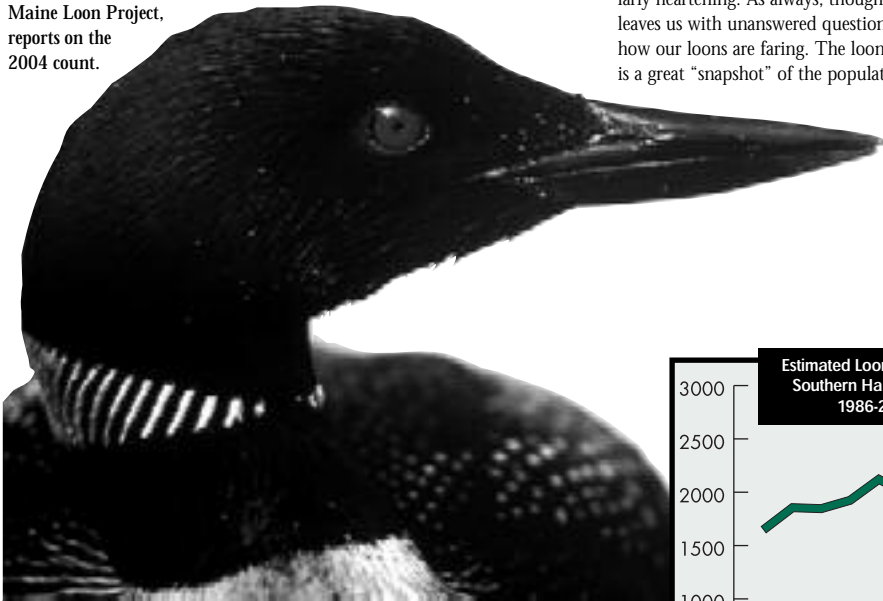


Loon News

This summer, Maine Audubon's Maine Loon Project celebrated the 21st year of its annual statewide loon count, a citizen-science project in which volunteers tally loons seen on assigned lakes around Maine. The data, collected during a half-hour period the third Saturday in July, provides a valuable portrait of the state's loon population and generates attention for the challenges the species faces, such as loss of habitat, poisoning from ingestion of lead fishing sinkers and jigs, and fatal boat collisions.

Susan Gallo, director of the Maine Loon Project, reports on the 2004 count.



Thank you!

Thanks to loon counters who recently donated to the Maine Loon Project directly or through Maine Audubon membership support. Becoming a Maine Audubon member is a great way to support loon conservation in Maine all year long.

- Ms. Bonnie Adams
- Ms. Wendy Austin
- Ms. Ursula Belden
- Mr. and Mrs. Earle D. Bessey, Jr.
- Mr. and Mrs. Edward Bosson
- Mr. and Mrs. Glen Buckingham
- John and Midge Burns
- Mr. and Mrs. John H. Bussell
- John and Dara Carberg
- Cathance Lake Association
- Mr. John Cavaretta and Mr. Randal Coulton
- Ms. Bea R. Coryell

After working from my office to organize Maine Audubon's annual loon count for the last six years, I finally had the chance to participate in the count while I was on vacation in Baxter State Park. Early on the morning of July 17, I found myself hiking the short trail to Draper Pond with some old friends who were visiting from Utah. We arrived at the pond just in time to launch our canoe at 7 a.m., the official start time of the half-hour count. The water was as smooth as glass as the sun started to rise above the trees. The world was still except for the splash of our paddles in the water as we leisurely paddled the perimeter of the pond, keeping our eyes peeled for the distinct sight of a loon. It was inspiring to think that across the state 961 others were out at the same time, all with the same goal: to find any and all loons in their assigned count area.

Luckily, most counters had the same clear weather for loon counting as we did. But because this was summer in Maine, there were exceptions: a few lakes were blanketed in thick fog. On Great Moose

Lake in Somerset County, for example, counters had to wait for clear skies before it was safe to motor home. Yet despite the isolated fog, loons were tallied on 345 lakes and ponds across the state.

The total count of loons seen was 2,046 adults and 220 chicks. We have traditionally used a sample of random lakes in the southern half of the state (south of the 45th parallel) to estimate the region's pop-

Our current population estimate for southern Maine is 2,774 adults and 237 chicks, a slight increase from last year.

ulation each year, since lakes in this part of the state are more thoroughly covered by volunteers. Based on that random sampling of 79 lakes in seven size categories, our current population estimate for southern Maine is 2,774 adults and 237 chicks (see graph), a slight increase from last year.

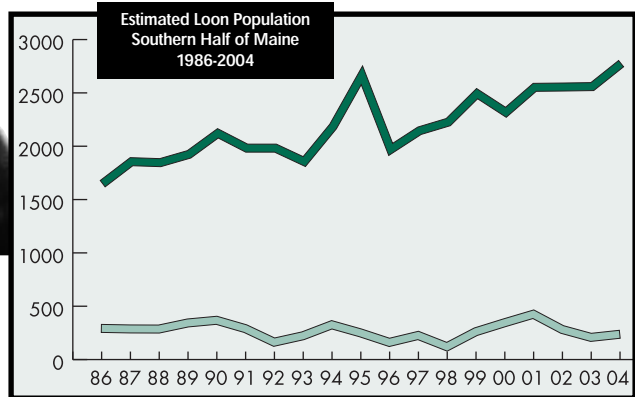
After a three-year plateau in the adult population, this slight increase is particularly heartening. As always, though, it leaves us with unanswered questions about how our loons are faring. The loon count is a great "snapshot" of the population and

yields excellent information to compare from year to year, but it doesn't answer what Maine's loons are doing. Do the chicks we see on count day actually survive through the summer to migrate to the ocean in the fall? How many of the adult loons seen on count day are non-breeders, adults without territories waiting out the summer? How many lakes in Maine have loon habitat but no loons, or have no loons because they simply don't possess the right habitat?

That last question was weighing on my mind as we finished our paddle around Draper Pond. We had heard a distant loon during the half-hour count but could say with certainty that there were no loons on our pond that morning. It was disappointing for us not to get even a glimpse of this magnificent Maine bird, but I reminded myself, as I've reminded many discouraged counters over these past six years, that zero is a very important number in a count like this.

As we hiked the short trail back to our cabin on Kidney Pond, where we'd seen and heard loons all week long, we talked about the many opportunities for research, for involving counters in more detailed citizen-science projects, and for further analyzing the 20 years of count data in our files. With volunteer involvement and member support, the Maine Loon Project will continue to seek answers to loon conservation questions and work to protect loons and their habitat in Maine. As for me, I'll continue to seek opportunities to get out from behind my computer screen whenever it's possible to "work" outdoors instead!

— Susan Gallo,
Maine Loon Project director



Loon Plates Do Great Things for Maine's Wildlife!



Register your car or truck with loon conservation license plates at your town hall or motor vehicle office, and a portion of the fee will be used to protect Maine's wildlife and to improve our state parks and historic sites.

Ask for the loon when you register or renew.



2004 Loon Count Results

Region 1: York County		
	Adults	Chicks
Balch Pond	3	0
Bunganut Pond	2	1
Great East Lake	5	1
Kennebunk Pond	2	0
Lake Arrowhead	1	0
Mousam Lake	3	0
Ossipee Lake (Little)	6	0
Square Pond	4	1
West Pond	2	0
Wilson Lake	1	0

Region 2: Cumberland County		
	Adults	Chicks
Brandy Pond	2	0
Coffee Pond	1	0
Crescent Lake+	2	1
Forest Lake	4	2
Highland Lake/WD+	2	0
Long Lake/NP	9	0
Notched Pond	0	0
Panther Pond	5	0
Parker Pond/CS	1	0
Raymond Pond	5	0
Sabbathday Pond	1	0
Sebago Lake (Little)	21	5
Sebago Lake+	9	2
Thomas Pond	1	0
Trickey Pond	2	0
Watchic Pond	7	3

Region 3: Oxford County		
	Adults	Chicks
Back & Middle Ponds (5 Kezars)	4	0
Barker Pond	2	2
Bickford Pond	1	0
Bryant (Christopher) Pond	2	1
Clemons Pond	3	0
Cushman Pond	2	0
Granger Pond	1	0
Hancock Pond/DM	8	0
Highland Lake/BD	9	2
Hutchinson Pond/AL	2	2
Indian Pond	3	0
Keewaydin Lake	2	0
Keoka Lake	2	1
Keyes Pond	5	0
Kezar Lake	25	3
Kimball Pond (Lower)	5	2
Lovewell Pond	0	0
McWain (Long) Pond	5	0
Moose Pond/DM	7	2
North Pond/NW	2	1
Papoose Pond	2	0
Peabody Pond	4	2
Pennessewassee Lake	7	2
Pleasant Pond/SU	3	0
Sand (Walden) Pond	1	0
Songo Pond	1	0
South Pond/GW	5	0
Stearns Pond	2	1

Region 4: Androscoggin County		
	Adults	Chicks
Allen Pond	5	0
Auburn Lake	10	1
Bartlett Pond	2	2
Bear Pond/HF	2	1
Middle Range Pond	3	0
No Name Pond	2	0
Pleasant Pond/TU	5	1
Range Pond (Upper)	0	0
Saturday Pond	2	0
Taylor Pond	5	0
Thompson Lake	13	2
Tripp Lake	1	0

Region 5: Southern Kennebec County		
	Adults	Chicks
Androscoggin Lake	27	0
Annabessacook Lake+	25	4
Buker Pond	2	0
Cobbosseecontee Lake	58	8
Cochnewagon Lake	1	0
Echo Lake/FY	12	1
Jimmy Pond	1	0
Long Pond/SV	3	0
Maranacook Lake	21	0
Narrows Pond (Lower)	2	1
Narrows Pond (Upper)	4	1
Pickeral Pond	1	0
Pleasant (Mud) Pond	5	0
Pocasset Lake	10	0
Purgatory Pond (Little)	0	0
Sand Pond/LF	6	0
Torsey (Greely) Pond	10	2
Wilson Pond/WN	9	3
Woodbury Pond	7	3

Region 6: Lincoln County		
	Adults	Chicks
Biscay Pond	6	0
Boyd Pond	0	0
Clary Lake	4	0
Damariscotta Lake	53	2
Duckpuddle Pond	2	0
Dyer Long Pond	1	0
Havener Pond	2	0
Kaler's Pond	3	0
McCurdy Pond	3	0
Medomak Pond	0	0
Medomak Pond (Little)	2	0
Paradise Pond	2	0
Pemaquid Pond	12	1
Sherman Lake	0	0
Three Corner Pond	5	0
Travel Pond	0	0
Webber Pond/BM	7	0

Region 7: Knox County		
	Adults	Chicks
Alford Lake	6	0
Chickawaukee Pond	2	0
Crawford Pond+	13	1
Fish Pond/HP	2	0
Hobbs Pond	3	0
Hosmer Pond	2	0
Lermond Pond	4	0
Megunticook Lake	23	5
Megunticook River	3	0
Mirror Lake	2	0
North Pond/WR+	7	0
Round Pond/UN	2	0
Sennebec Pond+	3	0
Seven Tree Pond+	2	0
South Pond/WN	7	0
Tolman's Pond	0	0
Washington Pond	6	0

Region 8: Northern Kennebec/Southern Somerset Counties		
	Adults	Chicks
China Lake	27	4
Dam Pond	11	0
David Pond	3	0
East Pond	17	3
Flying Pond	5	0
Great Pond/BG	53	4
Hamilton Pond/BG	3	0
Ingham Pond	2	1
Kimball Pond	2	2
Lake George	3	2
Long Pond/BG	42	3
McGrath Pond	4	0
Messalonskee Lake	22	0
Mill Pond/Sebasticook	0	0
Moose Pond/	35	2
Great Moose Lake		
Morrill Pond	2	0
North & Little Ponds	6	0
Parker Pond/FY	23	3
Pattee Pond	4	1
Salmon Lake (Ellis Pond)	11	0
Sibley Pond	1	0
Three Mile Pond	7	1
Three Cornered Pond	6	0
Togus Pond	8	0
Webber Pond/VB	12	0
Wesserunsett (Hayden) Lake	14	1

Region 9: Waldo County		
	Adults	Chicks
Basin Pond	2	0
Bowler (Belton) Pond	0	0
Branch Pond/CH	0	0
Cain Pond	1	0
Cargill Pond	2	0
Chisholm Pond	0	0
Coleman Pond	5	0
Dutton Pond	0	0
Kingdom Bog	1	0
Knight Pond	3	0
Lawry Pond	2	0
Ledge Pond	0	0
Levenseller Pond	1	0
Little Pond/LI	0	0
Mixer Pond	2	2
Mud Pond/MV	0	0
Norton Pond	2	0
Pitcher Pond	3	0
Quantabacook Lake	6	0
Sandy Pond/FD	2	1
Sheepsfoot Pond	5	1
Smiths Mill Pond+	0	0
St. George Lake+	7	2
Stevens Pond+	1	0
Swan Lake	7	0
Tilden Pond	1	0
Trues Pond+	2	2
Unity Pond	16	2

Region 10: Hancock County		
	Adults	Chicks
Abrams Pond+	0	0
Alamoosook Lake	13	2
Bay Pond (Lower West)	0	0
Bay Pond (Upper West)	1	0
Beech Hill Pond	12	2
Branch Lake	7	0
Craig Pond	4	0
Debec Pond	2	2
Donnell Pond+	1	0
Eagle Lake/BH	6	0
Echo Lake/MD	5	1
First (Billings) Pond	3	0
Flanders Pond	7	0
Fox Pond+	2	0
Georges Pond	2	0
Goose Pond/DH	7	2
Great Pond/FK	0	0
Great Pond/GPP+	2	0
Green Lake/DH	12	2
Hadlock Pond (Lower)	0	0
Hadlock Pond (Upper)	2	0
Harriman Pond	1	0
Heart Pond	1	0
Hopkins Pond	2	0
Jordan Pond	0	0
King Pond	4	0
Little Rocky Pond	2	0
Long Pond/AR+	3	1
Long Pond/MD	6	0
Molasses Pond	4	2
Moulton Pond	2	0
Patten Pond (Lower)	4	1
Patten Pond (Upper)	5	0
Phillips Lake	5	1
Pierce Pond	2	1
Rift Pond	2	0
Rocky Pond/OR+	3	0
Scammon Pond	1	1
Seal Cove Pond	0	0
Second Pond/BH	2	0
Silver Lake	12	2
Somes Pond	1	2
Toddy Pond/SU	19	3
Tunk Lake	7	0
Webb Pond	5	0
West Lake	5	2

Region 11: Rangeley Area		
	Adults	Chicks
Beaver Mt. Lake	3	0
Dodge Pond+	5	0
Gull Pond	3	0
Haley Pond	1	0
Kennebago Lake (Big)	11	0
Mooselookmeguntic Lake +	39	2
Quimby Pond	5	0
Rangeley Lake	25	2
Round Pond/RA	6	0
Umbagog Lake	7	2

Region 12: Farmington Area		
	Adults	Chicks
Anasagunticook Lake	2	0
Clearwater Lake	6	0
Crowell Pond	2	0
Ellis (Roxbury) Pond	3	1
Emben Pond	3	0
Fahi Pond	4	4
Gammon Pond	1	1
Gilman Pond	2	0
Hancock Pond/ED+	2	0
Howard Pond	2	2
Locke Pond	3	0
Norcross Pond	2	0
North Pond/CV	4	0
Pease Pond	0	0
Porter Lake	5	3
Sand Pond/CV	2	2
Sandy Pond/EM	2	2
Varnum Pond	7	0
Webb Lake	11	0
Wilson Pond/WL	8	3
Worthley Pond	4	0

Region 13: Washington County		
	Adults	Chicks
Barrows Lake	2	0
Bog Lake	3	0
Boyden Lake+	9	0
Cathance Lake+	13	0
Crawford Lake	7	1
Farrow Lake	2	0
Great Works Lake	1	1
Indian Lake	2	1
Keenes Lake	0	0
Lambert Lake	2	1
Meddybemps Lake+	19	1
Mud Lake (Lower)	1	0
Mud Lake (Upper)	1	0

Nash's Lake	6	1
Orange Lake	0	0
Patrick Lake	2	0
Pennamaquan Lake	4	1
Pleasant Lake/T06+	3	0
Pleasant River Lake	10	1
Pocomoonshine Lake	27	0
Round Lake/CH	2	0
Schoodic Lake	3	2

Region 14: Southern Penobscot County		
	Adults	Chicks
Brann's Mill Pond	0	0
Brewer Lake	14	3
Chemo Pond	9	1
Cold Stream Pond	25	3
Cold Stream Pond (Upper)	4	0
Eddington (Davis) Pond	7	1
Etna Pond	0	0
Fields Pond	0	0
Holland Pond	0	0
Indian Pond (Big)	18	2
Indian Pond (Little)	2	1
Parks Pond	1	0
Pleasant Lake/ST+	7	0
Plymouth Pond	2	1
Puffers Pond/Echo Lake	1	0
Pushaw Lake	19	3
Pushaw Pond (Little)	7	5
Ripley Pond+	3	1
Round (Grey) Pond	3	0
Saponac Pond	0	0
Sebasticook Lake	23	0
Wassookeag Lake	25	1

Region 15: Northern Maine		
	Adults	Chicks
Bottle Lake+	2	0
Branch Lake (South)	21	1
Brassua Lake+	14	0
California Pond	2	0
Caribou Pond	15	1
Cedar Lake	6	0
Center Pond	9	0
Cochrane Lake	2	0
Depot Lake	2	1
Eagle Lake/EL+	21	1
Elbow Lake	11	0
Endless Lake+	0	0
Faulkner Lake	2	0
Long Lake/SA	28	0
Madawaska Lake	6	0
Mattasunk Pond	3	0
Mattawameag Lake	20	1
Meduxnekeag Lake (Drews Lake)	6	1
Monson Pond	0	0
Moosehead Lake+	45	8
Mud Lake+	3	0
Nickerson Lake	4	0
Parlin Pond	3	0
Pleasant Lake/IF+	4	0
Plunkett Pond	6	1
Portage Lake	14	1
Prong Pond	4	0
Seboeis Lake+	21	0
Third Sly Brook Lake	4	1
Timoney Lake	2	0
Wilson Pond (Lower)+	9	2
Wilson Pond (Upper)	4	0

Region 16: Baxter State Park		
	Adults	Chicks
Abol Pond	0	0
Branch Pond (Lower So.)	0	0
Branch Pond (Upper So.)	0	0
Daicey Pond	0	0
Draper Pond	0	0
Dwelleys Pond	0	0
Elbow Pond	0	0
Grassy Pond/BSP	0	0
Hay Lake	7	0
Kidney Pond	5	0
Lily Pad Pond	0	0
Lost Pond/T3	2	0
Matagamon Lake	22	5
Nesowadnehunk Lake	0	0
Togue Pond (Lower)	1	0
Togue Pond (Upper)	1	0
Tracy Pond	0	0
Webster Lake	4	0

+ = incomplete coverage (lakes were not completely covered by counters in the allotted time)