



Loon Behavior

Learn To Read The Signs

Loons communicate among themselves using a variety of visual displays and calls. There are several ways in which loons communicate distress if people approach loons too closely, especially those with chicks or those on the nest.



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Loons are heavy-bodied birds and normally float low in the water. However, when a loon senses a threat it expels air from between its feathers causing it to sink even lower.



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The Loon Preservation Committee's mission is to restore and maintain a healthy population of loons throughout New Hampshire; to monitor the health and productivity of loon populations as sentinels of environmental quality; and to promote a greater understanding of loons and the natural world.



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If you approach too near a nesting loon or a loon with chicks it might give a “tremolo” alarm call that sounds like crazy laughter. If the loon is very agitated it may rear up and thrash about in the water.

If you are close to a loon that is calling or displaying, please move away!

Nesting is a vulnerable time for loons, who typically incubate eggs between late May and early July. Normally a loon on the nest stays in a relaxed position with its head upright.



A loon with its head craned forward or down senses a threat and might abandon its nest, leaving the eggs to be taken by a predator or destroyed by chilling or overheating.

If you see a loon in this head-down posture, please back away!



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