



Loon Preservation Committee **NEWSLETTER**

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

SUMMER 2015

*Celebrating
40 Years!*



Photo Courtesy of Brian Reilly

The Loon Preservation Committee
183 Lee's Mill Road, P.O. Box 604
Moultonborough, NH 03254
603-476-LOON (5666); www.loon.org

The Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) is a non-profit, self-directed and self-funded organization affiliated with New Hampshire Audubon. 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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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Forty Shades of Green

Jeff Fair, Director of the Loon Preservation Committee from 1981-1991, wrote at LPC's 10-year mark that a prominent New Hampshire wildlife biologist had given LPC three years, back in 1975, before interests waned and the organization "would be resorbed into the forest of good intentions and the dusty files of old news clippings." It's satisfying to reflect on that statement 40 years on as a measure of the uncommon success of the work of this extraordinary group of people.

A key to that success was our taking to heart, early on, that careful science must inform our every action to benefit loons. At the beginning there was precious little science-based knowledge to guide the work of that admittedly green group of loon advocates. So we labored to gain a better understanding of this mysterious bird. The loon has many secrets, and it is only right that we will never know them all. But the ones that are critical to its continued persistence and survival as part of the wild landscape — those are the ones we most urgently need to understand. Those are the ones LPC strived, year after year, to find. And once found we applied that hard-won knowledge in responsible and effective ways to help loons thrive. Even when that help meant denying a volunteer or major donor a loon nesting raft in cases where the science indicated it was not warranted and would do more harm than good.

That continual cycle of lessons learned and implemented has happened forty times now. At the end of every field season there has been a careful assessment of what worked for our loons and what didn't; what we got right and what we got wrong. The result of those forty iterations has been a more than tripling of our threatened loon population. And yet, as successful as that work has been, the problems facing loons today are more numerous, diverse, and challenging than any they have yet encountered. We will be challenged to keep up with them, but we will meet them as we always have — with careful science, thoughtful and innovative action, and the support of our many members, supporters, and volunteers. For this storied organization, there can be no other way.

Seeing a loon on a lake or nest, or hearing that call across the water, means something different to each of us. There are at least as many reasons to protect loons as people who love them. Whatever those reasons I am certain of one thing: it is right that they are here. They deserve to be on our lakes at least as much as we do. Our goal over our next 40 years will be to see that they have places to live and breed and continue to enrich the landscape and the lives of those who visit or live here.



NELSWG Kicks Off 2015 Season at The Loon Center

The Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) hosted the 26th meeting of the Northeast Loon Study Working Group (NELSWG) on March 16-17. A typically diverse agenda included the following highlights:

On Monday, former LPC membership coordinator Lee Attix (now working as a biologist for Biodiversity Research Institute) reported on fall departure observations in New Hampshire and other states over the last two years. This study has confirmed that adult loon pairs migrate separately from each other and from their chicks. The second adult usually lingered on the breeding lake for 2-3 weeks after its mate,

and most chicks left within days of the second adult, although some stayed on alone for several weeks. Also on Monday morning, LPC volunteer Dana Duxbury Fox discussed strategies for increasing volunteer participation and effectiveness in loon monitoring programs, based on her experience as an environmental organizer in Massachusetts and as an inveterate, global birder and citizen scientist. BioDiversity Research Institute's (BRI's) Carrie Gray described the huge botulism mortality event on Lake Erie in fall 2014, and her estimate that cumulative totals from similar events on Lake Ontario and Lake Erie over the last decade exceed

30,000 loon mortalities. This toll may explain recently observed local declines in productivity and abundance in loon populations immediately north of the Great Lakes. Ellen Martinsen of the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute reported on the discovery of two new avian malarial species in loon blood samples collected in New Hampshire in recent years. Some strains of avian malaria have likely been present in loons and other bird species in the Northeast for a long time. Exposure to new strains, especially ones that are favored by a warmer and wetter climate, pose the greatest concern for

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Photo Courtesy of Kitten Wilson

Representative presenters and attendees of the 2015 Northeast Loon Study Working Group. Standing: Lee Attix (BRI), Nina Schoch (Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation), Eric Hanson (Vermont Center for Ecostudies), Charlie Walcott (Cornell University), Ellie George (Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation), Dana Duxbury Fox and Bob Fox (LPC volunteers), Melissa Leszek (Plymouth State University), Harry Vogel (LPC), Susan Gallo (Maine Audubon Society), Vincent Spagnuolo (BRI), Danielle D'Auria (Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife), Jay Mager (Ohio Northern University), Ken Munney (US Fish & Wildlife Service), Carrie Gray (BRI), Dr. Mark Pokras (Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University); Kneeling: Ellen Martinsen (Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute), Jillian Whitney (Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation), Ralph Kirshner (LPC Trustee), John Cooley (LPC), Tiffany Grade (LPC).

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loons, and more data will be needed to know whether Martin's new discoveries are simply new to human observers or also new to New England's loons.

Other research conducted or supported by the Loon Preservation Committee was well-represented on the Monday portion of the NELSWG agenda. Students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute shared their senior project on loon eggshell porosity and thickness in North America, which relied chiefly on decades of eggshell samples archived at LPC. LPC's Squam Project Biologist Tiffany Grade reviewed her analysis of the population-level impacts of lead fishing tackle mortality on loons, and 2013-2014 Winnepesaukee field biologist and Plymouth State University Center for the Environment graduate student Melissa Leszek presented findings from her social-marketing survey of anglers, about the perceived barriers and benefits in making the transition from lead to non-lead sinkers and jigs. Melissa's survey received a very high response rate and documented a high level of awareness and support for the switch to safe tackle. Maine Audubon's Susan Gallo outlined the regional Fish Lead Free campaign that will spread this awareness.

Monday's NELSWG session closed with the results of a satellite transmitter study of winter movement and migration routes of Red-throated Loons on the Atlantic coast. Tracking these loons from winter capture locations in the Chesapeake Bay and the Carolinas, BRI's Carrie Gray documented a spring migration route along the coastline to the Canadian Maritimes, with staging areas in the Gulf of St. Lawrence before the loons dispersed across their Arctic breeding range. In contrast, fall migration usually



Fish Lead Free is a region-wide initiative to help anglers switch to lead-free tackle. For more information visit www.fishleadfree.org.

followed a direct route from staging areas on the Hudson Bay south to the Atlantic coast.

During NELSWG sessions on Tuesday, loon researcher Jim Paruk (BRI) provided a second discussion of wintering loon behavior, detailing the winter site fidelity shown by breeding loons from Maine. Interestingly, transmitter data from these loons showed the breeding females wintering as far south as Maryland,

while their male mates wintered off the New England coast. Males and females both used the same wintering locales in successive winters. In addition to Paruk's data, this winter site fidelity has been noted in banded loons in Louisiana, California, Washington, and most recently, close to home at Biddeford Pool, Maine, where LPC volunteer Kittie Wilson photographed a banded Maine loon in the same location in 2014 and 2015. Tuesday NELSWG topics also included a summary from NH Audubon's Chris Martin and consulting statistician David Harris of an analysis of Bald Eagle impacts on breeding Common Loons, selected necropsy findings from throughout New England by Tufts veterinarian Mark Pokras, and LPC's Senior Biologist/Executive Director Harry Vogel's outline of factors influencing loon nesting success (see article on page 7 by LPC staff biologist Chris Conrod on recent cutting-edge analyses of climate and loon nesting). Again this year, the variety and depth of NELSWG sessions stimulated much discussion and enthusiasm for the coming field season.



Photo Courtesy of Kittie Wilson

This banded wintering loon feasts on a crab during a light snowfall at Biddeford Pool, Maine, where it spent successive winters in 2014 and 2015.

Northeast Loon Study Working Group (NELSWG) Presenters:

Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation
BioDiversity Research Institute (BRI)
Humane Society of the United States
Loon Preservation Committee (LPC)
Maine Audubon Society
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
New Hampshire Audubon
Ohio Northern University
Plymouth State University
Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute
Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University
University of New Hampshire
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Vermont Center for Ecostudies
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Early Success on Sunapee

At press time in mid June, the first loon chicks had already hatched in southern New Hampshire. We are also pleased to report the first successful hatch in LPC's 40 years of monitoring on Lake Sunapee. If only the Sunapee loon pair could appreciate what a stir their success has caused in the dozens of devoted fans they have around the lake, and many more supporters beyond!

Next Stop, Marlborough

A series of clues pieced together by LPC volunteer and trustee Brian Reilly have revealed the intriguing identity of a banded loon nesting at a new site in southwestern New Hampshire. The Mo-nadnock region has many lakes that appear to be suitable loon habitat but remain vacant. Loons have slowly recolonized some of these lakes over the last four de-

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FIELD ANECDOTES

2015 Rafts

Flawless teamwork by eight participants at our annual April raft-building workday produced six new rafts. These new rafts went to failure-prone nest sites at Lovell Lake, Halfmoon Pond, and Leavitt Bay/Berry Bay at the outlet from Ossipee Lake. Thanks to an amazingly productive work-day crew (pictured right)!

2015 Rescues/Mortalities to Date

In May, two adult loons were rescued and released, one from a small beaver pond in Cornish Flats, in western New Hampshire, and the second a crash landing on Route 4 near Rollinsford. Both loons were examined and released after a few days of rehabilitation. Thanks to NH Fish and Game's Pat Tate (an LPC field biologist in the 1990s) and the St. Francis Bird Hospital in Lyme, New Hampshire, and the York Center for Wildlife in Maine for their care for these loons. May also saw the first adult loon mortality collection of 2015, from Duncan Pond in

Ossipee. A day-old chick mortality was also collected in the Mo-nadnock region, and two stranded immature loons were rescued on the Seacoast in January and February but did not survive.



Flawless teamwork by eight participants at our annual April raft-building workday produced six new rafts! Many thanks to the raft-building crew pictured: Norm Lesser, Duff Lewis, John Wheeler, Bill Mannion, Craig Rowley, Brian Taylor, Libby Corbin, John Cooley (LPC), and Warren Fletcher.

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acades of incremental recovery. Young adult loons prospecting for their first territory form the vanguard of this recolonization. In fact, in late spring this year Brian's photos of a new nesting pair on a small pond in Marlborough, NH showed that one of the pair was an adult banded as a juvenile—a loon that had settled on this pond after dispersing from the natal lake where it was originally banded. Loons banded as juveniles can be readily identified because the aluminum USF&WS band is placed on the left leg, instead of the right leg aluminum band placed on adults. Brian's photos showed that of the original four bands, this loon still had only the aluminum band on its left leg and a red band on its right, leaving lots of possible matches on the band list. Fortunately, Brian has been watching and photographing loons in the Monadnock region for years, and quickly realized that he'd seen the same banded loon on a nearby pond last year. And could it be the same loon that he got pictures of a few miles away on Howe Reservoir, five years ago? Those photos from 2010 showed a worn yellow band that might have fallen off since. Indeed, the photos from this spring showed a worn spot on the aluminum band where the yellow band rested before falling off. BRI and former LPC field biologist Mike Chickering, who grew up in the Monadnock region, worked with Brian Reilly and database manager Joan Plevich to piece together this puzzle. Their insights solved the mystery, identifying the loon's natal lake as Grafton Pond, almost 50 miles to the north, where it was banded as a chick in 1998. Only a few other adult loons banded as juveniles in New England have been known to disperse this far. To top it off, this loon had already made a



Photo Courtesy of Brian Reilly

A photo from 2010 on Howe Reservoir shows a worn yellow band over an aluminum USF&W band (circled). Photos from this spring show a worn spot on the aluminum band where the yellow band rested before falling off.

name for itself as one of the few banded New Hampshire loons resighted in the winter on the coast. Back in February of 2001, LPC field biologist Lucas Savoy sighted her (then approaching three years old and not yet a mature adult) off Weekepaug Beach, Rhode Island. Where this loon spent the intervening years—be-

fore Brian first photographed her in 2010—will remain a mystery.

As always, gleaning a few particulars about the longevity and travels of this banded loon from careful photos and lucky sightings only deepens our curiosity about the rest of her experience.

~John H. Cooley

History was made in June when two loon chicks hatched for the first time in LPC's 40 years of monitoring on Lake Sunapee! This adds to the myriad success stories of New Hampshire's loons thanks to the greatly expanded work of the Loon Preservation Committee through the Loon Recovery Plan. Please contact LPC's Senior Biologist/Executive Director, Harry Vogel, for more information about the Loon Recovery Plan or to donate to the Plan.



Photo Courtesy of Kitten Wilson

New Hampshire's Loons in a Changing Climate

We've all heard the news. The polar ice caps are melting, the sea level is rising and California is in the midst of an unprecedented drought. The current climate models project an increase in world-wide temperature throughout the 21st century regardless of what actions we take now. We face a significant challenge ahead.

But does this affect the loons? Ice caps are not a key component of loon habitat; loons are good swimmers, so they should be able to deal with sea level rise, and California isn't a hotbed of loon activity anyway. The latest projections indicate that New England should fare better than most locations, so New Hampshire's loons should dodge the bullet, right?

Not so fast. New Hampshire's loons are situated near the southernmost limit of the distribution range for common loons. Even small changes in climate could possibly result in serious stressors

on loons. Because of this, LPC will be partnering with Plymouth State University to study how the New Hampshire loon population will respond to increased temperature and precipitation projected in a groundbreaking study on New Hampshire's climate by Cameron Wake and other researchers at the University of New Hampshire (UNH). We hope this research will produce some definitive results to answer our questions about how loons will fare reproductively in a changing climate.

But for now, here's what we do know. Loon chick hatch and survival rates are strongly correlated with temperature and rainfall during the breeding season. A hot or wet June and July results in fewer chicks hatching and, consequently, surviving. In years when the seasonal total precipitation exceeds 10 inches (about 2 inches higher than normal) state-wide productivity typically falls by 25 - 30% compared to years with

normal or low precipitation. In the southernmost part of the state, mean June-July temperatures above 67 degrees result in a comparable drop in productivity. The UNH climate model projects an increase in precipitation — particularly in extreme single events — as well as an increase in temperature that will make 67 degrees the new "normal" June-July mean temperature for much of the area of the state south of the White Mountains.

Can loons adapt to these changes? That's what we need to find out and that's why we are initiating this study of New Hampshire's loons in a changing climate. One thing is certain: the loons are going to need our help in coping with the effects of climate change and all of the other challenges they are facing. Now, more than ever, the management practices of LPC will help decide the fate of New Hampshire's loons.

~Chris Conrod



Photo Courtesy of John Rockwood

Spotlight On a Lake: White Lake, Tamworth

Something like twelve thousand years ago much of Tamworth, Madison, Freedom and Ossipee were covered by a large lake of glacial meltwater surrounded by a retreating glacier. Within this lake were large remnant chunks of glacier — islands of ice rising above the frigid water. As the glacier continued to retreat, meltwater carried tremendous amounts of silt and sand that collected as sediment on the bottom of the lake, as much as a hundred feet deep in some places. The sediment served as insulation for the ice chunk islands, which persisted through much of the time the sand was being deposited.

After the glaciers retreated, the meltwater ceased and the ice chunks melted. What remained was a “kettle hole” — a deep depression — where every ice chunk had been. This is the geologic process that formed White Lake. Glacial outwash lakes of this type are distinguished by their sandy bottom, substantial depth and clear water. They are excellent habitat for cold-water fish, and the high water clarity aids loons in finding fish. The classic description of good loon habitat includes the term “oligotrophic,” which is basically what was just described above.

So, White Lake must be a very productive loon lake, right? Well, not really — at least not superlatively. There are a few other characteristics of typical glacial outwash lakes that don’t bode well for loon reproductive success. First, White Lake is much like a bathtub: steep banks and open water; no islands or marshes. In short, nesting opportunities are limited to narrow bands of shelf at times of low water. These nest sites are prone to flooding

and egg predation by raccoons or other egg-loving critters. A raft initially put out in 2006 has helped nesting success; and, for the past ten years, the loons have produced five surviving chicks, which is close to the state-wide average.

A second problem might actually be a result of nesting success. Single loons looking for territories are apt to be very impressed with the clear water fishing on White Lake. If they see that the resident pair has also successfully fledged chicks they can get covetous enough to try to take over the lake. After successful chick rearing in 2006 and 2008, the White Lake pair was inundated with “visiting” loons that wanted to take over. When a loon pair is too busy defending its territory it doesn’t have time to mate, nest and brood.

And then there’s the third issue. Loons are not the only species that enjoys clear, pristine

water with sandy shores. White Lake State Park has one of the most popular bathing beaches in the area, and there is easy access for canoes and kayaks, not to mention the beautiful view of Mount Chocorua to the north. It’s a busy lake. Sometimes when LPC goes to do a site survey on White Lake, all the field biologist has to do is look for the circle of kayaks all pointing in toward the center. That’s where the loons will be.

All in all, we must give the White Lake loons credit. They are very tolerant about sharing their beautiful lake with us and somehow they manage to contribute toward keeping New Hampshire’s loon population stable. The least LPC can do is keep the nesting raft in good repair and politely suggest to the kayakers that they give the loons a little more breathing room.

~Chris Conrod



Photo Courtesy of Chris Conrod

Glacial outwash lakes, like White Lake in Tamworth, offer both pros and cons for loon productivity. Substantial depth and clear water aid loons in finding fish, while steep banks and open water limit shoreline nesting opportunities and distinct territorial boundaries.

LPC's Volunteers: 40 Years of Working Together to Protect Loons

The last time I talked to LPC's founder, Rawson Wood, he was in Florida and hadn't been able to come to his beloved Squam Lake for several years. I always used to call him with an end-of-season report on what the year had been like on Squam for the loons. After I had related the summer's report to him for what was to be the final time, he told me that he felt like he was on Squam again and could hear the loons calling once more.

Forty years ago, the vanishing calls of the loons had summoned Rawson to establish the Loon Preservation Committee to ensure those calls would always echo across New Hampshire's waters. Those same calls have inspired hundreds of volunteers to protect the loons on their lakes and support LPC's research, management, monitoring, and outreach on behalf of New Hampshire's loon population. LPC's greatest strength has always been our strong grassroots support and the people who care about loons. From Rawson back in 1975 to the present, people who care about loons have been stepping up for forty years to make a difference.

LPC and The Loon Center are steeped in that history of volunteers working for loons, from the people who report on the nesting activities of their loons to those who help put out rafts, ropes, and signs to those who report sick, injured, or dead loons. One of these latter made history as the first loon ever documented to have died from lead fishing tackle ingestion. I had previously read the scientific paper reporting the discovery of lead tackle ingestion as a source of mortality from a loon found on Squam Lake in 1976, but I was astonished to

come upon the original necropsy report from this loon while rummaging among some old files at LPC. The report recorded the pathologists' wish to publish this discovery, and other papers associated with

the necropsy report told of the loon being found by Larry Coolidge off of Long Island on Squam. Members of the Coolidge family remain active volunteers on Squam to this day.

Over twenty years later, LPC Board member and State Senator Carl Johnson spearheaded an effort to bring about first-in-the-nation legislation to protect loons and other wildlife from certain types of lead fishing tackle, and LPC presented data to the NH Legislature demonstrating that lead tackle ingestion is the leading cause of adult loon mortality. Nearly forty years after that original lead loon, hundreds of LPC volunteers and supporters flooded NH legislative offices with letters, phone calls, and emails and packed hearing rooms to show their support for increased protections for loons from lead tackle. State Representatives still express astonishment at the outpouring of support from LPC's members and volunteers for the lead bill. One recently told an LPC Board member that they have never had another issue generate such a



Loon Preservation Committee founder, Rawson Wood, on his beloved Squam Lake. Photo courtesy of his family.

response from their constituents. This history – from the original collection of the loon by a volunteer through the legislation – encapsulates so much of what LPC is about: working at the forefront of loon conservation and science to understand threats to loons, transforming scientific discovery into actions to benefit loons, and all of it supported and made possible by our members and volunteers.

The calls of the loons that inspired Rawson Wood forty years ago to establish LPC to recover and protect this magnificent bird continues on Squam and on lakes throughout New Hampshire to this day. A few years ago, as I made the rounds on Squam, I met Claire and Evan Weiss, who had set up a "Lemonade for Loons" stand on their dock to raise money for the work of LPC. The tradition of caring for loons has come full circle – I'm certain Rawson would be pleased. Here's to another forty years, filled with the calls of the loons.

~Tiffany Grade

2015 LPC SUMMER STAFF

LAKES REGION



MAYA RAPPAPORT

As Maya completes her studies at the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, she's eager to begin a career in Conservation Biology. She has done extensive birding around Mount Desert Island, including many hours watching loon behavior from the coasts, coves and wooded ponds of this Maine island.

SQUAM LAKE



TIFFANY GRADE

The post-field season brought a long-awaited family member for Tiffany, with the adoption of her chocolate lab puppy, Trixie Joy! Trixie and Tiffany had many adventures over the winter, and Trixie even got a vacation from Mommy when Tiffany went on a fantastic birding trip to Guyana. Cotingas, anyone?!?

MONADNOCK



EMLYN CROCKER

Emlyn is a recent graduate of St. Lawrence University with a degree in Conservation Biology, as well as minors in African Studies and Outdoor Studies. Research experience includes a two-year study assessing the role of North American Porcupines in structuring northeastern forests.

SUNAPEE



TYLER REMICK

Tyler has a degree in Wildlife and Conservation Biology from the University of New Hampshire. He is a member of the National Society of Mammalogists and has prepared mammal specimens for the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History and the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History.

NORTH COUNTRY



GARY JANCO

Gary returns for a second season monitoring loons in the North Country. He has enjoyed the company of loons for many years at his family's camp on First Connecticut in Pittsburg. He is eager to put his Wildlife Conservation degree to good use again this year in New Hampshire's north woods.

WINNIPESAUKEE



LIZA WRIGHT-FAIRBANKS

Liza is a junior at Middlebury College where she studies Biology. She spent last summer as an intern for The Rivers Project, a non-profit organization in New York City, where she maintained a 3,000 gallon flow-through tank system. She learned a great deal about the Hudson River's fresh-water organisms.

SEACOAST



RAYMOND LEWIS

Ray is working towards a degree in Environmental Studies at the University of Maine, Fort Kent. An avid outdoorsman, he is Wilderness First Aid certified and S-130 Wildland Firefighting certified, and holds Associate of Arts degrees in Conservation Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice.

SUMMER INTERN



ISABEL BRINTNALL

Isabel returns for her second season of graduate work at Antioch University New England, studying the response of nesting and brooding loons to human recreation on lakes in the Sunapee/Monadnock regions.. She will also assist in recording loon vocalizations for analysis by both LPC and Northern Ohio State.



SUMMER VETERINARY INTERN: TORI O'TOOLE

Tori just finished her first year at Cumming's School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University in North Grafton, MA. Her goal as a veterinarian is to focus on wildlife. She also has previous experience at a rehabilitation center for birds back in Wisconsin, where she completed her undergrad at UW-Stevens Point.

Her interest in wildlife and birds brought her to LPC this summer. During the fall semester at school, Tufts professor Mark Pokras held a lunch talk about the ongoing loon project and mentioned the ability to get involved if interested. She contacted him almost immediately and plans were set in motion for her to spend the summer here at The Loon Center.

While at LPC, she will help with the night capture, banding and blood sampling of loons, and performing necropsies on loons to determine the cause of death. She hopes to include research on hemoparasites through blood sampling and she is also working on comparing mortality data at LPC with necropsy reports from Tufts.

The goals of the New Hampshire Loon Recovery Plan are first, to recover, and then, to maintain, a viable population of loons in New Hampshire as a component of a healthy regional population and ecosystem.

ANNUAL LOON CENSUS
SATURDAY, JULY 18, 2015
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM



CENSUS FORM ENCLOSED
(SEE PAGE 23)

To report a stranded loon,
loon harassment, or an injured
or dead loon, please call:

Loon Preservation Committee
603-476-5666
or
NH Fish & Game Dispatch
603-271-3361

THANK YOU!

Thank you to our donors: April 1, 2014 - March 31, 2015 (\$100 and above)

The Board of Trustees and staff of the Loon Preservation Committee thank all our supporters for their passion and commitment to our mission. Every dollar and donation of goods and/or services makes a difference in our work to preserve loons and their habitats in New Hampshire. We regret that space limits this listing to monetary donations of \$100 or more.

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Forty years of working to preserve loons and their habitats in New Hampshire



MISSION

The Loon Preservation Committee exists 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 greater understanding of loons and the natural world.

VOLUNTEER PROFILES

Photographing Loons: A Volunteer's Guide to Respectful Practices

LPC member, volunteer and "Spirit of the Loon" recipient Kittie Wilson maintains a lovely on-line nature journal entitled "All Things Pleasant on the Lake" in which she shares wonderful prose and nature photography, especially of her resident loons. She was recently asked by a curious subscriber how close she gets when photographing loons on and off the nest. We thought her response was worthy of re-printing in our newsletter to help educate the nature photographer wannabe in each of us!



How close are you to the loons when you take photographs of them on the nest?

This question is very understandable, since the photos make it seem as though I am sitting right beside the loon nest. That would be totally unacceptable and must never be done. Working with this dear pair of loons for the past nine years has been an incredible privilege, but they are wild and free animals. I am interested in taking photos of loon behavior, so I must not disturb their normal activities. Respect is key in such a relationship. When the loons are nesting I am in the forest behind a blind. You can make out the loon raft about 80 feet off-shore. The loons know I am there, but they are comfortable with this situation. I am using digiscoping when I am in the blind. Digiscoping is taking photographs by attaching a camera to a spotting scope. The results seem to put us right on the nest. I also work with a D600 Nikon camera with a 300mm Prime Lens. That gives us a bigger picture, and the ability to crop and enlarge to "get close." The best part of all of this is that the amazing day-to-day activities of the loons can be sent to you for your viewing pleasure!



Above: Kittie's forest blind is 80 feet from the loon nest (circled).



Left: A D600 Nikon Camera with a 300mm Prime Lens gives Kittie the ability to crop and enlarge.

Right: Digiscoping gives the impression of being right on the nest even though Kittie is a safe distance away.



"Working with this dear pair of loons for the past nine years has been an incredible privilege, but they are wild and free animals. I am interested in taking photos of loon behavior, so I must not disturb their normal activities. Respect is key in such a relationship."

How close are you to the loons when you photograph them on the water?

Mother and Father Loon are out and about on the lake now. They are true water birds and will not return to land until a year from now when it is time to mate and nest again. In order to photograph the loons, I must move from land to water as well. And I must be much more careful and pay close attention to the behavior of the loons. They will have to deal with constant problems. Is there a snapping turtle lurking below the surface? Has a visiting loon landed and is swimming their way? Is that a bald eagle flying overhead? Keeping a respectable distance is incredibly important. I never want to be one more problem for the loons.

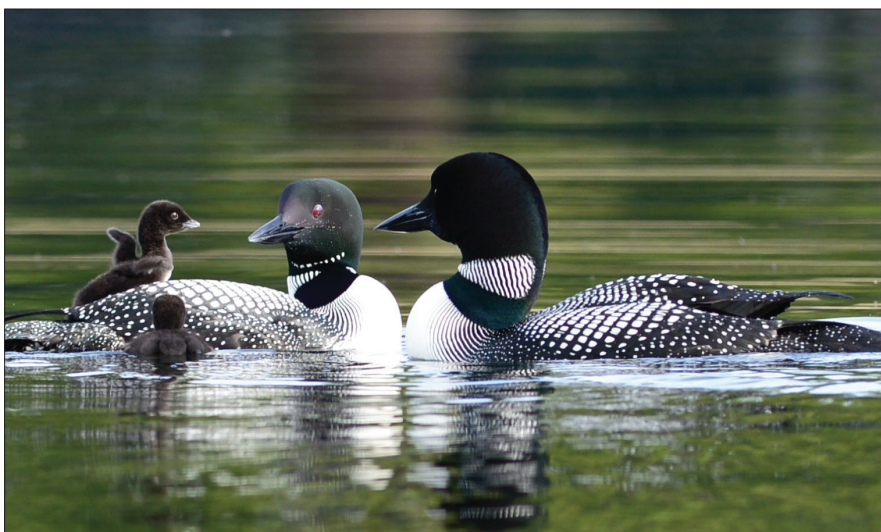
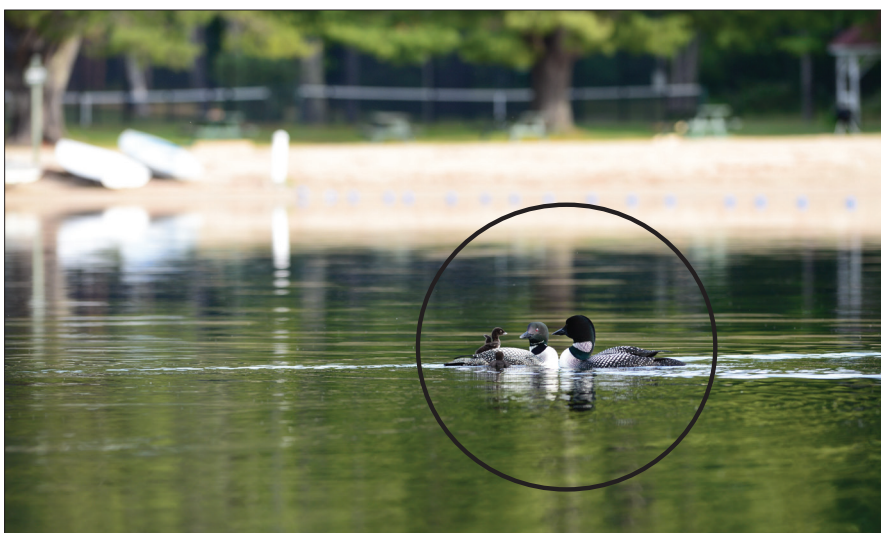
The chicks are quite defenseless during their first few weeks and will totally rely on Mother and Father's abilities to keep them safe. I must keep them safe as well. Working with a long lens on a tripod in my little Zodiac, I can get good photos of the loons' behavior from over 100 feet away. But each of those photos will be cropped and enlarged for your viewing pleasure so that it looks like we are 5 feet from the loons. I can assure you that they would not be acting normally if I was five feet away.

If you get out on the water to watch loons, bring a good pair of binoculars. Please do not paddle closer and closer to get a shot with your camera or phone. You will become the center of their attention and the results could be catastrophic for the chicks. If you are with several people, be sure not to surround the loon family. Never stay long, but enjoy the magic of observing these amazing birds!

~Kittie Wilson, LPC Volunteer



Working from her little Zodiac with a long lens (above), Kittie can get good photos of loons from over 100 feet away. Each photo is cropped and enlarged for her audience's viewing pleasure. The relaxed behavior of the loon family demonstrates the respectful distance between Kittie and her subjects.



LOON PRESERVATION COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Birdathon/Bloomathon

The Birdathon/Bloomathon is a volunteer fundraising event hosted by the Lakes Region Chapter of New Hampshire Audubon. The objective is to count as many birds and blooms as possible in a 24-hour period during the peak of songbird migration and spring blooms. Bird and bloom teams solicit per species sponsors and outright donations to help raise money for the Chapter and for the Loon Preservation Committee. The Chapter has held their meetings at The Loon Center since its dedication in 1994, and members of LPC are also active Lakes Region Chapter members.

The weather in May is unpredictable at best, and this year was no exception. May 20 dawned clear, breezy and cool (53° F), but it wasn't long before breezy became windy, and if you were on the lake—choppy!

This year's Tamworth Area Birdathon/Bloomathon (B/B) team included Tony Vazzano, Chris Clyne, Jane Rice, Ken Klapper, Bob Ridgely, Ned Beecher, Stefan Gaschott, Ingrid Albee, Mark Albee, Tiffany Grade, Harry Vogel, John Watkins, and the Tamworth Wednesday Bird Walkers. Following is a summary of their day and its highlights:

In Madison, Stefan woke to the call of the Whippoorwill. The day's highlight came early: near Thompson Preserve, Bob saw a flock of Brant Geese flying south about 5:30 am. Ken saw them a few minutes later. Both were excited to have the "bird of the day"—a rare chance migrant that has not been reported on Tamworth's B/B before. Bob, still near his home, had a White-crowned Sparrow and Willow Flycatcher, but the Wilson's Snipe has not been at Thompson Pre-

serve for a couple of years now—and it was not seen or heard all day. Then, at Chick's Corner, the Sandwich team had Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Alder Flycatcher. They heard a Tennessee Warbler near Town Hall in Center Sandwich. A Wood Pewee sang...

And, at White Lake, another Wood Pewee—they had just arrived—sang for Ned, Ingrid, Mark, and Stefan, as they scouted southeast Tamworth. At 7:00 am, the Tamworth team met up with a dozen others for the last of the Wednesday morning Bird Walks, finding the Prairie Warbler and towhee as usual in the Pine Barrens off Route 41 and the Fish Crow at McDonald's. Back in Tamworth Village, the swallows were diverse, but not numerous: the birding group ended the five-week Bird Walk season with clear views of Barn, Cliff, Tree, and Bank Swallows lined up on phone wires.

When the Sandwich and Tamworth teams met up at 9:30 am, their combined list exceeded 100 species, and the wind was blowing harder. The rest of the windy day was spent trying to pick up additional species here or there: Tony and Ken went back to the pine barrens, not finding the Field Sparrow, but seeing 15 Red Crossbills at the Nature Conservancy land in Madison. Jane had

the junco in Moultonboro. Ken got the Hooded Merganser and a Barred Owl. Tiffany and Harry saw the Double-crested Cormorant on Squam Lake despite the high winds and white caps!

Meanwhile, Chris methodically logged the blooms, surprised by the number of flowers by the "new" Route 25 bridge over the Ossipee River: plenty of Bastard Toadflax there, even as it is less numerous along Depot Road. "It was a relatively easy year," she said, "the late spring and quick warming compressed the season, so there was still some blooming Trailing Arbutus along with later-season flowers that are often still just in bud, like Bunchberry, Clintonia, and Oxeye Daisy."

Thanks to all who supported this Lakes Region tradition that, in turn, generously supports LPC!

The totals: 115 species of birds and 74 species of flowering plants.

~Lakes Region Audubon Chapter

New members or guests are always welcome at Chapter meetings, held the third Thursday of the month from fall to spring. See our website (loon.org) for details!



Brant Goose

Each new year is a surprise to us.
We find that we had virtually forgotten the note of each bird,
and when we hear it again, it is remembered like a dream,
reminding us of a previous state of existence...
The voice of nature is always encouraging.

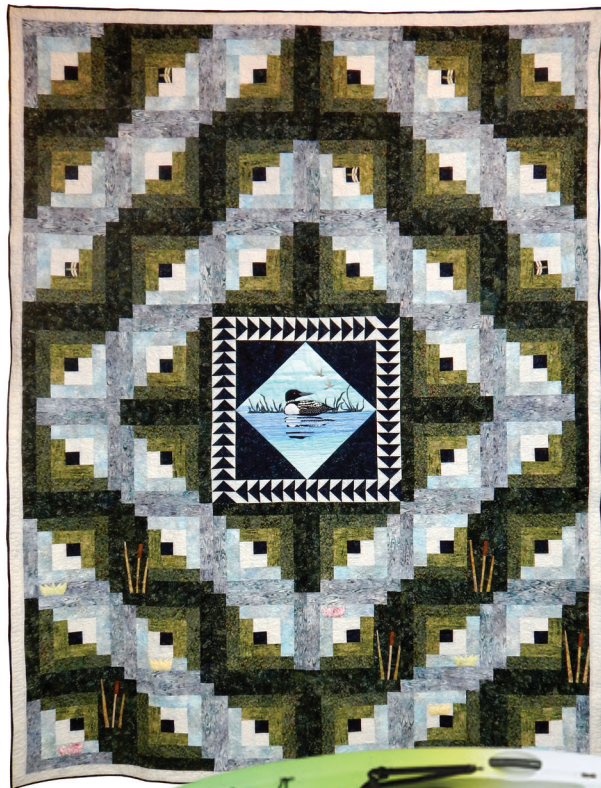
~Henry David Thoreau



The Loon Preservation Committee extends its sincere gratitude to Granite State Hospitality, LLC, for the invitation to display a collaborative banner with the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center at the new Route 93 Northbound Rest Area in Hooksett (<http://www.nhrestareas.com/>). The Rest Area is a pleasant respite celebrating New Hampshire's heritage and natural resources. Be sure and check out the banner (pictured above) along with the outstanding food, drink, gifts and interactive visitor center on your next trip north on Route 93; and, of course, be sure and include The Loon Center and Squam Lakes Natural Science Center on your next visit to the Lakes Region!

LPC Annual Benefit Raffle

Don't miss out on LPC's 40th Anniversary Benefit Raffle! Enter to win one of the four amazing prizes pictured below. Tickets can be purchased at The Loon Center or by calling 603-476-5666. All proceeds benefit New Hampshire's loons!



Queen/King Log Cabin Loon Quilt: Winnie O'Shaughnessy, Linda Monasky (Bear Paw Gallery) and Sarah Silk.

Quilted Loon Wall Hanging by Friends of Keepsake Quilting: Libby Morrill, Bonnie Knott, Winnie O'Shaughnessy and The Country Forge.

Hand-carved and Hand-painted Loon Decoys: crafted by Dux' Dekes; 1/2 size (16").

Old Town, Venus 10 Ocean Kayak: donated by Irwin Marine.

\$5.00 each or 3/\$10.00

Drawing November 28, 2015 at
LPC's Holiday Open House!



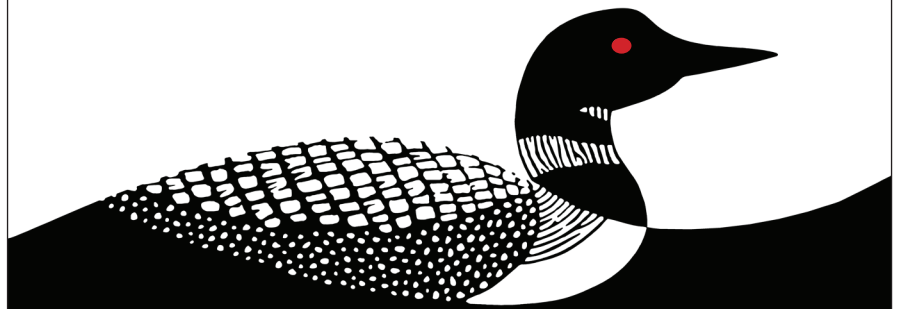
LOONS
by Jordan

They are here
They are there
you can hear them
but can you see them
far out in the Distance
can you hear the wail
the tremolo
the yodel
or the hoot
maybe yes
maybe no
maybe so

(Printed as written by a young
visitor to The Loon Center.)

The Loon Center &
Markus Wildlife Sanctuary

Open 7 days, July 1 - Columbus Day
9am - 5pm
Trails open dawn to dusk



The Loon's Feather Gift Shop
Selling "all things loon" and more!

visit www.loon.org for seasonal hours



Photo Courtesy of John Rockwood

Are you getting our e-Newsletter? If not, would you like to? Simply email Susie Burbidge, Volunteer Coordinator, at volunteers@loon.org, and she will gladly add you to our list! The e-Newsletter is generated monthly, allowing us to keep you current on LPC's happenings.

Like us on Facebook!

SUMMER CALENDAR

Visit www.loon.org for details, or call
603.476.LOON

JULY 10

Yakking for Loons!

YIPPEEEEE!!!

Don't forget to
pre-register!!!

JULY 18

Loon Festival & BBQ

Bring the family!

10-2

The Loon Center

AUGUST 13

"The Swim"

(Donate online or send
check to LPC!)

Gathering at Sandwich
Town Beach, 11:30ish

AUGUST 17

Carl Johnson Memorial

Golf Tournament

Pre-register foursome!

AUGUST 20

LPC Annual Meeting

6:30 PM

The Loon Center
(see page 22)

NOVEMBER 28

Mark your calendar for
HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

10-2

THE LOON CENTER
crafts, hay rides, Santa...

Summer 2015 Nature Talk Series

at The Loon Center
Lee's Mill Road, Moultonborough, NH
603-476-LOON

Thursdays, 7:30pm ♦ Admission Free ♦ Donations Appreciated

Thursday, July 9 Kittie Wilson – Spirit of the Loon

Loons are amazing bird parents, very gentle and loving with their chicks. Over the summer months those adorable loon chicks change a great deal. Come and experience the spirit of the loon as we watch the little loons grow up through Kittie's observations and photographs of the Loon Family of Pleasant Lake, New London. Kittie is a proud recipient of the 2009 Spirit of the Loon Award.

Thursday, July 16 Rebecca Segelhurst – Karner Blue Butterfly

Through the cooperation of many organizations and agencies, work began in the 1990's to restore the population of New Hampshire's endangered state butterfly, the Karner Blue. By executing habitat management practices, the use of a captive rearing program and public outreach, biologists have been able to shift the population towards recovery.

Thursday, July 23 Rick Libbey – MooseMan Moments in the Wild

Rick "MooseMan" Libbey loves to share his adventures from the woods by presenting an interactive slide show featuring wildlife of New England. Rick flies in to remote areas by floatplane and shoots from a kayak to get the work done. Subjects include moose, loon, fox, bears, eagles and others. Rick shoots Nikon cameras with telephoto lenses and simply loves what he does.

Thursday, July 30 Chris Bogard – Turtles of New Hampshire

Turtles are ancient animals that evolved their shelled form more than 200 million years ago. They are among the world's most endangered vertebrates, with about half of their more than 300 species threatened with extinction. Chris will discuss the turtle species found in New Hampshire and their life and reproductive strategy. She will also bring some turtle ambassadors, some of whom are listed species.

Thursday, August 6 David Govatski – The Nature of Pondicherry

Come learn about the wildlife of the Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge with this slide show sponsored by the Loon Preservation Committee. Pondicherry is a 10 square mile wetland complex located in the towns of Jefferson, Whitefield and Carroll. Learn where its name came from, why it is such an important wildlife area and the events that have occurred over the past fifty years to make this such a well loved area.

Thursday, August 13 Jillian Kilborn – The Distribution of Lynx and Pine Marten in NH

A wildlife biologist with NH Fish & Game, Jillian's responsibilities include forest and wildlife habitat management as well as coordinating research and management of American marten and Canada lynx throughout the state. She holds a Bachelor's degree in wildlife management from the University of New Hampshire and a Master's Degree in wildlife conservation from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Thursday, August 20 2015 Loon Season Report

LPC Senior Biologist/Executive Director, Harry Vogel, will present trends in New Hampshire's loon population and preliminary statistics on how loons fared in the state over the last year. Also featured will be a slide show by nature photographer John Rockwood showcasing the loons on Lake Massabesic. The Loon Preservation Committee Annual Meeting will precede these talks.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NORDEL GAGNON

Save paper and send us your sightings online! You can submit this form at www.loon.org/census.php



New Hampshire Loon Census
Saturday, 18 July 2015
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Lake: _____ Town: _____

Observer(s): _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Total number of people in party: _____

Observations

	Time	# Adults	# Chicks	# Immatures	*Location/Direction
Example	8:17	1 AD			Flew in from east
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
TOTALS					

Please note any osprey sightings during this hour: _____
(to assist NHA osprey field surveys)

(1) Record only the FIRST sighting of each loon or group, then be sure to total the number of loons observed on the appropriate line. Note the direction in which the loons move or fly.

(2) If possible, please attach a sketch/map of census area and the location of any loons you observe.

(3) It is CRITICAL that observations continue for the ENTIRE HOUR.

(4) Remember, a report of zero is just as biologically important as a report of 10 loons.

(3) Your sightings from throughout the summer are also valuable. Please comment on loon activity observed at other times on the reverse of this page.

CENSUS FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED BY JULY 31 TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FINAL TALLY.

Please return this form to your coordinator, LPC staff, or to the LPC office as soon as possible. Thank you!

Loon Preservation Committee, P.O. Box 604, Moultonborough, NH 03254; (603) 476-5666/5497(fax)
Email: volunteers@loon.org Online at www.loon.org

Save paper and send us your sightings online! You can submit this form at www.loon.org/census.php

Loon Preservation Committee
PO Box 604
Moultonborough, NH 03254



The Loon Preservation Committee
gratefully acknowledges
Squam Boat Livery
for underwriting this publication.