

Division of Ecological & Water Resources
Nongame Wildlife Program
1601 Minnesota Drive
Brainerd, MN 56401

Hello Loon Watchers!

I want to extend my immense appreciation and thanks to the dedicated volunteers who helped relaunch the Loon Watcher Survey in 2020. This past summer marked the 40th year of monitoring loons across Minnesota. Your passion and dedication for Minnesota's loons have provided essential insights into Minnesota loon biology, behavior and population dynamics. During this trying year, 124 volunteers "loon watched" 160 lakes across 26 counties in Minnesota; collecting valuable data on phenology, nesting behavior and chick survival. During 2020, volunteers observed 921 resident adult loons, found 168 active nests, and observed 251 loon chicks hatch with 186 of these chicks surviving until fledging! I want to share my appreciation for the highly organized and detailed data volunteers provided to the Loon Watcher Survey in 2020. We are incredibly thankful for the volunteer enthusiasm, expertise, and commitment to our Loon Watcher Survey over the first 40 years. Without you, this program would not be possible.

Now entering our 41st year of monitoring loons, there is still growing interest in protecting and watching over our state bird. Your enthusiasm for this important work is greatly appreciated. The goal of the Loon Watcher Survey is to capture valuable information on loon phenology, nesting behavior, breeding productivity, and unique behavior occurrences. To better answer these questions, we ask that Loon Watcher volunteers please attempt to observe their lake at least once per month from May to August. Enclosed is your Volunteer Loon Watcher Survey packet for 2021.



David Harrington

In this year's packet you will find the following:

- Survey form for your lake – to summarize your observations throughout the season
- Map of your lake – to record nesting locations
- A filled out example of the survey form and map
- Survey instructions and tips – to assist you with your observations
- Loon nesting platform tips – to help you with the decision of whether or not a loon platform is needed
- Volunteer Agreement – one time form to be signed by new volunteers

Please note: Electronic survey forms and lake maps can be provided upon request. Please reach out to the Loon Watcher Coordinator via the contact information below to request electronic forms. If you have interest in “Loon Watching” multiple lakes, a survey form and map will need to be completed for each lake surveyed. We encourage you to coordinate efforts with other residents and your lake association.

Don't forget to “**Look for the Loon**” on your Minnesota income and property tax forms. It's your opportunity to make a tax deductible donation to help loons and other wildlife. Or donate online at the website listed below.

Sincerely,



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