



# LOON PRESERVATION COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2022



Ray Hennessy Photo





### **The Loon Preservation Committee**

183 Lee's Mill Road, P.O. Box 604  
Moultonborough, NH 03254  
603-476-LOON (5666); [www.loon.org](http://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**

### ***Science, Data, People, and Loons***

I have just returned from the NH Lakes Congress as I write this message. The impacts of climate change on New Hampshire lakes was a major theme of the event, and there was much sobering news to share. It seems that lakes, like loons and humans, face an uncertain future in a warming climate.

Climate change has been an area of focus for the Loon Preservation Committee as well: if you are working to recover a northern species that nests at the water's edge, the prospect of a warmer and stormier world has to hold some of your attention and concern. I spoke at the conference about loons in a changing climate, and it was satisfying to bring LPC's research on this defining environmental issue of our time to bear on this vexing problem. Science and data will be critical components of any effort to address the climate issue – for loons, lakes, or people – and LPC happens to house the world's longest-running and most comprehensive record of loon populations and productivity. We have tracked loon breeding success over 47 summers of varying environmental conditions, hot and cold, wet and dry.

Last year, a record-hot June followed by a record-wet July taxed our loons' ability to hatch their eggs, despite LPC floating a record number of nesting rafts and protecting a record number of nesting pairs with "Loon Nesting Area" signs and floatlines. Loons are long-lived birds and are in it for the long haul: they can deal with an off year because there is always next year, if they can avoid an early demise from lead tackle, boat collisions, etc. But climate change will make for more of those off years going forward. Loon nesting rafts with shade covers will help blunt the impact of both storms and heat, and loons might have other ways of adapting – perhaps early ice-outs will allow them to nest earlier, before the heat of summer. The data we are collecting on loon nesting success will inform our work to help them cope with even something as dire as climate change; but they, like we, are living the Grand Experiment with an uncertain outcome.

For now, the long-term trend of loons in New Hampshire continues in an upward direction, thanks to the work and care of many thousands of people over 47 years. The land and the people have changed in that time. Since our last newsletter, LPC lost a towering figure in its history, Jordan Prouty, and gained back a familiar face and valued staff member in Betsy McCoy (please see articles on pages 19 and 21). Ultimately, the limits of adaptability – loon and human – remain unknown; but this organization continues to be up to every challenge facing loons, as that slowly but steadily rising number of loons shows.

## *Starting the Year with a Bang: Ten Loons Rescued from Frozen Lake Winnepesaukee in January*

Following a warmer-than-average autumn and early winter, the cold snap that New Hampshire experienced in January 2022 came as a shock not only to us humans, who had grown accustomed to the above-freezing temperatures, but also to a group of 10 loons that had remained on Lake Winnepesaukee long past the time when they should have migrated to their wintering grounds.

It remains unclear why these loons stayed behind – perhaps the warm temperatures of the previous months overrode the other cues that would normally have triggered their migration, or perhaps they opted to stay on the lake as part of a high-risk-high-reward gamble that the lake would not completely freeze over and they would be that much closer to their breeding grounds come spring. Whatever their motivation for remaining, the loons found themselves stuck, as temperatures dropped in mid-January and the ice closed in.

Without intervention, loons that become iced-in face a grim fate. Without the runway of open water needed for takeoff, they will eventually be forced up on top of the ice where they will either starve to death or become easy targets for predators such as eagles. Such was the case in 2007 when 22 loons became iced-in on Lake Winnepesaukee. That year only 5 of the 22 were still alive by the time we were alerted to their presence.

Thankfully, in the years since 2007, the network of people who are out on the lakes for recreational purposes in the winter has grown, and we have worked to let them know to alert LPC if they come across loons that are becom-



*LPC was alerted by Nordic skaters to a group of 10 loons trapped in a 40-meter-long pool of open water in late January, roughly one mile west of Tuftonboro Neck on Lake Winnepesaukee.*

ing iced-in. That was the case this past January – Nordic skaters found the group of 10 loons out on the ice in a 40-meter-long pool of open water, roughly one mile west of Tuftonboro Neck. The skaters called and sent photos of the situation to LPC's Senior Biologist, John Cooley.

At the time of the initial reporting, there was still too little open water for takeoff but too much open water remaining for a rescue to be feasible, and it was still possible that the loons may take off on their own. From January 16th through 20th, Senior Biologist, John Cooley, skied out across the frozen lake to check on the loons daily. What he found was not encouraging: loon feathers littered the ice surrounding the hole, indicating that the loons were likely in the midst of molting their primary feathers (those feathers needed for flight) and would not be able to take off on their own. The loons also appeared to be lethargic, indicating that they might not have been getting enough to eat.

By January 21st, the opening that the loons were in had shrunk down to a small enough size that it was possible that a rescue attempt using gill nets might succeed. LPC staff were accompanied out to the loons' location by members of the Tuftonboro Fire Department, members of the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game, and by some of the Nordic skaters who had originally found the loons. While this initial rescue attempt was not successful, it helped us to further evaluate the loons' condition and to review ice safety principles with the Tuftonboro Fire Department.

The next morning, Cooley made the trek back out to check on the loons. Below-zero temperatures overnight had drastically shrunk the opening in the ice, leaving the loons in a hole of open water just 15 feet in diameter. The much smaller opening meant that a rescue attempt was likely to be successful, and LPC staff once again headed out across the ice

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to try to capture the loons. Over the course of roughly five hours, we were able to use gill nets and long-handled landing nets to catch all 10 loons. As we handled the loons, we confirmed that all were in some stage of molting their primary feathers, rendering them flightless. This is a normal process for loons, but it typically occurs when they are on their ocean wintering grounds, where they have no need to fly.

As we captured the loons, we put them in boxes and loaded them up on ice-fishing sleds. Once we had all 10, we dragged them the mile to shore. We then transported the loons back to The Loon Center where we drew blood samples and gave each loon (except three that were already banded) a single plastic band so that we could tell them apart and match blood test results to the correct loon.

The loons were then driven down to VCA Capital Area Veterinary Emergency and Specialty (CAVES), where we worked with CAVES veterinary staff and wildlife rehabilitator, Maria Colby, to radiograph (x-ray) them and evaluate their condition. Next, all 10 loons were transferred to Maria Colby, who brought them to her facility for feeding and observation. Maria also treated one loon, which had been found to have elevated blood lead levels, with chelation drugs to remove the toxic metal from its blood. One of Maria's generous donors provided 30 pounds of bait fish to feed the loons, all of which were consumed by the loons during their 36-hour stay with her.

After Maria confirmed that the loons were able to swim, dive, catch fish, and keep themselves waterproofed, and after follow-up blood testing revealed that lead levels were dropping in the loon that initially had elevated levels,



*Above: LPC biologists Tiffany Grade, John Cooley, and Caroline Hughes remove one of the ten loons from the gill net.*

*Below: LPC Executive Director/Senior Biologist, Harry Vogel, gives a double thumbs up as he tows several of the loons to shore on an ice-fishing sled.*

it was time to release the loons. We met with Maria on the coast, where we finished the banding process for the seven loons that were not previously banded (giving them three color bands in addition to the single band that we had given them on the day they were captured, for a total of two bands per leg in a unique combination). All 10 loons were then released onto the ocean at Odiorne Point.

Interestingly, genetic tests of the loons' blood revealed that all 10 were males. This raises several questions: Is there some aspect of male loon biology or behavior that makes them more likely to remain on lakes and become iced-in than females? Is there a benefit to spending the winter on a lake that



*Eliot Johnson Photo*

doesn't completely freeze over (for example, being able to return to breeding grounds that much earlier in the spring) that caused these loons to take a gamble and stay around long after other loons had left for the ocean? Three of these loons had been banded in previous years, and as such, we know that they have, in the past, been able to successfully migrate to and return from their wintering grounds. Why didn't they mi-





Loon Center Assistant, Kirsten Knell, and LPC volunteer, Eunice Jackson, hold one of the rescued loons while LPC biologist, Caroline Hughes, measures its tarsus for a proper band fit.



Wildlife Rehabilitator, Maria Colby, and LPC biologist, Tiffany Grade, release one of the loons onto the ocean at Odiorne Point in Rye, NH.

grate this time? Was it the unusually warm weather, or is it possible that the presence of other loons on the lake made these three experienced loons more likely to stay behind? Each new winter rescue provides insight into these mysteries, and gathering data on the factors that affect loons in the winter is an additional benefit to performing these rescues.

This spring, we have already received photo confirmation from an LPC volunteer that one of these 10 loons has survived the winter and returned to his breeding lake. This summer, LPC biologists will be eagerly scouring the lakes for a glimpse of the bands of the other members of 'The Winni Ten' and will be interested to see if they nest and contribute to the growth of our loon population by fledging chicks.

~Caroline Hughes



Jane Beardsley Photo

LPC volunteer, Jane Beardsley, confirmed the return of one of the 'Winni Ten' to her lake in April.

**L**oon rescues are a complex undertaking. We are thankful to the following people and organizations who contributed to the successful capture and release of these ten loons: the Nordic skaters who located and reported the loons; Steve and Carol Bush for lake access; LPC volunteers Eunice Jackson, Eliot Johnson, and Rachel Willwerth; Dr. Mark Pokras; Wildlife Rehabilitator Maria Colby; New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game; Tuftonboro Fire Department; VCA Capital Area Veterinary Emergency and Specialty.

## Lead Tackle Buyback Program Passes a Milestone

Since 2018, LPC has partnered with the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game and several local tackle shops throughout the state to provide a Lead Tackle Buyback Program. As part of the program, anglers can visit a participating retail shop and exchange one ounce or more of illegal lead fishing tackle (lead sinkers and lead-headed jigs weighing one ounce or less) for a \$10 voucher to that shop, which they can use to purchase non-lead, loon-safe tackle or other fishing supplies. In its fourth year, the program surpassed a huge milestone: we have now collected over 30,000 pieces of lead tackle from circulation in NH!

### The Program So Far

As of the end of 2021, our Lead Tackle Buyback program has removed 32,691 individual pieces of lead fishing tackle weighing a total of 264.6 pounds from tackle boxes around the state. And that's just the tackle that we've been able to inventory! In addition to providing an opportunity for anglers to exchange tackle for a voucher, another key component of the Lead Tackle Buyback program has been to ensure that there are additional ways for people to responsibly dispose of their lead tackle. To achieve that end, we have partnered with Maria Colby of Wings of the Dawn Wildlife Rehabilitation and 30 local transfer stations throughout the state to provide lead tackle collection receptacles. In 2021, we also partnered with the Lakes Region Planning Commission to collect lead tackle at their four Household Hazardous Waste collection events. Additionally, several of our partner organizations, including many lake associations

and New Hampshire Fish and Game regional offices, provide receptacles at their headquarters where anglers can turn in lead tackle.

### The Impact: Changes in NH Lead Tackle Mortality Rates

Between 2016 (when our most recent lead tackle legislation went into effect) and 2021, the average annual per capita rate of documented lead tackle mortality for the New Hampshire population declined by 27.6% from pre-2016 levels and by 57.4% from peak levels (1996 to 2000). Loon mortality rates can be highly variable year-to-year and, as such, this six years of data is not sufficient to establish a statistically significant trend. Nevertheless, these initial findings are encouraging and indicate that together the legislation, LPC's educational efforts, and the Lead Tackle Buyback Program may already be substantively reducing loon deaths resulting from ingested lead fishing tackle.

While the average annual per capita rate of lead tackle mortality has declined, the rate that we're experiencing remains high enough to significantly negatively

affect New Hampshire's loon population. In 2021 we confirmed the deaths of seven adult NH loons and one immature NH loon from lead poisoning, resulting from the ingestion of lead fishing tackle. An additional adult loon died on a New Hampshire lake in November 2021, but because it was collected during a time when loons from other areas are migrating through New Hampshire, we cannot definitively state that loon was from the New Hampshire population. Continuing to address the current use of lead fishing tackle remains an integral part of our work to reduce loon mortality and recover New Hampshire's threatened loon population.

### You Can Help!

Would you like to help get the word out about the impacts of lead tackle on our loons? Could your lake association or group help us collect tackle? Visit [loonsafe.org](https://loonsafe.org) or email [volunteers@loon.org](mailto:volunteers@loon.org) to find out how you can help reduce loon deaths from lead tackle!

~Caroline Hughes



LPC Volunteer and Outreach Biologist, Caroline Hughes, inventories tackle collected during our 2021 Lead Tackle Buyback Program.





## The 32nd Northeast Loon Study Working Group Conference

LPC hosted the 32nd Northeast Loon Study Working Group (NELSWG) meetings on March 17-18 in a Zoom format that drew over 60 participants from across the United States and Canada. This is an annual opportunity for biologists and citizen scientists to compare the status of loon populations across the region and beyond, to share the results of recent research, and to hone in on new threats or challenges facing loons. These challenges are diverse: in Wyoming, loon researchers reported using audio recordings and trail cams to detect nest failures caused by human disturbance, while a fall survey near Ithaca, NY highlighted the potential impact of ridgetop wind turbines on loons migrating through the Finger Lakes. Closer to home, LPC's 2020 Winnepesaukee biologist, Alyssa Neuhaus, presented her graduate work with Ellen Martinsen at the University of Vermont on avian malaria in loons. This is an emerging threat in New Hampshire, after several more cases were reported in 2021. The NELSWG agenda devoted substantial attention to the most immediate challenge for New England loon populations, eliminating lead fishing tackle use. Presentations from LPC and partner programs in other New England states were a chance to evaluate what methods are working, or need refinement, in the ongoing work to shift to safe tackle materials. LPC staff also hosted similar sessions to evaluate best practices for winter ice rescues, loon nest raft siting and construction, and wardening or nest site protection. The agenda paired these discussions with presentations on the underlying loon biology, from the role of the 'floater' population of

intruding loons, to wintering loon social dynamics, to the instincts and adaptability that may determine when, or whether, a loon migrates from a New Hampshire lake in time to avoid ice-in. After two years of meeting virtually, the 2022 NELSWG sessions concluded with plans to continue hosting this vigorous exchange in support of loon conservation in New Hampshire and beyond with an in-person meeting at The Loon Center in March, 2023.

~John H. Cooley, Jr.



Ray Hennessy Photo

## A Generous Donation Gives LPC's Live Loon Cam an Incredible Update

Viewers of LPC's 2022 Live Loon Cams may have noticed that this year, the view has been even more spectacular than usual. The visual upgrade comes courtesy of Axis Communications, which donated two brand new, state of the art cameras to LPC.

Our new cameras are much more powerful than the older models that we have been using since 2016. They have a faster CPU and more memory, which allows for higher resolution and frame rate than our previous models. The results of this camera upgrade are much higher quality streams and a greater level of operational control, allowing us to capture every detail in high resolution.

We sincerely thank Axis Com-

Looking to keep up with LPC and our work in real time? Follow us on social media!

In an increasingly modernizing world, social media has become a key component of LPC's strategy to educate the public about loons, the challenges they face, and the things we can all do help them survive and thrive. This year, in order to maximize our education through social media, we've teamed up with professionals at Social Speak Network to bring you more loon education than ever before! Keep up with us on:

Facebook:

@LoonPreservationCommittee

Instagram:

@LoonPreservationCommittee

Twitter: @LPC\_NH

YouTube: @LoonOrgNH

munications for their generous donation of the two cameras. We also thank those who facilitated the donation, including Loon Cam viewer Bill Puddicombe, his coworker George Degrosieller, George's son in law Acquan Wesley. These cameras are some of the best out there and will greatly aid us in our mission to educate the public about loons and their challenges.

While Loon Cam 1 is live at the time of writing, the eggs will likely have hatched by the time this newsletter is printed. But you can relive the highlights and, if the loons cooperate, watch Loon Cam 2 by visiting [loon.org/loon-cam](http://loon.org/loon-cam).

~Caroline Hughes

# 2022 FIELD STAFF SELFIES!

## LAKES REGION WEST



JAYDEN JECH

Jayden graduated from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida with B.S. degrees in Biology and Environmental Studies. He successfully defended his thesis on the role of barrier islands in supporting non-breeding plovers in South-western Florida.

## PEMIGEWASSET



TAYLOR TEWKSBURY

Taylor is a graduate student at the University of Montana pursuing an M.S. in Environmental Studies and certificates in Natural Resource Conflict Resolution and Environmental Education. She is experienced with researching, handling, and banding birds.

## LAKES REGION EAST



EMMA PURINTON

Emma spent the year on the Outer Banks as a research technician at the Coastal Studies Institute. She was part of a biogeochemistry lab focusing on characterizing the role of Sargassum seaweed in the Gulf Stream marine environment.

## SEACOAST



WILL HEIN

Will is a recent graduate of McGill University where he earned a B.S. in Environmental Science. An avid outdoorsman, including membership in Trout Unlimited, he aspires to focus his career on biodiversity and conservation.

## MONADNOCK



AUTUMN HEIL

Autumn is pursuing a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies/Environmental Biology and Fine Arts from Plymouth State University. She is passionate about discovering the natural world through scientific inquiry, natural observation, and artistic expression.

## SUNAPEE



PHIL KEEFE

Phil Keefe is the Sunapee region seasonal field biologist for his third season at LPC. He is going into his senior year at the University of New Hampshire studying Wildlife and Conservation Biology. In the winter, outside of class, he works as a forest surveyor.

## NORTH COUNTRY



JACK FOGARTY

A graduate of Paul Smith's College in the Fisheries and Wildlife Science program, Jack's goal is a career working with and studying wildlife. Prior experience includes working with Lesser Scaup on the Mississippi River, and banding migratory Saw-Whet Owls.

## WINNIPESAUKEE



ASHLEY KEENAN

Ashley is pursuing a degree in Wildlife Conservation from Unity College. She gained valuable knowledge on lake history, preservation, and wildlife conservation as a tour boat operator for the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center.

LPC's SQUAM LAKES region is monitored by Tiffany Grade, LPC's full-time Squam Lakes Project Biologist.



### CONSERVATION INTERN



AMANDA GABRYZSAK

A second-year veterinary student at Tufts, Amanda is focused on a career in wildlife disease research and conservation medicine. She has worked with loons in the past which sparked her interest in the connections between environmental health and wildlife health.

### OUTREACH INTERN



KAILA HODGES

Kaila is a senior at Clemson University, pursuing a degree in Environmental and Natural Resources. She will spend the summer giving presentations throughout the state, leading guided paddling trips, and engaging with viewers of LPC's Live Loon Cams.

### TUFTS INTERN



TONI RABASCO

Toni is pursuing a Masters in Conservation Medicine at Tufts. Through her undergraduate classes at UVM and time spent in the field, she became interested in learning how to protect and maintain biodiversity, as well as navigating the human/wildlife conflict.

*To see the summer sky is poetry,  
though never in a book it lie –  
true poems flee.*

*-Emily Dickinson*

*The dramatic increases in LPC's monitoring, research, management, and education to recover loons have been funded by donations to LPC's Loon Recovery Plan. For more information about the Loon Recovery Plan, or to make a donation, please contact Harry Vogel, Senior Biologist/Executive Director, at 603-476-5666 or hvogel@loon.org.*

See a Loon in Trouble?  
Please call 603-476-5666  
[www.loon.org](http://www.loon.org)



For help after hours please call  
NH Fish & Game  
603-271-3361



ANNUAL LOON CENSUS  
SATURDAY, JULY 16, 2022  
8AM - 9AM



CENSUS FORM ENCLOSED  
(SEE PAGE 23)

## Thank you to our donors: April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022 (\$100 and above)

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 Jerome and Lorry Gates  
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 Lori Hennelly  
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 Mr. and Mrs. Daniel L. Jackson  
 Betsy Janeway  
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 Daniel and Betsy Junius  
 Charles Christopher Jurack  
 Mr. and Mrs. Louis Kahn  
 Katherine Kinnicutt Family Foundation  
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 Omar Kouatly  
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 Christine Kuhlman  
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 Canobie Lake Protective Assoc.  
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   & Mike Ellenbecker  
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 Barbara Goodline  
   & Gary Eccleston  
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 Henry J. Sredl  
   & Rowena M. Schlegel  
 William Stapleton  
 Peter and Erin Steckler  
 Kathleen Crowell Steinmuller  
 Marie Stephens

Nancy Steproe  
 Ken and Ilene Stern  
 Alison and Rob Stevens  
 Cynthia Stewart  
 Stonehall Farm  
 Howard and Carol Stoner  
 Mr. Guy W. Stoye  
 Mr. Robert B. Strassler  
 John and Corliss Strumello  
 Ruth N. Stuart  
 Michael Sullivan  
 Mark and Marianne Sunderland  
 BJ Warner & Lori Sussman  
 Swains Lake Assoc.  
 Richard Swanson  
 Leslie Swanson  
 Bryan Sweeney  
 Carl and Laurie Tarabelli  
 Joy Tarbell  
 Donna Tasso Johnson  
 Dr. and Mrs. Andrew L. Taylor  
 Taylor Community  
 Peter and Denise Terwilligar  
 Ms. Brett Amy Thelen  
 Carl and Sheila Thieme  
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard Thomas  
 Therese Thompson  
 Sarah C. Thorne  
 Terri Tiedt  
 Vicky Tierney  
 Andrew Timbie  
 Sarah Tipton  
 Michael Tocco  
 Matthew Tolbert  
 Steven Tomasi  
 Dennis and Marianne Tompkins  
 Joyce Tompkins  
 Germaine T. Towle  
 Trish Townsend  
 Louis and Lorraine Travers  
 Wendy Traynor  
 Michael Trotta  
 Kim Tsatsarones  
 John Updegraff  
 Stephen and Jane Urner  
 Lori Van Dam  
 Karen and David Van Der Beken

Reverend Jane W. Van Zandt  
 Tony Vazzano & Susan Wiley  
 Ms. Hanny Veenendaal  
 Mr. and Mrs. Gene Venable  
 Gary and Diane Viera  
 Village Kitchen, LLC  
 Mary Vinagro  
 Patricia Vittum & Laurie Brocklesby  
 Robert Volpe  
 Mr. and Mrs. Friedrich K. Von Gottberg  
 Beth O'Brien Vumbaco  
 Anne J. Waehner  
 Lisa Wardlaw  
 Renny and Susan Warren  
 Page Wasson  
 Michael F. Webster &  
   Leone Buyse  
 Jack and Lory Weekes  
 Norman E. Weeks  
 Len Wetherbee  
 Maynard Wheeler  
 Evelyn and Paul Whelton  
 Ms. Wendy E. White  
 Alexander Whiteside  
 G. B. Whiting  
 Laurie and Doug Whitley  
 Mr. and Mrs. Thomas S. Whitman  
 Whitemore Improvement Assoc.  
 Julie Wiatt  
 George Williams  
 Brenda Wilson  
 Diane Winn  
 Winnepesaukee Chocolates  
 Winnepesaukee DAR  
 Alice Wood  
 Mr. and Mrs. H. Curtis Wood, III  
 Woodlands Shores Assoc., Inc.  
 Elizabeth Worthington  
 Mimi Youngkins  
 Danil Zakablukovskii  
 Karan Zaranka  
 Robert and Deborah Zeller  
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard Zeloski  
 John and Kathleen Zenker  
 Bob and Eileen Zewski  
 Andrew and Kimberly Ziegele  
 Paul Zintl



## *LPC Collaborates with NHDES to Study PFAS in Loon Eggs*

The Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) and New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) are partnering to study PFAS in loon eggs. This research will test 100-150 inviable eggs collected from failed nests throughout New Hampshire over the last five years using state funds dedicated to PFAS research. The purpose of the study is to identify lakes with elevated levels of PFAS contamination using loon eggs as indicators of contaminant levels, to investigate how PFAS moves through aquatic food webs, and to study contaminant levels in loon eggs and potential impacts on loon breeding success. LPC is excited to partner with NHDES in these investigations!

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of chemicals that have been used since the 1950s as stain repellants and surfactants. They are found in products such as Teflon™, Gore-Tex™, other stain- and water-repellant products, food wrappers and packaging, firefighting foam, and other consumer goods. PFAS chemicals have been found to persist in the environment and in wildlife and have been linked to a range of health problems in humans. PFAS chemicals have also been linked to reduced hatching success in birds and possible endocrine disruption.

As fish-eaters high on aquatic food webs, loons are good indicators of the health of lake ecosystems and an ideal species in which to study these contaminants. They ultimately reflect any problems lower in the food web or any harmful inputs into the ecosystem, such as chemical contaminants. Like many other contaminants, PFAS chemicals



Roy Hennessy Photo

*LPC's partnership with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services will help us learn how PFAS impacts loon breeding success.*

bioaccumulate in animals over time and biomagnify as they go up the food web. In biomagnification, contaminants bind to sediments and are absorbed by bacteria, which in turn are consumed by plankton. An aquatic insect or other invertebrate may then eat many of those plankton, in the process absorbing the contaminants they had consumed, and so on up the food chain. With each step, the level of contaminants in an organism is "magnified" as it consumes many of the contaminant-carrying organisms in the level below it. With loons at the top of the aquatic food web, contaminants have already gone through many levels of biomagnification by the time a loon eats a fish, so the loon is receiving a concentrated dose of contaminants in the fish. In addition, contaminants can bioaccumulate in long-lived species like loons, building up over the years in their body tissues. Loons' status as a long-lived species, their position

at the top of aquatic food webs, and the fact that loons are feeding exclusively in aquatic habitats make them sensitive indicators of contaminants in a lake ecosystem.

LPC's previous testing of PFAS has revealed elevated levels of PFAS contamination in loon eggs throughout New Hampshire, most notably at Canobie Lake and Arlington Mill Reservoir, as well as Lake Winnepesaukee. As LPC reported in our egg contaminant report released last November, the mean level of PFOS (a type of PFAS) for 24 lakes throughout the state was 184 parts per billion. This statewide mean already exceeds the lowest level documented to cause negative effects in other bird species. However, levels of PFOS on Arlington Mill Reservoir reached 1310 ppb, while two eggs from the same clutch on Canobie Lake reached 1170 and 1400 ppb. Four eggs from Winnepesaukee, including one egg tested since LPC's report came

*continued on page 16*

*continued from page 15*

out, ranged from 545-905 ppb (Figure 1).

These elevated levels raise several important questions. First, what do these levels mean for loons? The effects of PFAS on loons are not known, but we hope that ongoing research by LPC and additional testing through our partnership with NHDES will help increase understanding of the potential impacts of PFAS on loon breeding success.

More broadly, what do elevated levels of PFAS in loon eggs mean for other wildlife and people who share the lakes with loons? This is where the importance of loons as an indicator species comes in, and LPC's research has already served as a demonstration of this important fact. Fish testing by NHDES in the wake of LPC's work on Squam led to a new fish consumption advisory due to elevated levels of PCBs in the fish (see LPC's Spring 2020 Newsletter), and NHDES' fish testing at Canobie lake led to PFAS fish consumption advisories there. Testing eggs from more lakes across New Hampshire will help identify other potential hotspots that might require testing of fish to assess risks to human health.

There is still much to learn about PFAS in aquatic systems: how does it move through aquatic food webs? What do certain levels of PFAS in various parts of the food web mean for loons, people, and other wildlife? Of course,

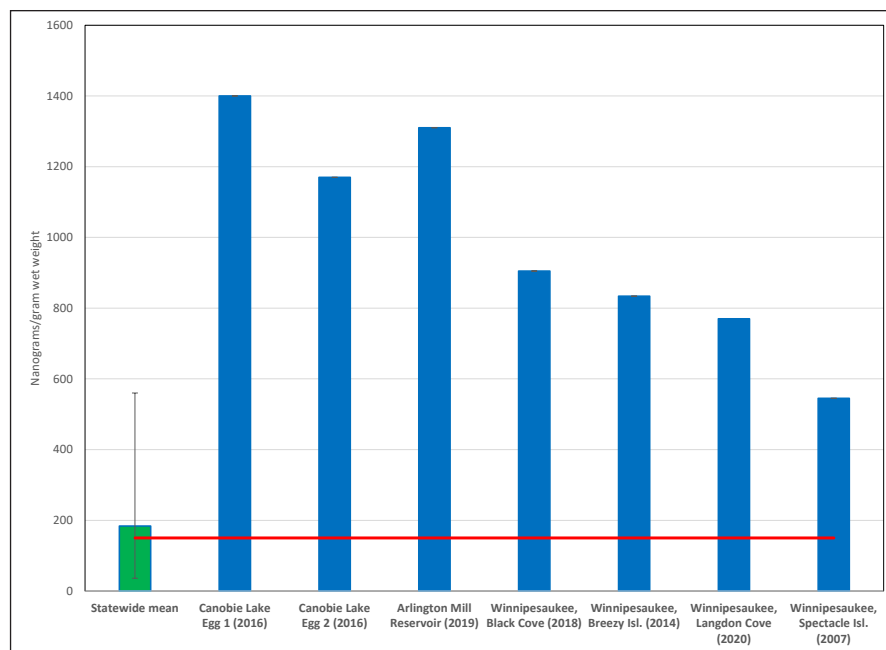


Figure 1: Levels of PFOS, a type of PFAS contaminant, in loon eggs in New Hampshire. The red line indicates the lowest level documented to cause reduced hatching success in other bird species. The bar on the statewide mean column indicates the range of PFOS levels documented in NH loon eggs, excluding the eggs indicated to the right.

preventing such toxic chemicals from entering ecosystems is the critical issue; but once they are in the system, what steps can be taken to mitigate those risks? Partnerships like the one with NHDES can help researchers begin to answer those questions and help decision-makers create good policy. LPC has an incredible resource in its archive of inviable eggs collected from failed nests over the years. We are excited to be able to use this resource in collaboration with NHDES to benefit the loons, other wildlife, aquatic

ecosystems, and people of New Hampshire.

*~Tiffany Grade*

*Loon Preservation Committee thanks New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services for their partnership with us on this project and for making these funds available. For more information on LPC's contaminants research, please see our report on contaminants in loon eggs at [www.loon.org/eggreport](http://www.loon.org/eggreport).*



### *Honorary LPC Trustee, Jordan Prouty, Passes at 93*

It is with great sadness that I note the passing of Jordan Prouty, a towering figure in the Loon Preservation Committee's history. Jordan was recruited by LPC's founder, Rawson Wood, in 1976, just a year after LPC's creation. As was Jordan's way, he jumped in with both feet and was soon at the forefront of those early efforts to reverse the decline of loons in New Hampshire. He became a founding member of LPC's governing body, the Loon Preservation Policy Committee, and served as Chair of the Policy Committee from 1992 until 1997. An engineer by education and a salesman by nature, he was integral to the capital campaign to create the original Loon Center in 1993 and was Clerk of the Works for the building project. Jordan's leadership during critical times was essential to help LPC survive and thrive, and he reprised his position as Chair of the Policy Committee from 2004 to 2006. In that role he was instrumental in the change of that body to a true governing Board of Trustees, as LPC fledged from a self-guided and self-funded project of New Hampshire Audubon to an independent organization.

Altogether he guided LPC on its Policy Committee and then Board of Trustees for 16 years,



*Phyllis and Jordan Prouty at the dedication of the "Prouty Porch."*

serving as Chair for seven. It was with great pride that the LPC Board acknowledged he and wife Phyllis' outstanding contributions to loons and LPC by dedicating the "Prouty Porch" of The Loon Center in 2006 and made him an Honorary Trustee in 2012.

Jordan was a father figure and mentor to staff, and a grandfather figure to our young field biologists. He opened his heart and home to all of us with great warmth and generosity. Upon stepping down as Policy Commi-

tee Chair, a staff member wrote of Jordan, "His generosity of spirit, optimism, and overall commitment to the staff, fellow volunteers, and the loon recovery effort in New Hampshire have been an inspiration to us all." Jordan was a true ambassador for loons and friend to the Loon Preservation Committee, and he leaves behind a long and rich legacy of work to recover New Hampshire's loon population.

*~Harry Vogel*

## 2022 LPC Benefit Raffle!

Tickets \$5.00 each or 3/\$10.00



Old Town Kayak: Donated by Irwin Marine. Heron 9XT; stable, light weight, and easy to paddle.

Loon and Chicks Decoy: Entirely handcrafted from the delicate carving to detail painting and hand wax finish.

Wine Ensemble: Sip a "Smoking Loon" Unoaked Chardonnay or 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon from elegant wine glasses with loon etching. An 8x13 serving tray with a sublimation loon photo completes the ensemble.

Drawing November 26; 2pm at The Loon Center

Need tickets? Call 603-476-5666!

## Annual Meeting August 25, 2022

### The Loon Center

5:00 pm	Potluck Dinner
6:45 pm	Annual Meeting
7:00 pm	End of Season Loon Report

This meeting will be held both in-person and virtually. If you would like to join us virtually, please visit <https://loon.org/annual-meeting> for information. If you plan to attend in-person and would like to participate in the Potluck dinner, please email [volunteers@loon.org](mailto:volunteers@loon.org) to let us know what you'd like to bring. We hope to see you there!

Roy Hennessy Photo



## Rainy Day Fun

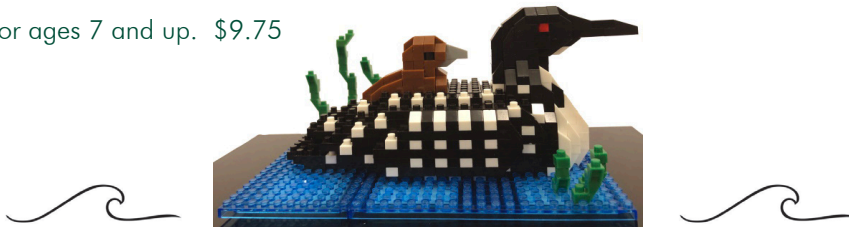
Summer is the time for enjoying nature and playing outdoors. But, what to do when it rains? Rainy days are perfect for curling up with a good book, working through a puzzle, or trying a new game. If you like loons, then you'll love the following items. Available in our online store ([www.loon.org/shop](http://www.loon.org/shop)), or you can swing by The Loon Center to purchase these items and many more!

Incidentally, visiting The Loon Center is a great way to spend a rainy day!

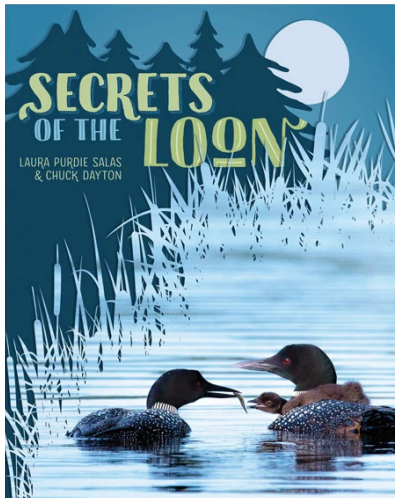
### Loon Mini Blocks

This "mini block" building block set features a loon carrying its chick and a brief description of loons. The creators of this building set were determined to get the design and write-up as accurate as possible and reached out to LPC for input about some of the finer details. 410 pieces with an assembled size of roughly 3 x 5.5 x 2.5 inches.

For ages 7 and up. \$9.75



### Secrets of the Loon by Laura Purdie Salas and Chuck Dayton



Vivid depictions in words and photos illuminate the mysterious world of loons, viewed through the lens of a chick learning how to survive — and thrive — in her first year.

For ages 3 - 7. \$16.95

### NH Child's Floor Puzzle

What screams "rainy day" more than a puzzle? This NH Child's Floor Puzzle features the state's iconic flora and fauna!

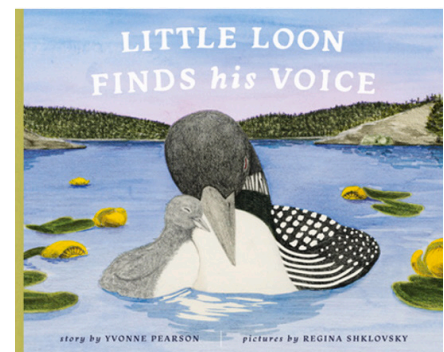
100 pieces; 2' x 3'. \$15.99



### Little Loon Finds His Voice; Story by Yvonne Pearson and Pictures by Regina Shlovsky

A beautifully illustrated coming of age story about a little bird claiming his place in the world, Little Loon Finds his Voice is perfect for young readers and their families!

Ooo aaa woo woo! Papa Loon's voice calls out long and strong across the water. He warns of danger. He defends his family's home. He even wards off predators. But Peep! Eep! Squeak! Little Loon's voice is nothing like his Papa's. When an eagle attacks, will Little Loon find his voice in time? Juvenile Fiction. \$17.95





## LPC's Exhibit Room Gets an Exciting Update

As the grande finale of the expansion and remodel of The Loon Center, LPC has updated our exhibit room! Visitors to The Loon Center will now be greeted by all new educational displays that explore topics relating to all aspects of loon biology including (but not limited to): territory selection, flight, migration, nesting, behaviors, and the impacts of lead fishing tackle on loons. Other exhibits cover topics relating to the work of LPC and our volunteers, including displays dedicated to nest rafts and the circumstances in which they can help improve nesting success, the history of LPC, and ways for members of the public to become involved in our work.

We would like to thank Maja Smith and Sandra Murphy from Maja Design, Inc., who worked with LPC staff to design the displays and ensure that they were true to our vision. We also thank our generous Capital Campaign donors, who made our new exhibit room possible. We are incredibly excited about our new displays, and we look forward to sharing them with visitors to The Loon Center!

~Caroline Hughes



## *Silence Triplett wanted to make a difference in her estate plans... and she did!*

Silence “Encie” Triplett passed away suddenly last August. Encie moved to New Hampshire in the 1960’s settling in the Plymouth/Rumney area. She worked as a financial and legal researcher, and a paralegal with many local individuals and companies. When it came time for Encie to make her own estate plans, she told her legal advisor that she was interested in including one or more local environmental not-for-profits as beneficiaries. He provided her with an extensive list and she chose to include LPC in her will. While we are saddened that we did not have an opportunity to know Encie, we are hon-

ored by her decision, and will be forever grateful for her generous gift to LPC.

In response to this gift and other recent bequests, the LPC Board has formed a committee to recommend how to allocate estate gifts. Some of these funds will go to support LPC’s ongoing and ever-increasing efforts to preserve and protect New Hampshire’s loons, and a portion will be allocated to LPC’s endowment. A strong endowment is a critical element of the fiscal health of any organization. LPC is committed to increasing its endowment to better ensure that we are able to fulfill our mission even in uncer-

tain times. Estate gifts like this will help us reach our endowment goals.

We did not know Encie but we do know that loons were important to her, as they are to you. We humbly ask that you consider including the Loon Preservation Committee in your estate plans and make your love for loons part of your legacy.

For more information on remembering LPC in your will or trust, go to <https://loon.org/bequests/>, or contact Betsy McCoy at [bmccoy@loon.org](mailto:bmccoy@loon.org).

~Holly Heath

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## THE LOON LEGACY SOCIETY

### *Remembering Loons Now – and Forever*

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### *Welcome Back Betsy!*

LPC Director Jeff Fair made a fateful decision when he decided to hire Betsy McCoy, a fresh-faced UNH wildlife student, as a field biologist in the summer of 1984. Recognizing talent and dedication, he hired her back the following two years, and then promoted her to LPC Program Assistant, a full-time, year-round position. Betsy continued to be up to every challenge, and soon found herself to be LPC’s Acting Director when Jeff took a leave of absence, and then became LPC’s Director. In this capacity she developed and met LPC’s operating budget, supervised staff and coordinated volunteers, and directed LPC’s monitoring, research, management, and outreach programs. She also raised funds to support

LPC’s operations as well as the capital campaign that built the original Loon Center in 1993 before leaving LPC to pursue other endeavors.

Her intervening work experiences, including at Plymouth State University’s Office of Institutional Effectiveness, have honed Betsy’s program assessment and strategic planning skills and prepared her to return to LPC to put old and new life experiences to use for loons once again. As LPC’s new Director of Development and Membership, Betsy will be able to apply her very considerable skills, dedication to loons, and institutional memory to ensure the continued support of LPC’s work to recover our loon population. She will build on her



predecessor Lin O’Bara’s outstanding work to develop and deepen our relationships with our friends and supporters. We are thrilled to have Betsy back where she belongs: working for New Hampshire’s loons! I invite all to stop in at The Loon Center and either meet or reacquaint themselves with Betsy!

~Harry Vogel

# 2022 Summer Nature Talk Schedule

♦ Thursdays July 7 - August 25 at 7pm ♦

Please check <https://www.youtube.com/LoonOrgNH>  
for additional details about livestreams.

## **July 7: Northwoods Wildlife Safari with Team Mooseman**

Rick and Libby met through their love of nature and wildlife. From Moose to Loons, their love and respect for wildlife is obvious through their photographs. Their philosophy is simple – create as little disturbance as possible so the animals can live their lives as they were meant to, wild and free.

## **July 14: LoonCam with Bill Gassman**

Join us as Bill Gassman, LPC's volunteer Loon Cam Operator, shares the drama of the 2022 LoonCam season, showing photos from the LoonCam and reviewing the most interesting things we have seen and learned while watching nesting loons. Bill will also share some behind the scenes details about how the LoonCam works, the challenges of getting it all up and running, and introduce the "Zoomies" that helped track the loons on camera this year.

## **July 21: New Hampshire's Bobcats with Patrick Tate**

Bobcats are distributed throughout North America and are one of two species of wildcats living in New Hampshire. Previously recognized as a livestock predator subject to bounties, bobcats have seen a population rebound and are now found in all ten counties. A New Hampshire Fish & Game (NHF&G) Wildlife Biologist and Furbearer Project Leader, Patrick will be presenting biological information about Bobcats in the state and the NHF&G's monitoring efforts of the species.

## **July 28: Hummingbirds of the Americas with Dana & Bob Duxbury-Fox**

Dana and Bob will focus on "What is a hummingbird?" and their personal adventures with ten different, remarkable species seen on their journeys in the Americas. They will also share results of recent research giving deeper insights into the wonders of this family - how they evolved, pollination through nectar gathering, their diet of insects and nectar, nectar feeding technique, use of torpor, how iridescence is produced, and their courtship. Many spectacular pictures and videos will be included.

## **August 4: The Nature of Coyotes with Chris Schadler**

Chris' interest in wild canids began in the 1970s as a volunteer at the Wolf Park in Battleground, Indiana, and inspired a Masters in Conservation Biology at Antioch University. Her thesis focused on the Natural Recovery of the Eastern Timber Wolf in Michigan. Her attention shifted to the Eastern Coyote when she and her flock of sheep moved to New England. She is now the NH and VT representative for Project Coyote, a national organization promoting coexistence with coyotes.

## **August 11: Relocating Turtles: "Should We or Shouldn't We?" with Chris Bogard**

Have you ever found a turtle crossing a road and decided to move it to a safer location? Surprisingly, this may prove to be even more hazardous to the relocated turtle. Disease, genetic and dispersal issues are some of the topics to be discussed along with some case histories experienced by the presenter. Our State Endangered turtle and State Threatened turtle will also be making an appearance!

## **August 18: Bird Migration: Fun Facts and Shameless Speculations with Dr. Pam Hunt**

Why do birds migrate? How do they know where they're going? The phenomenon of bird migration has fascinated people for millennia, and in this program the answers are finally revealed! Dr. Pam Hunt of NH Audubon will provide an overview of the nuts and bolts of bird migration, including how scientists study it. We'll also discuss examples of migration routes of some familiar (and unfamiliar) species and touch on the conservation issues facing migratory birds.

## **August 25: End of Season Report with John Rockwood and Harry Vogel**

Wildlife photographer, John Rockwood, will share photos and video of local loon families from two southern NH lakes, from their arrival in spring through August. 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 this year.





**New Hampshire Loon Census**  
**Saturday, 16 July 2022**  
**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 bald eagle sightings during this hour & the loons' response (i.e. vocalizations):

(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 23 TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FINAL TALLY.**

Please return this form to the LPC: PO Box 604, Moultonborough, NH 03254,  
or you can fax it 603-476-5497 or email it to [volunteers@loon.org](mailto:volunteers@loon.org).

If you were part of a coordinated census effort on a larger lake, please send this form to  
your coordinator so they can send the forms in all together.

Loon Preservation Committee  
PO Box 604  
Moultonborough, NH 03254

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for underwriting this publication.

