LoonWatch Mission

Engage, educate and connect students and citizens with resource professionals.
Wisconsin Loon Population Survey

Annual Lakes Monitoring Program

Training Workshops

Sigurd T. Olson Loon Research Award

Educational Materials

Get the Lead Out!

Speakers’ Bureau

Presentations and Events

Website

Loon Appreciation Week

Resource to Answer Citizen Questions

Work Study and Interns

Advisory Council
Common Loon
¼ Mile Aquatic Runway
Common Loon Range and Migration in North America
Yodel
Wail
Hoot

Loon Calls courtesy of Jay Mager

David Rippon
Nesting Habitat
Nesting Habitat

Linda Grenzer
Artificial Nesting Platforms
Predators
Predators
Nesting Behavior
Defensive Postures
Defensive Postures
Loon Identification

Recently Hatched

Linda Grenzer
Loon Identification

7 Day Old Chicks
Linda Grenzer
Loon Identification

Two Week Old Chick

Linda Grenzer
Loon Identification

6 Week Old Chick

Linda Grenzer
Loon Identification

Juvenile Chick

Linda Grenzer
Threats

Loss of Habitat

Past and Present
Common Loon
Breeding Range in
North America

Current Range

Historical
Southern Limit

McIntyre 1988

Northland College / Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute / LoonWatch
Threats

Poor Water Quality

Approximately 20% of necropsied loons succumbed to lead poisoning.
Threats

Human Disturbance
Emerging Threats

The darker the color, the more favorable the climate conditions are for survival. The outlined areas represent approximate current range for each season. 
More on reading these maps.

Winter
Summer
Winter Range
Summer Range
Both Seasons

2000  2020  2050  2080
Zoom In
Figure 6: The observed number of days with extreme precipitation events (annual number of days with precipitation above 2 inches) for 1900–2014, averaged over 5-year periods; these values are averages from 28 long-term reporting stations. A typical station experiences 1 day annually with 2 inches or more of precipitation. Since 1990, Wisconsin has experienced an increasing number of extreme rain events. Source: CICS-NC and NOAA NCEI.
June 19-20, 2012 Flooding Rains

Emerging Threats

Climate Change
Emerging Threats

Observed Precipitation

Valid Ending Thursday July 14th, 2016 at 8 AM CDT

- Up to 0.1 inch
- 0.1 to 0.25 inches
- 0.25 to 0.5 inches
- 0.5 to 1.0 inches
- 1.0 to 2.0 inches
- 2.0 to 3.0 inches
- 3.0 to 4.0 inches
- 4.0 to 6.0 inches
- 6.0 to 8.0 inches
- 8.0 to 10.0 inches
- 10.0 to 15.0 inches
- Greater than 15 inches

Graphic Created
July 14th, 2016
9:22 AM CDT
Emerging Threats

The Loon Project

- From 1993 to 2019 the incidence of chicks reaching 5 weeks of age has fallen 1.1% annually.

- In 2019, 5-week old chicks weighed 10.5% less than those in 1993.

- There are fewer two-chick broods.

- From 1993 to 1998, 53% of broods were single broods. From 2014 to 2019, it jumped to 73%.

- Decreasing floater population is leading to fewer territorial evictions.

- The threat of being evicted (from territory) is only 20% to 25% chance of what it was 2 decades ago.
Emerging Threats

Big Wake Boats

In WI it is unlawful to:
• Chase, harass or disturb wildlife with your vessel.
• Operate a vessel within 100 feet of the shoreline, any dock, raft, pier or restricted area on any lake at greater than “slow, no wake speed”.
What Can Be Done to Protect Loons?

Restore Your Shoreland

Which is the exotic!
What Can Be Done to Protect Loons?

https://healthylakeswi.com/
What Can Be Done to Protect Loons?

Build a Rain Garden and Utilize Rain Barrels

Project Location:
River Falls, WI
What Can Be Done to Protect Loons?

Get the Lead Out and Properly Dispose of Fishing Line
What Can Be Done to Protect Loons?

Reduce Your Energy Consumption

- Walk or bike to work, store, errands
- Carpool
- Use public transportation
- Drive the posted speed limit
- Make sure your tires are properly inflated
- Purchase locally produced products
- Support alternative energy
Educate Your Fellow Lake Users

What Can Be Done to Protect Loons?

**LEAD ALERT**

Lead fishing tackle kills loons, eagles, swans, and other wildlife due to lead poisoning. Please use non-lead tackle when fishing this lake!

- Prevent wildlife death and entanglement.
- Discard unwanted fishing line in a trash receptacle and lead tackle at a local hazardous waste collection site.

**LOON ALERT**

Help keep this lake safe for loons by staying 200 feet from:

- loons on the water, and
- shoreline areas used by loons.

Wildlife harrassment is illegal. Please report violations to the local Department of Natural Resources office or call toll free 1-800-TIP-WDNR.

For loon information write: LoonWatch, Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute, Northland College, Ashland, WI 54806 or visit our websites www.northland.edu/soei or email us at loonwatch@northland.edu.
What Can Be Done to Protect Loons?

Monitor the Water Quality on Your Lake

Join the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network

https://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/
Annual Lakes Monitoring Program

- An annual monitoring program. Ideally, volunteers monitor once a week from ice-out to migration.
- Volunteers collect productivity and phenology data: arrival date, floaters, territorial pairs, nesting pairs, # of nesting attempts, # chicks, # chicks surviving to 8 weeks.
- Volunteers can select the lake(s) they want to monitor.

www.northland.edu/loonwatch
What Can Be Done to Protect Loons?

Join a LoonWatch Program

Wisconsin Loon Population Survey

- Once every FIVE years.
- One day survey. Saturday July 18th, between 5:00a.m. and 10:00a.m.
- Counting *adult loons and loon chicks*. NOT counting territorial pairs, floaters, etc.
- Survey occurs only on **258 pre-selected lakes**. These lakes were randomly chosen based on all size classes, # of lakes per county, and northern breeding location. They are representative of all lakes in the loon’s breeding area.

www.northland.edu/loonwatch
Help protect loons by sharing what you learned today.
BECOME A LOON RANGER

Contact Erica LeMoine
loonwatch@northland.edu
715-682-1220

The intensive nurturing, observation and protection provided to loons by volunteers across the continent is unprecedented...

What Loon Rangers are protecting is not just loons but a whole aesthetic: the loon, the forested shores, the clear cold water...

Terry Daulton
LoonWatch Coordinator 1990-1999