

IT'S FUN, EASY AND REWARDING TO BE A LOON SURVEYOR!

- ✓ Survey any Canadian lake at least once in June (for loon pairs), once in July (for newly hatched chicks) and once in August (for the number of young that survive).
- ✓ If there are no loons or no loon chicks B keep surveying! Such "negative" data are valuable too!
- ✓ Record the information on the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey Reporting Forms provided with the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey Instructions.
- ✓ During the summer keep an eye out for other common waterbirds and record the species that are present or absent on your lake.
- ✓ After the breeding season, send the forms back to Bird Studies Canada for analysis or enter the data into the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey Online Data Entry web site.
- ✓ Your reports join hundreds of others from across the country to support the conservation of loons and lakes.

When you enroll in the [Canadian Lakes Loon Survey](#) you become a Bird Studies Canada member and will receive benefits, including four issues of BSC's magazine *BirdWatch Canada*, covering the latest loon information and other interesting tidbits on birds. You will also be contributing to an important nation-wide bird research program.

The CLLS is delivered by Bird Studies Canada, a non-profit organization, and is financed by participant fees, corporate and government sponsors, and private donations. These partnerships are essential for effective conservation.

Special thanks to the Kenneth M Molson Foundation for supporting the production of this brochure.

Spending time on a lake is a wonderful experience...participating in the [Canadian Lakes Loon Survey](#) can make these moments even more rewarding.

TWELVE SIMPLE STEPS TO A WILDLIFE FRIENDLY WATERFRONT

- ✓ Keep the lot well-treed S never clearcut.
- ✓ Protect shoreline vegetation; replant areas lacking shrubs and trees with native species.
- ✓ Start a buffer strip by leaving some grass uncut near the water.
- ✓ Build at least 30 metres away from the shore.
- ✓ Give clear instructions to your contractors and monitor their work.
- ✓ Avoid spilling fuels, antifreeze, paint thinner or other chemicals on land or water S clean up fast!
- ✓ Don't use fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides near the water.
- ✓ Use only phosphate-free soaps, detergents and cleaners in your home.
- ✓ Pump out your septic tank regularly S every two to three years.
- ✓ Extend the life of your septic system by avoiding tank additives and minimizing water consumption
- ✓ Refuel your boat with care S don't spill a drop.
- ✓ Watch your boat's wake S it causes erosion!

These tips have been provided courtesy of the Living by Water Project (www.livingbywater.ca).



Are you causing harm?

People can harass and stress loons without even being aware they are doing so. While on the lake or shoreline keep an eye out for the following and, if seen, move away.

- ★ A loon is splashing across the water, appearing to stand up.
- ★ A loon is vocalizing at you.
- ★ A loon is lying very flat on the shoreline with its head down. The loon is on its nest, and if approached, may slide into the water, leaving the eggs exposed to predators.
- ★ Watch your pets as well; please keep them away from wildlife.

WHAT IS BIRD STUDIES CANADA?

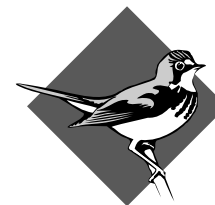
Bird Studies Canada (BSC) is Canada's leading bird conservation organization, with a mission to advance and encourage the understanding, appreciation and conservation of wild birds and their habitats throughout Canada and around the world.

Volunteers for the [Canadian Lakes Loon Survey](#) monitor Canada's lakes for Common Loons and other waterbirds. Founded in 1981, the program involves hundreds of participants across the country.

Other Bird Studies Canada programs include: Ebird; Coastal Waterbird Surveys; Beached Bird Surveys; Project FeederWatch; Project NestWatch; Nocturnal Owl Surveys; Species at Risk programs; Marsh Monitoring Programs in the Great Lakes, Quebec and the Prairies; and Breeding Bird Atlases (British Columbia, Maritimes, Manitoba, and Quebec).

BSC supporters receive many benefits, including:

- ★ Four issues of *BirdWatch Canada* a year
- ★ Bird Studies Canada's Annual Report
- ★ The opportunity to watch and learn about birds, while making important contributions to conservation science



BIRD STUDIES CANADA
ÉTUDES D'OISEAUX CANADA

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BirdLife
INTERNATIONAL

DO YOU ENJOY WATCHING LOONS?

DO YOU LIVE OR PLAY IN LOON COUNTRY?

If you answered Yes
to these questions ...



Help us ensure Canada's Lakes are Loon Friendly!



FACTS ABOUT LOONS

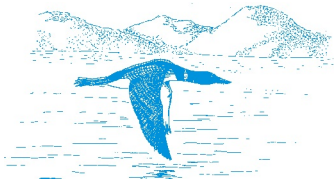
- There are five species of loons worldwide, four of which breed in Canada. The Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) is the most well-known species.
- Loons are one of the oldest groups of birds still living today, with a history of more than 50 million years.
- Human activities have decreased the abundance and breeding range of Common Loons in North America in the last 150 years.
- There are several US states where loons are threatened, endangered or just no longer present.
- Today, the majority of the world's Common Loon population breeds on Canadian lakes.

Loon Calls

Quiet "hoots" or "mews" are intimate chats among loons floating together. The wild "yodel," with repeated triplets at the end, is a territorial call given by males.

A loon call you don't always want to hear ...

The familiar tremolo or "laughing" call is a distress call that loons give when alarmed or threatened. The cause could be another loon, or it could be a predator or a curious human. If loons give this call with you near, you may have approached a loon's nest or chick too closely.



How are Canada's Common Loons faring?

Participants in the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey have collected information on nesting loons since 1981. While at present, loon populations are stable, examination of participants' data gives us reason to be concerned. Reproductive success is consistently higher in western regions (Prairie provinces, British Columbia, Yukon) than in the east (Ontario, Québec, and Atlantic Canada). Loons are still affected by lake pH, with lower pH (i.e., more acidic) decreasing chick survival in some regions. Chicks and their parents are also threatened by deadly Type E. Botulism when they migrate.

WHY ARE LOONS IN TROUBLE?

Acid rain

Loons are mainly fish-eaters. They suffer when fish populations decline due to acid rain. Loons may try to breed on acidic lakes, but may not find enough food to feed their chicks. Even where pH has returned to normal levels the lack of calcium may impair breeding success. Acid rain also leaches mercury and other toxic metals from the ground. Loons can get lethal doses when toxic chemicals build up in the food chain.

Shoreline development

When we build homes and cottages on lakes, we may wipe out shoreline habitat that provides nesting sites and protective cover for loons. Development, and even camping, on islands can displace loons and drive them to less hospitable nesting sites.

Water level fluctuations

Water-levels on many loon lakes are controlled by dams. When we change lake levels for power generation, navigation or aesthetic reasons, we can harm loon nests. Water level changes during May, June and July can either drown nests or leave them too high and dry for loons to safely access.



Immature Common Loon

Watercraft

Canoes and small boats plying shallow water in bays or close to shore can frighten loons from nests or disturb loon chicks taking cover in the secluded waters. Fast-moving personal watercraft give loons little warning and their operators are often not aware of loons they disturb. Personal watercraft and powerboats can also create wakes that wash away loon eggs and disturb nests.

Nest predators

Raccoons, skunks, bears and gulls feed on loon eggs and chicks. We attract these predators when we feed them, are careless with our trash, or inadvertently give them shelter with poorly maintained barns or sheds. Equally harmful, unrestrained pets can harass loons and may cause nest abandonment.

Ten Steps to a Loon-Friendly Lake

Keep it wild

Work to preserve the wild parts of your lake.

Keep your shoreline natural

Vegetated shorelines provide shelter for both fish and loons.

Watch your wake

Use sensitive boating practices and steer clear of loons.

Don't Discard

Return plastics, metals, fishing line, tackle and other refuse to shore for appropriate disposal or recycling.

Test the waters

Help monitor your lake's water quality. Find a program in your area or call us.



Be level-headed

Work to reduce large water level changes during the nesting season (May to July). Talk to your local officials.

Don't mess with the food chain

Don't feed nest predators such as raccoons or gulls. Dispose of your garbage properly.

Lobby for loons

Get involved in national air pollution issues and local water quality programs.

Spread the word

Place loon conservation messages on websites and in papers and newsletters.

Be a citizen scientist!
Watch over nesting areas and join the
Canadian Lakes Loon Survey!

YES,



I'D LIKE TO SUPPORT THE CLLS!

Register: by phone at 1-888-448-BIRD (2473) or 519-586-3531, at <http://www.birdscanada.org> (BSC Store), or with the form below

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Phone _____

Province _____ Postal Code _____

E-mail _____

Tax receipts are issued for membership fees and donations

___ I'd like to survey my lake. Please send me a survey package at the end of May, BSC's Annual Report, and *BirdWatch Canada* four times a year. (\$35)

___ I care about loons and lake conservation but am not able to survey. Please sign me up as a CLLS supporter and send me BSC's Annual Report and *BirdWatch Canada* four times a year. (\$35)

___ I'd like to help support loon and lake conservation through an additional donation of _____ to the CLLS.

___ I would like more information on the CLLS loon sign program.

My preferred survey lake is _____, in the province of _____, and at the coordinates _____ (optional, UTM or lat/long).

___ Je voudrais recevoir les renseignements en français.

PAYMENT

American Express MasterCard VISA

Cheque enclosed

Card number _____

Expiration date _____

Signature _____

MAILING

Please make cheques payable to Bird Studies Canada - CLLS and mail to:

The Canadian Lakes Loon Survey
Bird Studies Canada
P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, ON
NOE 1M0

CLLS survey kits are mailed in May.

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