



# PROVINCE LAKE THIS MONTH

## A Message from the President

Hi Everyone,  
We are introducing a new Newsletter format entitled **Province Lake This Month**. This will include interesting and informative items concerning Province Lake and our lake community. You will learn about programs the Province Lake Association has in place to protect and improve the health of the lake as well as ways you can help. There will be items of interest including happenings in the area.

We hope you enjoy this format, learn something new and find ways you can help in preserving the beauty of Province Lake.

If you have a topic you would like to see addressed or if you would prefer to opt out of receiving the Newsletter please let us know. You can contact us at ***provincelakemembers@gmail.com***.

The newsletter is a work in progress and we would appreciate your feedback and patience as we refine it to best meet the needs of our Province Lake community.

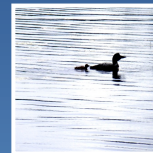
Thank You,

Mindy  
President, Province Lake Association

### In This Issue

#### A Message from the President

Page 1



#### Where do our loons go in the winter?

Pages 2 & 3

#### Your PLA at work

Page 4

#### Calendar of events

Page 4

#### About the PLA and Partners

Page 5

## Where do our loons go in the winter?

If you are one of those hearty New Englanders who stayed in New Hampshire this winter and didn't flock south to a tropical locale like some other folks I know, you may be wondering, "Where do the loons go in winter – do they go south, too?"

Common Loons, with their characteristic black and white "checkered" back and wings, black head, white "necklace" around their throat, and red eyes, have left New Hampshire for the winter. But they haven't gone far-and they certainly aren't basking in the sun in some exotic and warm vacation paradise.

Banding and satellite tracking studies conducted by the Loon Preservation Committee have discovered that loons escape the freezing of New Hampshire's lakes and ponds by spending the winter off the coast of the Atlantic Ocean – from Maine to Rhode Island.

While there is a lot that biologists still don't know about loon migration, they do know that loons don't leave New Hampshire because they feel like it, but rather, because they have to.

Loons are heavy birds with very large feet and, like an airplane, they need long runways to take-off. Loons run awkwardly across the water surface for approximately a quarter of a mile to pick up speed before being able to take flight. If the lake is covered with ice, they can't run for lift-off and they become trapped and eventually perish.



*Our 2017 baby loon, Indy, and a parent on Province Lake this summer (Photo by T. Townsend)*

Loons don't leave New Hampshire in search of tropical waters down south where the lakes don't freeze because these waters are too dangerous. Alligators and water bodies that are too warm or too shallow for diving and hunting create big problems for these birds.

The adult loons generally migrate first in large groups, usually two or three months after their chicks hatch and after their beautiful black and white feathers have been replaced by plain brownish-grey feathers. Adult loons leave their offspring behind until their flight feathers become long enough to support their weight. This time also allows the chicks to become capable of surviving on their own before they fly to the ocean.

Typically, loon chicks do not leave their birth lake until just before it freezes. Biologists do not know exactly how the young loons know where to go. This is one of many mysteries.

Chicks won't return to their birth lake until they are approximately three or four years old, and they won't be able to reproduce until they are six or seven.

Once they reach the ocean, loons must adapt to life in salt water. Fortunately, loons have salt glands in their skull between their eyes that remove the salt from the water and fish they eat and excrete it from ducts in their beak.

The ocean provides very clear, deep open water for the loons to dive and fish. They group together, riding the waves and hunting in the shallow waters trapping schools of fish and filling their stomachs

In late-winter, their dull winter coat is replaced by their beautiful black and white breeding coat, replacing their worn out feathers with strong feathers to fly with, a process called “molting.” Loons lose all their feathers at once, instead of losing one or two at a time like most birds, because they need a complete set of flight feathers to hold up their heavy bodies.

If a loon were to try and fly with just a few missing feathers, its wings wouldn’t be big enough to hold up its body. During this approximately two to three week molting period, loons are unable to fly and are in great danger. They must expend a lot of energy to grow new feathers and they have less energy to fight off illnesses or toxins stored in their body fat.

Make no mistake – life on the ocean is not easy for these creatures. They must not only adjust to the stress of molting and a different diet, they must also endure the stress of rough coastal waters and stormy weather, marine pollution and parasites.

Biologists suspect that loons return to the same general area where they were born, often returning to their very own birth lake. Loons will typically arrive on New Hampshire’s lakes and ponds just after ice-out, sometimes on the very next day!

The groundhog saw its shadow as I wrote this article, indicating that we should expect at least six more weeks of winter. While it will be at least a few more months before the loons return to New Hampshire this spring, I know that many of us are looking forward to their return, as it is a signal that warmer, sunnier days out on the lake lie ahead.

In the meantime, to learn more about these fascinating birds, you’ll want to check out the Loon Preservation Committee’s website at [www.loon.org](http://www.loon.org).

***Many thanks to Andrea LaMoreaux (Education Director of N.H. Lakes Association) who contributed this previously published article.***

***You can find additional information about NHLakes at <http://www.nhlakes.org>***

## Your PLA at work

- ❖ Please be advised that all dam boards will be removed over the Columbus Day weekend. This is done in order to lower the lake level to minimize ice damage to the shoreline over the winter.
- ❖ The Lake Host Program, a courtesy boat inspection program, is designed to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species between water bodies. The PLA Lake Host program runs for 16 weeks over the summer season at the Towle Farm boat launch. This year's program reported a total of 556 inspections during the hours of Lake Host coverage.

We would like to extend a big Thank You to David Lajoie, volunteer program supervisor, and our intrepid inspectors, Lenny Dodge and Leanne Cammett, who are out there rain or shine. For anyone who has launched and retrieved a boat you have met them and can see how committed they are to the program.

- ❖ We have added an [Important Info](#) link to our website dedicated to supplying helpful information to the residents and visitors of Province Lake. This will help everyone in understanding the important responsibility of owning and using property near our beautiful natural resource, Province Lake.
- ❖ Work on a PLA grant in partnership with AWWA, NH DES, and the Town of Effingham to mitigate erosion along Bonnyman Rd was completed in September. This weir and ditch will significantly decrease the road erosion and subsequent movement of gravel & sand into Province Lake.
- ❖ Province Lake Golf is seeking certification as an Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuary to preserve habitats and protect water quality. PLA is a partner in this project.

## Calendar of events and items of interest

### October 20,21, 27, 28

The Haunting at Parsonsfield Seminary:  
The Seminary closed in 1949 but Not  
Everyone Left!  
504 North Road  
Parsonsfield, ME  
Hours 6.30-9.00. Pay at the door

### October 21

Branch Hill Farm and Moose Mountain  
Regional Greenways are offering a free  
Forestry Workshop with forester Charlie  
Moreno  
Jones Brook East forest in Milton  
10am – 12 pm  
To register call Kari Lygren at 603-978-  
7125 or email @mmrg.info

The Cotton Valley Rail Trail can now be  
walked, run or cycled from downtown  
Wolfeboro to Sanbornville. The unofficial  
distance is 12 miles.

### *Final weir and ditch installation near 120 Bonnyman Rd*



## About the PLA

Membership in the PLA is open to anyone who has a love and concern for Province Lake. The PLA has an active membership of 152 members and we encourage all to become members by completing a brief membership form and paying annual dues. Click here to [join](#) and to see membership information.

### Links to our partner websites:

Action Wakefield Watershed Alliance (AWWA) <https://awwatersheds.org/>

Moose Mountain Regional Greenways <http://www.mmrgr.info/>

NH Lakes Lay Monitoring Program <http://www.cfb.unh.edu/programs/LLMP/nhlmp.htm>

Province Lake Association, PO Box 24, Effingham, NH 03882

Phone (207) 200-3234

[www.provincelake.org](http://www.provincelake.org) and follow us on Facebook at [Province Lake Association](#)

### The PLA Board

Mindy Schuman-Vye (President)

Lorie Dunne (Vice President)

Thom Townsend (Treasurer)

Donna Luce (Secretary)

#### Directors:

Barbara Burns

Donna Davis

Carl Davis

Peter Dinger

David Lajoie

Jon Samuelson

Tucker Vye



*Views of Mts Whiteface and  
Passaconaway from Province Lake*

PLA is a 501(c)3 charitable organization and as such all donations are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Our EIN is 23-7337832