

The Uncommon Common Loon of Boundary County (2007-Current)

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Photo by: Steve Jamsa



Adult Loons with
chicks



Sub-adult Loon



Other birds commonly mistaken for Common Loons



Red-necked Grebe



Common Merganser



Western Grebe



Double-crested Cormorant

Common Loon Facts

- Long-lived species <25 years
- Morphology
 - Body size – 28-36”
 - Solid bones
 - Wingspan – 40-51”
 - 30’ – 1,320’ for take off
 - Legs located far back on the body
 - Efficient swimmers
 - Only on shore to mate & incubate



More Looney Facts

- Migration
 - April and October
 - Young of the year migrate later in fall
 - Immature birds do not return for approx. 3 yrs.
 - Generally return within 20 miles of natal lake



More Looney Facts

- Reproduction

- Age of Reproduction – Approx. 7 yrs old
- Generally 2 eggs, re-nest only 1 egg
- Incubation – 26-29 days
- Hatching late May-early June, early July for re-nests.



- Habitat

- Lakes > 13 acres
- Abundant prey (fish, amphibians, invertebrates)



- Nesting Habitat

- Small islands, herbaceous shorelines
- Shallow coves for nursery areas



Legend

- Winter Range
Breeding Range



Local Loon Populations

- NW Montana (1999-2008)
 - 62 breeding pairs (stable population)
 - 41 chicks/year
 - 53 singles (variable)
 - Banding program
 - 174 active bands 2013
- Eastern Washington
 - 10 lakes with established Territories
- North Idaho
 - Sporadic observations
 - Last documented chicks – 1985 (MacArthur Lake)



Montana Banding Program

- Main effort started in 2003, continuing at a reduced rate.
- Currently, 233 birds have been banded
- 38 loon deaths have been documented (MT, ID, WA, OR, CA, NV)



Lakes Surveyed for Common Loons in Boundary County, Idaho

Boundary County,
Idaho

Lincoln
County,
Montana

Bonner County,
Idaho

+
Priest
Lake

Myrtle Creek

Bonniers
Ferry

McArthur Lake

+ Robinson Lake

+ Brush Lake

Smith Lake
Dawson Lake

+ Solomon Lake

+ Perkins Lake

+ Bonner Lake

+ Herman Lake

State Hwy

Kootenai River

Moyie River

US Hwy 95

US Hwy 2

US Hwy 95

Kootenai River

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North Idaho Loon Summary Update

Lake	Acres	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Bonner Lake	21				6 7	7-S 7-P	5 7	6-L? 7-P 8-B	5-P 5-N 6-C? 7-L
Brush Lake	39				6 7	7	5 7	5 7	5 7
Dawson Lake	30				6 7	7	5 7	7	5 7
Herman Lake	31					7-P 8-S	5-N	5 7	5 7
Kootenai River		S		S					
McArthur Lake	267				6 7	7	5 7	5 7	5 7
Myrtle Creek	20							7-S	5-S
Perkins Lake	53				6 7	7	5 7	5 7	5 7
Robinson Lake	54				6 7	7	5 7	5 7	5, 6-S 7
Smith Lake	27				6 7	7	5	7	5 6-P? 7
Solomon Lake	11					7	7		

5=May survey/observation

6=June observation

7=July survey/observation

8=August observation

B=Banded loon

C=Chick

L=Dead loon

N=Nest

P=Pair

S=Single

F=Nest failure



Photo by: Steve Jamsa

Herman Lake, Boundary County, Idaho



Bonner Lake, Boundary County, Idaho



Fishing Line and Common Loons



Don't Mix



How to Find Loon Bands - PATIENCE





Photo by: Steve Jamsa







Common Loons And Lead Sinkers



Don't Mix

Common Loon Conservation

A Common Loon is shown in flight, its wings spread wide, over a body of water. The bird has a black head and neck, a white collar around its neck, and a grey and white speckled body. The background is a blurred landscape with water and land.

- Common Loons
 - Give them space
 - Be aware that they may attempt to prey on your lures
 - Wrap up loose fishing line
 - Use non-lead fishing tackle
- Nesting loons and chicks
 - Give them space
 - Do not approach the nests
 - Reduce wakes (not a problem)

