

# LOON ECHOES



*Newsletter of the Michigan Loon Preservation Association  
Annual Membership Issue  
Autumn 2015*



## ***It's Autumn! Time To Fly!***



*"The Golden Time" by Laura Tom, Loon Ranger*

\*\_\*\*

***The golden days of Autumn are here***, and soon our loons will have all flown to warmer climes. Some of our MLPA members and Loon Rangers will also follow, before the snow announces that winter's frosty days will be with us for awhile. As we wind down this 2015 loon season, we already are thinking ahead and planning for next year. Loon Ranger reports are coming in and we are tallying the results of Michigan's loon nesting success this year. So, Loon Rangers, remember to return your lake reports before you fly south or bundle up your cottage for spending winter on your ice-bound lakes. Thank you!

\*\_\*\*



***Autumn is our annual membership renewal time. We thank you for your continued support for Loon protection!***



## *An Unforgettable Summer*

**Each year** brings its joys and heartaches as we share these few short months with the loons and loon families on our lakes. This season was no exception, but there seemed more things of an unusual nature this summer than we have seen in awhile. There were moments and events that seemed to end up differently than we had found in the past (to the good when we least expected it!), and events that seemed so difficult to figure out; things that we had not before experienced and some that we hope we never experience again. There were loon babies found and loon babies lost, loon families reunited and loon families torn apart, some under most unusual circumstances. Sometimes we were able to help; sometimes not.

But each summer also serves to increase our knowledge of these wonderful creatures, allowing us to see a little more of what their lives are like, how they interact, how they manage day-to-day, and what they do (indeed *must* do) to survive. They bring to us many happy, and some sad, moments; and like old friends coming back to their same lake and territory each year, we greet them joyfully, and we mourn the loons that do not make it back home. We smile when we hear the loon parents proudly announcing to everyone as far away as can be heard, that their babies have at last arrived, and we welcome the new life when the downy chicks appear. Truly it is the highlight of our Loon Summer days! Then, to watch the babies grow, learning all they need to know before the end of the summer, (sometimes very comically, and certainly entertaining, it seems to us) and to then safely taking flight for the wintering waters, is a wonderfully satisfying experience for us. What a privilege to share our lakes and our lives with these marvelous birds!

\*\*\*\*\*

## *An Old Question*

**So often**, it seems, we hear of people wondering if animals have feelings. We know that it surely appears that our pets, our daily companions, show us their joy or sadness in many ways; we see it easily. So, too, if we are observant we can realize that there are instances when we may notice the same emotions in wild animals that we observe in our own pets who after all are not so far removed from their wild heritage.

When something happens on our lakes with our loons or even other animals, we can often hear the cries or witness the exuberance of emotion in these wild creatures. These sounds and sights speak very clearly to us.

We hear the happy calling of the loon parents when their chicks are born, and we hear their crying and sad, mournful sounds if a chick is lost. There are times when it is so apparent that the loons know and accept people. They are very intelligent with long-term memory, and can even be playful at times, in which they seem to delight. All this tells us that they indeed, do have emotion and feelings. They are, in fact, highly evolved, having been here much longer than ourselves. They are perfectly adapted for the life they live.

As it is with our loons, so it is with other animals. Let us keep our minds and hearts open to all that is around us and to the voices of all Earth's creatures as they go about their lives, fully aware and fully capable of thought and emotion with their own languages in this beautiful world that together we all share



## *Lakes, Loons and Limnology*

*By Ross Powers, retired Aquatic Biologist, U.S. EPA;  
member- Michigan Loon Preservation Association.*

***Clean Lakes Attract Loons:*** Did you know that loons once nested on many southern Michigan lakes? Now you are lucky to find them on lakes south of Clare. Why? Here is a hint. There is a connection between clean water and the bird that symbolizes pure Michigan. Common Loons nest on lakes with clear, clean water and healthy fish populations. They avoid lakes that are too polluted or clogged with weeds. That restricts the lakes that can attract and support loons. Because loons naturally select clean healthy lakes for their homes, we can use them as biological indicators providing early warnings of degrading water quality.

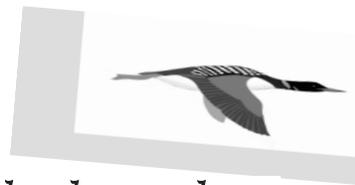
Because both people and wildlife are impacted by poor lake conditions it is important to recognize and preserve lakes with good water quality. The mournful call of a loon is mimicked by Hollywood to provide the feeling of pristine northern living. People value this feeling, and are typically willing to pay more for homes on lakes with loons. Loons are part of the total lake living package on many of our lakes. As a kid, I loved growing up on a lake in Michigan, because there was always something to see and do. I loved the whole experience of being on a lake. Boats, swimmers, ducks and other wildlife were always coming and going. I liked clear lakes for swimming, and other lakes with a few more weeds for fishing. I learned to value the quality of the water in a lake, because it determined how I could use it.

Some lakes are geologically old, and appear to be polluted, but are not. Other lakes with too many weeds can be salvaged if we detect problems early. Excessive nutrients due to inadequate septic systems are bad for fishing, people and loons. Being aware of changes in your lakes water quality can help prevent losing the use of the lake for swimming, aesthetics and wildlife watching. That is where MiCorps water quality monitoring can help. Be informed and you can make a difference.

***Lake Associations Are Good For People and Loons:*** Michigan Lake and Stream Associations are working to provide solutions to problems found on our waters. Armed with the correct information, they can protect your lake. When needed, they can restrict abusive boat traffic, monitor lake conditions, and report changes in the wildlife and environment. By keeping lakes healthy, lake associations are invaluable stewards of our water quality. Poor environmental conditions affect people and wildlife in and around lakes. Water clarity and invasive weeds are stealthy problems that can diminish the use of a lake.

As a lake resident, you can prevent the loss of these healthy lakes by simply taking some easy samples and observations. Lake residents, working with the MiCorps Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program ([www.micorps.net](http://www.micorps.net)) can provide data to support pollution prevention actions. Lake Associations do many things to protect lakes and at the same time, this protects the habitat of the threatened Common Loons. The health of Michigan's loon population is monitored by the Michigan Loon Preservation Association. The members of MLPA provide this data for natural resource scientists. You can learn about loons and how to attract them to your lake, by visiting [www.michiganloons.org](http://www.michiganloons.org) or joining the Michigan Loon Preservation Association.

## Dear Auntie



*\*Dear Auntie,*

*I have traveled statewide, from border-to border, and have noticed that there are many "Loon Lakes". I have visited some of them, and found that there had not been loons on the lake for many years. How many Loon Lakes are there, and how many of them still have loons nesting on them?*

*Perry Grinn*

Dear Perry,

I contacted Damon Mc Cormick, of Common Coast, he replied that of the 29 Michigan Loon Lakes, four harbored breeding pairs in 2003. (See map) Three of the four lakes were in the northern Lower Peninsula and one in the Upper. He has visited some of the 29 in recent years but doesn't have a comprehensive update for this twelve-year-old finding. The plan is to revisit the lakes in the near future, perhaps next summer, to update these totals.

Lakes in the Northern Lower Peninsula and the Upper Peninsula suffer from loss of habitat and/or its degradation. Loons in the Southern Lower Peninsula are at the southern limit of their current range which heightens habitat loss and disturbance problems. If we assume that lakes were so named because there were loons on them, it seems to underscore the importance of protecting the loons and their habitat we still have.

MLPA and Michigan Loonwatch are dedicated to preserving and protecting loons and their habitat. Our Loon Rangers are residents or visitors to lakes and therefore are in a position to protect "their" loons through education and protection of the nest site, nursery, and feeding areas. Brochures about the threat of lead tackle to loons and safe watercraft use are available to individuals, lake associations, and agencies. Loon Rangers also install artificial nesting islands which are successful in providing replacement habitat when natural sites are lost or unsuccessful. Educational buoys are placed during the nesting season to help prevent disturbance.

How can you help protect the loons we have? Please support the Michigan Loonwatch Program by becoming a member of MLPA, you will find a membership form in this newsletter. In addition, please send a contribution to MLPA Loonwatch to help fund its protection efforts. Consider it as "adopting" a loon family. For more information about upcoming events, brochures, or our programs, visit [www.michiganloons.org](http://www.michiganloons.org). We thank you for your help. Thank you, Perry, for your question.

### 2003 Chart



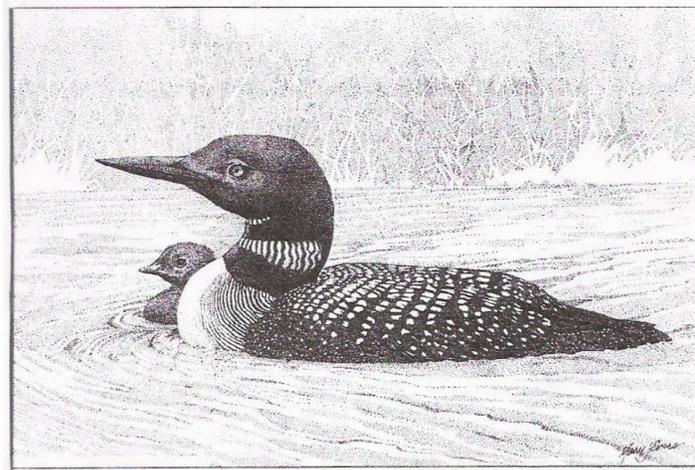
White spots indicate the 25 Loon Lakes that no longer have breeding pairs of birds. The four lakes with loons nesting are represented by loon icons.

*Auntie ArLOON*









from "Loon Monitoring Report, 1990" Evers

\*\*\*\*\*

### **MLPA Membership/Donation Form**

*Please indicate if this is a gift membership and include the giver's information*

**Mail to:** Luanne Jaruzel, MLPA  
10181 Sheridan Rd.  
Millington MI 48746

Please make checks payable to MLPA; Thank You!  
\*\*\*\*\*

***An MLPA Membership makes a perfect gift  
any time of year!***

Yes, I would like to initiate/ continue my MLPA membership or make a donation

- \$15 Family/Student/Senior
- \$20 Supporting Individual
- \$25 Contributing
- \$50 Sustaining/ Organization/ Business
- \$100 Award
- \$500 Benefactor/Life     \$1000 Sponsor

MLPA Contacts:

Luanne: 989-871-4819  
Joanne: 989-828-6019  
Arlene: 231-598-0878  
***michiganloons.org***  
***michiganloons@gmail.com***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (or Organization) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Amount Enclosed

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail

\_\_\_\_\_  
Receive E-Newsletters, etc.?

***Memberships and renewals are now available through PayPal at michiganloons.org***

***MLPA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization***

