occurred near Errol, when Umbagog NWR biologist Laurie Wunder retrieved a loon that was stranded in the middle of the Greenough Pond Road, at least a quarter mile from the nearest pond. The loon was released on the Magalloway River. Rescue work can often involve multiple volunteers, LPC staff, and wildlife rehabilitators and veterinarians and can take days to unfold. We are working with wildlife rehabilitators from New Hampshire and Maine to develop a standard protocol for assessing and treating injured loons. Thanks to everyone involved this year!

LPC Attends Regional and International Conferences

In October, LPC biologist John Cooley teamed up with Vermont Loon Recovery Program's Eric Hanson to present a poster on loon nest site protection at the Northeast Bird Conservation Conference in Plymouth, MA. The conference proceedings were an exciting reminder that loon protection shares many common themes with other species of concern. For example, posters and presentation topics included a tern nesting platform project in upstate New York, recent tracking of wintering red-throated loons and ducks on the Mid-Atlantic coast, the role of citizen science, human-caused bird mortalities, and setting regional bird population objectives – all very relevant to LPC's current work.

In mid-August, LPC's 2009-2010 Winnepesaukee field biologist Vincent Spagnuolo traveled to a special session on loons at the North American Ornithological Conference in Vancouver. Joining over 1,500 attendees, Vin presented his recent work on loon habitat recovery in Massachusetts, which incorporated LPC methods and conservation strategies.

Acknowledgments

Chris Conrod

In his fifth year at LPC, Chris Conrod was once again a pivotal source of sanity, insight, and diverse scientific and practical talent throughout the season. He provided the impetus and elbow-grease for much of the increased raft and sign management this year, gave slideshows, drove many miles to rescue or collect loons and survey the big lakes, and put in long hours to keep the Loon Center and field program on track. As Chris finishes his seasonal stint here, we thank him for another outstanding and multifaceted season and look forward to seeing him back next spring!

Mary Schmid (pictured)

LPC research into loon health and mortality factors and our rescue and capture work got a huge boost this year from Tufts veterinary student Mary Schmid, who interned at LPC. Mary's training and previous experience with other wildlife rehabilitation was a big help in treating and handling rescued or captured loons throughout the season. In addition to performing loon necropsies and helping with night-time capture work, Mary also made big strides to organize the workflow in our banding and blood sampling. We now have a well-organized blood sampling protocol and data files, pre-printed sample



Photo Courtesy of Alexis Rudko

Tufts veterinary student and LPC summer intern, Mary Schmid, holds an adult loon during a night of banding on Balch Pond.

labels and a supporting spreadsheet list, and a working lead-test kit with staff trained to use it. Mary's good humor, sharp eye, boat handling skills, abundant energy, and meticulous approach made a terrific difference and were much appreciated by field staff and volunteers. Thank you, Mary!

LPC Field Biologists

LPC Field Biologists poured their hearts and minds into long days (and some nights) of field work, volunteer coordination, captures and rescues, and, at the end of it all,...data entry!

Field/Loon Center Interns

Caitlyn Dowell, Carly Read and Jacqui Trudeau provided invaluable aid as volunteers during our busiest season!

Donations

Thank you Tufts University Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine for the donation of critical lab equipment and Dick and Sue de Seve for the wonderful sea kayak for our field program!

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A special acknowledgment of gratitude to the rehabilitators and veterinarians that come to our rescue throughout the year and especially during the busy field season.

Rehabilitators

Avian Haven, Freedom, ME

Kappy Sprenger, Bridgeton, ME

Catherine Greenleaf, St. Francis
Bird Hospital, Lyme, NH

Maria Colby, Wings of Dawn,
Henniker, NH

Veterinarians

Chris Plumley, DVM, Whitefield
Animal Hospital, Whitefield, NH

Meadow Pond Animal Hospital,
Moultonborough, NH

Concord Area Veterinary
Emergency Services (CAVES),
Concord, NH

Plymouth Animal Hospital,
Plymouth, NH

Susan Dyer, DVM, Stonecliff
Animal Hospital, Bradford, VT

~John H. Cooley



Solving loon mysteries...with crayfish!

LPC is currently engaged in what may seem like an odd project for an organization working with loons – catching crayfish! But that is exactly what we have been doing as part of the Squam Lake Loon Initiative. With the help of Prof. Kerry Yurewicz of Plymouth State University (PSU) and recent Master of Science graduate Nicole Ramberg-Pihl, we have caught crayfish of two species from nine loon territories on Squam Lake, as well as samples from Lake Winnepesaukee.

So why is LPC catching crayfish? As many of you know, Squam Lake's loon population has suffered poor reproductive success in recent years following a steep decline in its adult loon population. LPC is conducting intensive research on the Squam ecosystem in an effort to understand the cause(s) of this decline and to restore a healthy population of loons to the lake. Crayfish, as part of loons' diets and mem-



Photo Courtesy of Kerry Yurewicz

bers of the lake ecosystem which feed on a varied diet in the sediments of lakes, may help answer some of the questions about what happened to Squam's loons. We will test the crayfish for contaminants to investigate if there are areas of the lake that are "hot-spots" for contaminants. We will also test the crayfish to examine if there has been a change in what the loons have been feeding on in Squam, which may have contributed to an increase in contaminants in Squam loon eggs.

continued on next page



Photo Courtesy of Kerry Yurewicz

LPC Squam Lake Project Biologist, Tiffany Grade, and Nicole Ramberg-Pihl, MS Plymouth State University, check crayfish traps on Squam Lake.

Spotlight on a Lake

This is the first in a series of articles that will appear in LPC's newsletters highlighting how loons from individual lakes are doing around the state. Keep an eye out for your lake or pond in future newsletters!

South Pond, Stark, NH

Located within White Mountain National Forest, one would think that South Pond would be a peaceful place for loons to nest and raise their young. Although the loons successfully produced a few chicks in the mid-1980's and early 1990's, a lack of suitable nesting habitat on the pond has meant that the loons are unable to consistently nest there, and the lake has not hosted a nesting pair since 1994. Despite this, a pair has

occupied South Pond nearly every year since LPC began surveying it in 1981, and unpaired loons frequent the lake as well.

While South Pond has struggled to support nesting loons, it has also struggled with high levels of adult loon mortality from lead fishing tackle in recent years. Prior to 2009, there was only one recorded adult loon mortality from South Pond – a female that died in 1994 from a boat collision. Sadly, the summers of 2009 and 2010 both saw loons die from lead fishing tackle on South Pond. In each year, the loons (both males) had ingested legal-sized lead jigs and died of lead poisoning.

This past summer, an x-ray of a dead loon collected from the lake showed that this loon had also ingested fishing tackle. Although the necropsy is still pending, symptoms displayed by the loon

and evidence from the x-ray suggest that this loon also likely died from ingested lead fishing tackle.

We hope that this sad streak will end soon for South Pond. Please help LPC spread the word that lead fishing tackle is fatal to loons and that non-toxic fishing tackle is available and affordable. Visit our website for links to manufacturers of non-lead fishing tackle and help "Get the lead out!"

~Tiffany Grade

continued from previous page

Prof. Yurewicz and Nicole have been an extraordinary help to LPC in this effort. They have generously contributed their knowledge, experience, and expertise on trap placement and techniques for catching crayfish, countless hours assisting in the field to set and check the traps, as well as supplying the traps and bait. Prof. Yurewicz is an Associate Professor of Ecology and the chair of the Department of Biological Sciences at PSU, who specializes in the study of species interactions and population dynamics of aquatic invertebrates. Prof. Yurewicz was the adviser for Nicole's recently-completed Master of Science thesis on the behavioral ecology of crayfish. LPC is very grateful for their generous contributions to our Squam Lake Loon Initiative!

~Tiffany Grade

loons, loons
the wonderful bird
i like them they are
very pretty

i went to a museum
and some were stuffed
because they were killed
by poisonous lead

even stuffed
i still like them
they are still beautiful

loons, loons
the wonderful bird
they are very happy birds

but sometimes they are sad
because they have been
stuffed

the end

griffin stripto, age 6

*The loon socks were
hung...*



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LPC's Founder, Rawson L. Wood, Passes at 103 Years Old

It is with sadness that we report that Rawson L. Wood, the Loon Preservation Committee's founder, passed away this July 4th at 103 years of age. Born on September 16, 1908, Rawson worked throughout his life for causes having to do with social justice and preserving nature. In the early 1970s Rawson became concerned with the decline of loons on Squam Lake where he and his family had summered for many years. In 1975, at the young age of 67, he created the Loon Preservation Committee to recover New Hampshire's loon population.

At his 100th birthday party, celebrated at the Loon Center in 2008, Rawson was presented with a proclamation from New Hampshire Governor John Lynch and special citations from the New Hampshire Senate and the US Fish and Wildlife Service in honor of his many achievements. In Rawson's honor, the Board of the Loon Preservation Committee established the "Spirit of the Loon" Award to be presented to an individual who exemplifies outstanding volunteer service to loons and the Loon Preservation Committee. Rawson was recognized as the first recipient of the award.

In addition to founding LPC, Rawson created the North American Loon Fund, established the New Hampshire Lakes Region Conservation Trust, and engaged the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine in research to preserve loons. He was also active in many other organizations promoting the environment and other worthy causes.

Jeff Fair, a former director of LPC who worked closely with Rawson, wrote this when he

learned of his passing: *"He lived out his final years in the south, but in my mind, his spirit will haunt and celebrate the wild north, especially on summer nights when the water has calmed and a wild music echoes through the fresh lacustrine air."* The Loon Preservation Committee is honored to acknowledge Rawson's longevity and his outstanding contributions to loon preservation. His was truly a life well lived.

~Harry Vogel



Photo Courtesy of Nordel Gagnon

Remembering Jane Irwin

Jane Irwin was among the Loon Preservation Committee's pioneers. An early recruit of LPC founder, Rawson Wood, Jane was eager to save the loons she enjoyed from her home on Lake Winnepesaukee. Her knowledge of the lake and its residents made Jane the perfect ambassador for loon and chick safety on the big lake, establishing one of the first organized loon watch patrols in the state. Jane also brought to LPC her many talents as an art teacher. She put these to good use as Chair of the early Loon Festivals at Bald Peak. Her kind and unassuming ways made her fun to work with, and she was a perfectionist in everything she did.

As the demands of the field season increased for LPC, Jane became an official summer biologist on Lake Winnepesaukee in 1983. Monitoring loon nests, organiz-

ing loon and chick patrols, and educating a growing lake public kept Jane busy in her aptly named boat, "The Loon Patrol." She had a wonderful way with people and was quick to recruit new members and volunteers. We were fortunate to keep Jane onboard until 1994 when she resigned as an official biologist but remained active for the cause.

Jane passed away on September 30 at the age of 79. Instrumental in helping to establish the Loon Preservation Committee, her legacy is deeply ingrained in the history of preserving loons in New Hampshire. We are honored that her son, William "Bill" Irwin, has followed in her footsteps, contributing valuable time and counsel as a member of LPC's Board of Trustees since 2008.

~Linda Egli Johnson

LPC Honors John Wilson at Annual Meeting

The Loon Preservation Committee held its sixth Annual Meeting at The Loon Center on Thursday, August 23rd, as required by the By-laws that accompanied LPC's incorporation as an independent 501(c)(3) organization in 2006.

The meeting opened at 7:30 p.m. with an outstanding presentation of loon pictures and videos by LPC volunteer and member John Rockwood. LPC Senior Biologist/Executive Director Harry Vogel followed John's show with preliminary results of the Loon Preservation Committee's monitoring, research, management and educational programs in 2012 and reported on recent trends in New Hampshire's loon population.

The Chair of the Loon Preservation Committee Board, Bill Crangle, remarked on changes to the LPC Board and presented new nominees for three-year terms as LPC Board members. LPC members voted in favor of the slate of Board members presented (please see inside cover for a complete list of LPC Board members/officers). Bill also reported that LPC had completed the fiscal year ended March 31, 2012 in the black with a clean audit. (Interested members or the public may contact the Loon Preservation Committee for copies of LPC's audited FY12 Financial Statements.)

John Wilson Honored with 2012 "Spirit of The Loon" Award

A highlight of LPC's Annual Meeting was the presentation of the fourth annual "Spirit of the Loon" Award, created to honor LPC's founder Rawson Wood by recognizing an individual who exemplifies outstanding volunteer service to loons and the Loon

Preservation Committee. John Wilson, an exceptional LPC volunteer who has been active in loon conservation since his wife Kittie (herself a "Spirit of The Loon" Award recipient) first became involved in 2003, was this year's recipient of the award.

John has built numerous loon nesting rafts for Pleasant Lake and other Monadnock region lakes. He accepted the position of Chair of the NH Lakes Association Policy Committee last year and immediately persuaded them to support legislation restricting the use and sale of lead-headed jigs as NH Lakes' prime legislative focus for the year. John worked tirelessly to persuade NH Fish and Game staff and commissioners to support this issue; to secure sponsors for the legislation in the Senate and House; and to call and meet with Senators and Representatives.

Ultimately those efforts fell short but it was not for lack of trying on John's part, and he is

resolved to continue his work to educate the public and decision-makers on this important issue. These ongoing efforts include promoting a new joint project between NH Lakes and LPC, the Lead-Free Lakes Initiative, to protect loons from lead fishing tackle. John has worked to raise awareness of issues facing loons, and our ability to protect them, in the best tradition of LPC's founder, Rawson Wood. We were pleased to recognize his contributions by honoring him as the 2012 recipient of the "Spirit of The Loon" Award.

~Harry Vogel



Photo Courtesy of Kittie Wilson



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www.loon.org

The Many Hats of Caitlyn Dowell

This summer the Loon Center was awash with volunteers, but one in particular wore the hat of almost every staff member at some point during her tenure.

Caitlyn Dowell is in her senior year at SUNY Geneseo (State University of New York), a Childhood/Special Education major with a concentration in Environmental Studies. She is also fortunate to be a summer resident on Lake Winnepesaukee in Moultonborough. Caitlyn's many talents and contagious enthusiasm to learn new skills resulted in numerous and varied accomplishments. She manned the LPC information booth at Interlakes Ecology Day, ran the visitor center and gift shop with other volunteers, assembled outreach kits for LPC staff use at presentations, laminated trail maps for hikers to use when the weather is inclement, distributed flyers for our Summer Nature Talk Series, and painted many eager faces at our annual Loon Festival.

She assisted our Winnepesaukee field biologist, Liz Jackson, with installing game cameras, contacted volunteers to determine their willingness to remain active, assisted with surveys from the boat and partnered in presentations to camps on the big lake.

With this year's Tufts veterinary intern, Mary Schmid, she assembled loon foot bones for a future display and assisted in the design of our new Skeletal Comparisons exhibit poster depicting chicken, loon and human skeletons. Needless to say, she wore many hats!

Her absence upon return to a busy field hockey season and academic year at SUNY Geneseo left a huge void at the Loon Center. We all wish her the best of luck!



Photo Courtesy of Alexis Rudko

LPC summer intern, Caitlyn Dowell, wears her face painting hat at the Annual Loon Festival held at the Loon Center on July 21.

Thank you to our volunteers!

College, high school and middle school students were among the many volunteers who came to our aid at the Loon Center this summer. They include Jacqui Trudeau, Carly Read, Taylor Boyle, Terri Folsom, Greg, Ally and Jenn Lively and Josh Gerbarneau. These fine young women and men assisted in the field or around the Loon Center in many ways. New member Peg D'Haene took charge of the landscaping, mowing, trimming, and raking. Lynne Route created eye-catching posters for our Summer Nature Talk Series.

Our veteran summer volunteer crew (Sheila Robusto, Winnie McCullough, new recruit Pam Jackson, and our year-round volunteer Anne McLean) assisted visitors during a busy season.

A heartfelt thank you to one and all!

Thank you, Bette!

Veteran summer shop assistant Bette Ruyffelaert came to the rescue when our Center Assistant left for a full-time position. Bette readily and willingly increased her coverage and responsibilities, including organizing our annual Loon Festival. We would have been lost without her good will and expertise. She has migrated with the loons for the winter and we already look forward to her return next spring.

~Nancy McDonald



No Shortage of Summer Events to Support LPC

Summer Luncheon & Auction
June 10, 2012

The Loon Preservation Committee's Annual Summer Luncheon and Auction was held at Church Landing in Meredith on Sunday, June 10. Attendees enjoyed a delicious buffet lunch, silent and live auctions, and the chance to swap stories with fellow loon enthusiasts. All proceeds from the event benefitted Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) programs.

LPC Executive Director Harry Vogel gave a brief overview of New Hampshire's early loon activity and served on a panel discussing legislative issues affecting loons along with State Senators Jeb Bradley and Jeanie Forrester, NH Lakes Association (NHLA) President Tom O'Brien and NHLA Board Member John Wilson, and LPC Board Member Chip Broadhurst. LPC's summer field biologists were on hand to answer both general loon questions as well as those specific to their field territories.

This year's live auction was conducted by volunteer P.K. Zyla. Items included a Sports Fan weekend, a trip to Banff and Lake Louise, a cooking lesson for four, greens fees, gift certificates from local restaurants and businesses, and lake tours with LPC biologists. The array of prizes was both plentiful and unique.

We owe the success of the Summer Luncheon and Auction to LPC Board Member and Chair of the event, Renee Speltz, along with Board Members Elizabeth Gabel and Terry Wetzler-Finn. Their tireless efforts ensured an enjoyable event from start to finish and much needed funds to support LPC's loon recovery



Photo Courtesy of Harry Vogel

work in New Hampshire.

We are also indebted to the following businesses and individuals for providing enticing items for the silent and live auctions: Bald Peak Colony Club, Bayswater Book Co., Butternuts, Cape Shore, Chuck Yaeger, Corner House, Country Carriage, Dion's Plant Place, E.M. Heath, Fitness Edge, Funspot, Holland Hill Studio, Janet Levetin, Joel Tree Farm, Karen Swensrud and Marty Williams, Keepsake Quilting, Kit-tie & John Wilson, Lakes Region Computer, Laconia Country Club, Lavinia's, Lemongrass, Loon's Feather Gift Shop, Lydia's Café, Magic Foods Restaurant Group, Mary Rice, Meadow Pond Veterinary Hospital, M.J. Harrington Jewelers, Mill St. Meat Market, Mt. Sunapee Ski Resort, Mug on the Bay, NH Boat Museum, NH Music Festival, Oglethorpe, Olde Orchard Inn, Spa at Mill Falls, Richard Worthley, Terry Wetzler-Finn, The Bobhouse, The Restaurant, The Woodshed, Village Kitchen, Waukegan Golf Club, Weirs Beach Go-kart, Winnepesaukee Chocolates, Winnepesaukee Playhouse, and the Wolfeboro Inn.

Mark your calendar for next year's Annual Summer Luncheon

and Auction to be held on Sunday, June 30, 2013.

First Annual Yakking for Loons
July 13, 2012

Thirty-five eager paddlers met at Lee's Mill Landing on July 13 for the first annual "Yakking for Loons" fundraiser. It was a perfect, sunny day to take on the 2.5 mile "Ganzy" course or the 4.6 mile "Green's Basin" course. The Loon Preservation Committee's (LPC's) Winnepesaukee biologist, Liz Jackson, provided great memories by treating paddlers to sightings of the area's loons while pointing out the need to keep a safe distance from nesting loons and loon chicks.

A delicious light lunch provided by sponsor Curt's Caterers of Gilford was the perfect ending to the fun event. Everyone parted with a "Yakking for Loons" cap and a new friend or two made.

Special thanks go to Irving Oil for co-sponsoring the fundraiser with Curt's Caterers and to Wild Meadow Canoes of Center Harbor for providing a discount on rentals and helping paddlers adjust seats and foot peddles before starting the courses.

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Co-chair volunteers Linda Allen and Joanne Chesley did a fantastic job of arranging for spotter boats and volunteer spotters Ralph Rannacher, Beverly Leonard, Elaine Chesley, Warren Reynolds and John Allen. LPC's Events Committee is grateful to the volunteers, participants and their sponsors for being a part of this fun day to benefit New Hampshire's loons.

Mark your calendar for July 12, 2013 for next year's yakking fun.

Annual Loon Festival July 21, 2012

Mother Nature awarded us with a perfect summer day for the 35th Annual Loon Festival. The Loon Center was bustling with families and activities. Mo the Clown drew a big crowd as kids lined up for his amazing balloon creations and entertaining banter. Face painting was another big hit with LPC summer volunteers Caitlyn Dowell and Jacqui Trudeau on hand to share their handiwork. "The Legend of the Loon's Necklace" was the theme at the arts and crafts table, while Paul Tierney spun loon tales in a screened tent tucked in the woods. The ever popular dunk tank was a magnet for kids vying for the chance to dunk a biologist and catch a refreshing splash.

Indoors found the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center Discovery Table and a live Saw-whet Owl. Book signings included "Libby's Loons" by Nancy Prince and "Close Encounters with Loons" by Larry L. Cox, with Charlotte Cox standing in for her late husband. LPC summer biologists entertained guests with educational slide shows about loons.

The Meredith Rotary Club provided a wonderful picnic lunch, while Odd Men Out treated visi-

tors to live Celtic music.

Many thanks to our Festival volunteers: Nan and Ron Baker, Sally Carver, Jacquie Colburn, Marilyn and Bob Coppo, Bill Crangle, Caitlyn Dowell, Sheila Kabat, Anne McLean, Karin and Keith Nelson, Marion Powers, Mike Ruyffelaert, Kim Beardwood Smith, Marlene and Eric Taussig, and Jacqui Trudeau.

Thank You Festival Sponsors!

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Memorial Golf Tournament August 20, 2012

Sunny skies welcomed golfers to the Carl Johnson Memorial Tournament at Ridgewood Country Club, a welcome sight after last year's rain. There were 55 players in all, with prizes awarded to the top three teams.

First place went to Stan and Garret Plifka and Justin Dion. Brad, Nick and Brent Leighton, along with Brian Ribiero, were a tight second. Third place was awarded to Eric and Angela Webster, Susan McKimens and Michael Schnell. An exclusive raffle sent many players home with additional prizes, including a Cleveland Classic Putter.

Sincere thanks to the Tournament Prime Sponsors: Advanced Land Surveying Consultants and Overhead Door Options of Meredith, NH. In addition, we'd like to thank our hole sponsors: Annalee Dolls, the Broadhurst Family, Belknap Landscape Company, Inc., Cross Insurance, Centrix Bank, Inns & Spa at Mill Falls, Irwin Zone, Sheila Kabat, Attorney Keith R. Nelson, Lakes Region Realty Group, Sandy McGinnes, Meadow Pond Animal Hospital, Meredith Village Savings Bank, New Hampshire Environmental Consultants, The Mug Restaurant, Northeast Delta Dental, Rath Young & Pignatelli, REMAX Bayside/Bayside Rentals, and Savings Bank of Walpole; and our sign sponsor, Saltmarsh Insurance Agency. Although no one succeeded in taking home the grand prize, we are grateful to Kevin Keenan of Paugus Bay Marina for the hole-in-one boat and trailer.

Lastly, we wish to thank Dixon Golf, Winnie McCullough, Brian Reilly, Jane Rice, and John and Kittie Wilson for their generous donation of raffle prizes.

The Swim 2012

The Swim 2012, to benefit loons on Squam Lake, was a huge success! This year's intrepid team included team leader Wendy Van de Poll, Rose de Mars, Kit Kilbourn, Chip Broadhurst, Celeste St. Pierre, Louise Utzinger, Mark Longley and Rick Van de Poll. The swimmers were accompanied by spotters Gloria Hoag, Peg Longley and Susan Deme; and the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center generously donated a boat and captain, Dale Lary.

The tremendous efforts of the swimmers allowed the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) to dramatically increase its monitoring, research, management, and outreach to help loons on Squam. This year, LPC biologists floated eight loon nesting rafts; protected seven nesting pairs of loons with signs and ropelines; floated six "Caution: Loon Chicks" signs to slow down boat traffic in territories with young loons; gave 12 educational Squam Lake Loon Cruises partnering with our friends in conservation, the Squam Lakes Natural Science



Photo Courtesy of Dale Lary

The Swim 2012 swimmers: Mark Longley, Wendy Van de Poll, Louise Utzinger, Rick Van de Poll, Celeste St. Pierre, Kit Kilbourn, and Rose de Mars. Not pictured: Chip Broadhurst.

Center; and gave another 23 presentations on and around Squam to teach people about loons and their needs.

The Squam swimmers' summer-long training and fundraising efforts resulted in 125 donors sponsoring team members, for a total of over \$20,075 raised to date this year! Funds raised through The Swim allow LPC to extend its field season on the lake; test eggs from failed nests for contaminants; continue banding and monitoring the health of loons on Squam; expand its research into

the causes of declines, including testing sediments and crayfish (loon food) for contaminants; educate lake users to encourage a culture of respect and appreciation for loons; and continue its intensive management to help loons cope with their challenges. For more information on the Squam Lake Loon Initiative or to make a donation, visit www.loon.org.

We are most grateful to Wendy and The Swim 2012 team, and all the swim donors, for this year's remarkable success!

~Harry Vogel

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS

Each year the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) receives support in many different forms to carry out its mission to restore and maintain a healthy population of loons throughout New Hampshire. Memberships, Annual Appeal donations, event sponsorships, designated gifts for research, memorial gifts, bequests, grants, and gifts of time and talent through our volunteer programs, are the backbone of LPC.

Often we don't get the opportunity to publically thank everyone for their many forms of support. In the future we plan to do our best to thank our supporters at events and/or in our Newsletter or other publications. Please note that we do not plan to publicize the specific value of individual gifts to LPC.

We recognize there may be people who would prefer to NOT be thanked publically. If you prefer that your donations remain anonymous, please feel free to let our development office know with a note, an e-mail (development@loon.org) or by phone at 603-476-LOON.

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~Rawson L. Wood, LPC Founder

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