



SPRING 2020

TACOMA LAKE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 2020

Litchfield Fairgrounds

44 Plains Rd | Litchfield, ME 04350

9:00 AM

The location has changed to an outdoor venue due to COVID-19 restrictions on large gatherings in Maine. Please bring your own chairs.

We look forward to seeing you there!

www.tacomalakes.org | www.facebook.com/TacomaLakesAssociation



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Members and Friends,

The Tacoma Lakes Association enjoyed another stellar year in 2019. Although memberships were slightly down, our donations, and fund-raising efforts enabled us to once again be a very healthy organization.

I would like to thank each and every member for your support. It is your generosity that enables us to continue to monitor our lakes, and do everything within our power to keep them clean, and free of invasive plants. Our biggest annual expense is the boat inspection program at the Woodbury Pond boat launch. This program is literally our first line of defense against invasive plants. With the increase in minimum wage the last couple of years, we need every member to renew their membership for the year 2020.

There are lots of new faces on the lakes this year as many properties have changed hands, and there are a couple brand new homes under construction on Sand Pond. I ask all members to reach out to new neighbors, and tell them of the great things we do. Roughly half of our lake front property owners are members of TLA, if we

could increase that to 75%, we could explore expanding the boat inspection program. Personally, I would love to see inspectors there 7 days a week!

Our volunteer plant patrol crew, headed up by the amazing Diane Clay have been out on Sand Pond already this summer. They will search the shoreline, sampling any plant that they deem questionable. They volunteer their time to search our shorelines.

I would like to thank each member of our Board of Directors. You all do a great job for the Association with little recognition.

Finally, we are always looking for new people to join our organization as a director. New perspectives are always helpful. If you or anyone else are interested, please contact me at 268-2070.

Regards,
Jim Adams, President

TREASURER'S REPORT

TLA continued its string of successful financial years in 2019. Donations totaled \$7,395, eclipsing last year's total of \$7,172 by \$223. We received membership dues in the amount of \$3,585. This is a decrease from last year's dues in the amount of \$300 which equates to a net loss of 20 memberships. Membership for the year stood at 239 members. Net income for the year 2019 totaled \$8,746. An increase of \$353 over 2018.

TLA remains in strong financial condition thanks to its members and donations from the community. We have again received support from the State of Maine, the Town of Litchfield, and the Town of Monmouth. We thank them for their help and support.

Currently all bills are paid with no invoices outstanding. I am happy to answer any questions that the membership may have regarding TLA finances. You may contact me by email at curtisindamoodcpa@yahoo.com. I will also be available at the annual meeting to discuss or answer any financial questions regarding the association after I present the Treasurers Report.

Thank you,
Curtis Lindamood, Treasurer

LOON STABS BALD EAGLE TO DEATH

By Laura Geggel - Associate Editor

A bald eagle likely thought that grabbing a tiny loon chick would be an easy meal. It wasn't.

After the eagle wrapped its talons around the chick, another loon — possibly the chick's parent — stabbed the eagle in the heart with its "dagger-like bill," killing the American mascot in one fell swoop, according to Danielle D'Auria, a wildlife biologist at the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife.

This is the only documented case of a loon — aquatic birds that belong to the genus *Gavia* — killing an eagle by stabbing it in the chest, D'Auria wrote in a May 18 blog post for the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife.

However, it wasn't immediately clear what had killed the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). D'Auria learned that a bald eagle carcass and a dead loon chick (sadly, the loon chick did not survive) had been found at Highland Lake in Bridgton, Maine in July 2019. It's a criminal offence to kill a bald eagle, so Neal Wykes, a game warden in Maine, brought the dead bird to the nearby Norway Veterinary Hospital for a radiograph, which would reveal whether the eagle had been shot.

But it wasn't a bullet that had killed the eagle. As D'Auria wrote in the blog, "No metal showed up on the image, but during the external exam a puncture wound on the eagle's chest was discovered."

D'Auria suspected that an adult loon had stabbed the predator, perhaps in an "attempt to protect its chick from the eagle," she wrote in the blog. "A loon's best weapon is its dagger-like bill, and it will often attack adversary loons by coming up from beneath the water's surface with its bill straight towards the other loon's sternum, or chest."

These loon-on-loon fights are so common, many adult loons have several, healed puncture wounds on their chests, she noted. What's more, the number of bald eagle and loon conflicts has soared in recent years, as the eagle population has recovered from its endangered status.

Originally published on Live Science



In a separate incident from the one described here, a loon launches out of the water to scare off a bald eagle on Bow Lake in Northwood, New Hampshire. (Image: © Jon Winslow)

Now, hungry bald eagles are targeting loon chicks and even adults for a quick meal, she said.

Normally, dead eagles are sent to the National Eagle Repository in Colorado, so that their remains can be given to Native Americans for ceremonial purposes. But the "whodunit" question was so intriguing, that D'Auria and her colleagues got special permission from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to send this particular eagle to the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin, so it could be necropsied (an animal autopsy).

"Sure enough, the pathologist who examined the eagle and loon chick in the lab called me shortly afterward to tell me it indeed looked as though the loon was the culprit in this eagle's death," D'Auria wrote in the blog.

The puncture wound in the eagle's chest was similar to the size of a loon's bill. It went straight to the eagle's heart, indicating that the bird of prey had a quick death, she said. Moreover, the loon chick had puncture marks on its body that had the same spacing as an eagle's talons.

There weren't any human witnesses during the deadly attack, but a woman in a nearby cabin said she heard a "hullabaloo" the night before that sounded like agitated loons.

"You can use your imagination to formulate how this all played out on Highland Lake that late July evening," D'Auria concluded.



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BROADBAND GRANT

ConnectMaine Authority announced June 2, 2020 that its Board has approved \$554,500 in grants to seven communities across Maine for broadband infrastructure and planning.

Litchfield was awarded a grant in the amount of \$8,250 for community broadband planning. These grants are designed to help engage communities, identify needs, and attract potential broadband service providers to expand the availability of broadband to their area. These grants are 50/50 matched by the communities seeking funding.

“Broadband is critical to spur innovation, create opportunity, provide telehealth and remote learning, and build a strong, diverse economy – especially in rural Maine,” said Governor Janet Mills. “The COVID crisis has highlighted the importance of a good high-speed connection for remote work, and supporting small businesses. One of the highest priorities of my administration is to expand our state’s broadband infrastructure. These grants from ConnectMaine are a step in that direction by leveraging local and private investment to bring high-speed connectivity to these communities.”

The ConnectMaine Authority was created by the legislature in 2006 to make a secure, reliable, competitive and forward-looking broadband infrastructure and make broadband service universally available. It is funded by a small assessment on landlines and broadband services to customers in Maine, with an annual budget of just over \$1.5 million.

DAM KEEPER'S REPORT

The water level has been brought up to the summer level of 7'6". At this time, the dam is in very good shape. This past year has seen the retirement of most dam committee members. I will be putting a committee together soon. I have the names of several interested people. Anyone interested in becoming a member? Please have them submit names to the town office.

**Thank you,
Terry Averill, Dam Keeper**

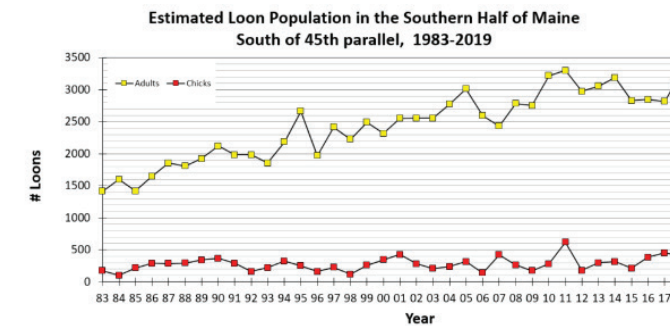


For the 36th year in a row, community scientists all over Maine ventured onto their local lakes and ponds on the third Saturday in July this year to count Common Loons. In total, 1,414 people participated in the count this year (up from 1,350 in 2018), covering 292 lakes.

Let's see how we did. In the southern half of Maine, including all areas south of the 45th parallel, we estimate the 2019 loon population to include:

Total Number of Adult Loons: 3,129
Total Number of Chicks: 372

[How does this compare to past years?](#)
Here's how Maine's Common Loon population has changed since the beginning of our count:



Though there was a bit of a dip in the estimated population since 2018, this year's estimates for adult loons are still above the population estimates for 2015-17, and estimates for both chicks and adults are in line with the rest of the decade. We'll continue to watch for trends, but the loon population in Maine appears to be healthy and holding steady.

A number of factors may have influenced this year's findings. Most impactful may have been heavy spring rains which flooded some nests and caused egg loss. (Common Loons can't walk very well on land and so build their nests very close to the water's edge, making nests susceptible to flooding from high water or boat wake.) Some loon counters also reported loons abandoning nests due to high concentrations of black flies in the early season, as well as more predation from Bald Eagles and other wildlife. New

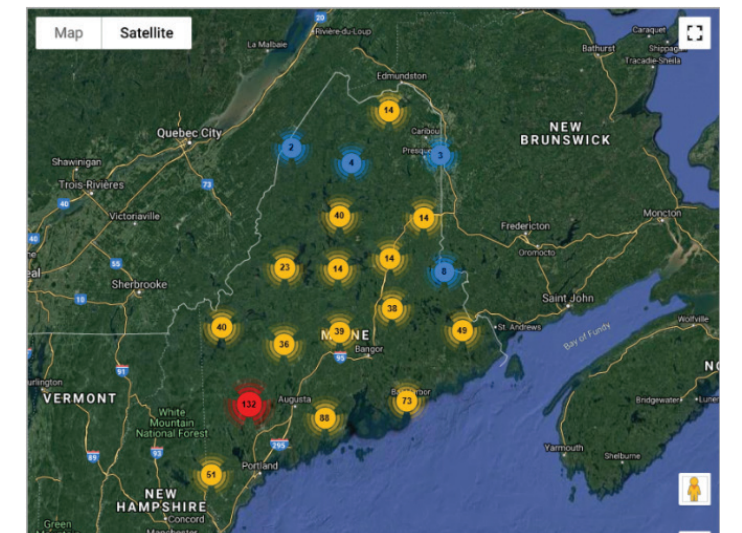


this year, we received a number of calls reporting concerns about “wake boats,” which kick up a large enough wake for someone to surf behind the boat. Several callers believed that even operating outside the 200’ no-wake zone, the wakes generated by these new boats could wash eggs out of nests when they reach shore.

These factors highlight some of the challenges that loons face in Maine and other states. Yet, even in the face of these threats, loon populations have increased markedly since the count began over three decades ago. The no-wake law, requiring speeds that don't generate wakes within 200’ of shore, was enacted to prevent shoreline erosion, but has benefited loons by reducing the number of nests flooded by boat wakes. Phased-in bans on types of lead fishing tackle are also addressing lead poisoning in adult loons, one of the leading causes of mortality. Our annual loon counters also serve as the eyes and ears for loons out on their lakes and have taken important steps to protect loons and spread the word locally about what Maine residents can do to help loons

[Can I See Population Trends on my Local Lake?](#)

Yes! Historical Loon Count data can be sorted on this interactive map hosted by the Lake Stewards of Maine. Click the image below to visit the map. Data from the 2019 Loon Count will be reflected on the map in Jan. 2020.



A New Loon in Charge

Maine Audubon's Loon Count was managed for many years by biologist Susan Gallo. When Susan left in 2018 to become the Executive Director of the Maine Lakes Society, Maine Audubon hired wildlife ecologist Tracy Hart to take over. Tracy rose to the challenge in her first year at the helm, which included overseeing the transition from paper forms to a digital portal. We're grateful for all of Tracy's work this year, and know that she's looking forward to using what she's learned to make future counts run even more smoothly.

Continued on next page >



Want to Get Involved?

Maine Audubon is always looking for more volunteers to help us count loons on the third Saturday of July, from 7:00 to 7:30 am. If you're interested in learning about how you can help, or have other questions about our work to protect the Common Loon, visit our Maine Loon Project page or contact us at conserve@maineaudubon.org or call 207-781-2330 ext. 219.

History of the Loon Count

The Common Loon is an iconic bird in Maine, but Maine Audubon realized in the early 1980s that we didn't know much about how their population was doing. Was it growing or shrinking? Where were they breeding? What threats were

there? We assembled volunteers from all over the state to visit their local lake or pond for a single dedicated half-hour in July to count all the adult and young Common Loons as they could find, and send us their numbers. Maine Audubon biologists use the data to estimate the number of loons in the southern half of Maine (though some northern Maine lakes are counted, but not enough to give us a reliable population estimate).

Maine Audubon would like to extend an enormous thank you to the regional coordinators of the loon count and to all of the volunteers who helped with the 2019 count and data entry.

TLA INVASIVE PLANT PATROL

On June 2, 2020, the invasive plant patrol held our first get-together on Zoom. While we are still in the midst of the pandemic, we are looking forward to getting out on the water with a few changes. Our target this year will be Sand Pond. Instead of starting at one point and all members aiming for the same spot, we have decided to divide the lake into 3 sections. Lynn Sidman will coordinate section 1, Patti Lott, section 2, and Diane Clay, section 3. Using our email chain we will invite every member to each outing. Each person will attend the most convenient. Reporting to Lake Stewards of Maine will be through an on-line app this year.

As always, everyone is welcome to join the TLA/IPP. Having an active plant patrol group has kept us from having an infestation of invasive aquatic plants up to this point, and we hope it will continue.

Using boats and scopes to search the littoral zones (places where light gets to the bottom allowing plants to grow) will be the same as it has been. We are working on safe ways to launch boats and to examine specimens together. New members are not only welcome, but are essential in keeping the process going.

LAKE STEWARDS OF MAINE

Lake Stewards of Maine (LMS) recently held a zoom meeting. Although the focus was on continuing the work of invasive plant patrol and lake monitoring teams, there was a great deal of information provided regarding how they plan to run their programs this summer. In the face of the COVID-19 outbreak, people will not be gathering in large groups. Many of us will continue to be reluctant to share equipment, forms, and boats, although being out on the water regularly will be a welcome and safe activity.

Whether you intend to do any kind of lake monitoring for 2020 or just want to settle in and enjoy our lovely lakes, please take the time to go to the website: www.lakestewardsofmaine.org. You are guaranteed to find something interesting and useful. There are online pictures, videos, information about individual lakes, webinars and training - all available as you relax on your deck with your favorite beverage (at an appropriate social distance).



The Incredible Loon Journey

Place Migration Challenge Cards Here



Start Here Time to leave your lake home. Roll the die and go that many spaces.	Migration Challenge Card		A nor'easter makes it difficult to fly and you freeze to death. Sorry but you did not survive.	Migration Challenge Card	A newly preserved lake gives you a peaceful place to rest and eat. Roll again.
Watch out for the helicopter! Crouch down for 10 seconds then move 3 spaces.			You become tangled in some fishing line. Lose a turn.		You've landed in a pond full of fish! Go ahead 2 spaces
Your lake begins to freeze and you have a hard time taking off. Lose a turn.	Migration Challenge Card		You landed in a pond with a lot of yummy fish. Take extra turn.	Migration Challenge Card	You flew into the large window of a shopping mall. Miss one turn.
You rest in a pond with many fish and gain a lot of energy. Go ahead 2 spaces.			A busy lake makes it difficult for you to fish and take off. Lose a turn.		Go back 2 spaces
Smooth flying! Roll again.	Migration Challenge Card		Great wind currents help you along your way. Take the shortcut pass.	Migration Challenge Card	A hungry eagle is soaring above you. You must hide. Go back 2 spaces.
			One of your resting spots is now a mall. You become tired as you circle for food. Go back 2 spaces.		You are tired from flying. You must rest before you continue your journey. Skip a turn.

End Here





Migration Challenge Cards

Photocopy and cut out a set for each board game.

Place the cards on the board game square marked "Migration Challenge Cards".

<p>You have a good 1/4 mile runway for take off.</p> <p>Flap your wings 30 times and jump as high as you can.</p>	<p>You are tangled in some fishing line.</p> <p>Hop on one foot and count to twenty.</p>	<p>You encounter an early snowstorm and can't fly. Shiver for 30 seconds and hold your stomach because you are hungry.</p>	<p>Strong winds make it difficult to fly.</p> <p>Flap your wings in slow motion 10 times.</p>
<p>You just ate a lead sinker.</p> <p>Die a dramatic death and start again from the beginning.</p>	<p>Your pond froze over in the night.</p> <p>Stand completely still for 30 seconds.</p>	<p>You have eaten a fish from a polluted pond.</p> <p>Hold your stomach and groan for 10 seconds.</p>	<p>A hurricane blows you off course and you become disoriented.</p> <p>Spin around 8 times.</p>
<p>You have found a pond full of fish.</p> <p>Smack your lips 10 times and rub your belly.</p>	<p>An eagle is soaring above you.</p> <p>Crouch down and remain still for 30 seconds.</p>	<p>You have landed in a wildlife refuge with a lake full of fish.</p> <p>Gulp 20 times.</p>	<p>You have flown very far and need to take a rest. Luckily, you have found a secluded pond. Pretend to sleep until your next turn.</p>
<p>You have encountered power lines.</p> <p>Crouch down and crawl around the room.</p>	<p>You landed in a busy lake and all of the boats are making you dizzy.</p> <p>Spin around 10 times.</p>	<p>You have found a secluded lake! You are full of energy because you have eaten a lot of fish.</p> <p>Flap your wings 30 times.</p>	<p>A resting pond has been developed and has many boats and fishermen. You must find another place to rest. Walk around the room and flap your wings as you go.</p>

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2020 MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$15.00

Thank you for your membership in the Tacoma Lakes Association. Your dues are essential to support our many activities. Together we can all help to preserve the health of these beautiful lakes we love.

(Please print legibly so we can make sure we receive the information correctly. Thanks!)

LAST NAME: _____

FIRST NAME(S): _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____
 (Your Year Round Mailing Address):

MAILING ADDRESS CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____
 (Will only be used if we have questions about your application)

If you would like to receive email updates regarding TLA activities, please provide up to two (2) email addresses below. This is not a membership requirement. Your email addresses will be kept private and will not be shared with any other organization.

E-MAIL ADDRESS 1: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS 2: _____

If you own property on the Tacoma Lakes, please complete the following:

On which pond is your property located? (please circle):

Jimmy Buker Sand Woodbury Little Purgatory

Physical street address of your Tacoma Lakes property: _____

Town (please circle): Monmouth Litchfield

Thank you for considering a DONATION to help us continue our important work. TLA is a fully charitable organization under the IRS Code Section 501(c)(3). This means that all donations (monetary or otherwise) may be deductible for tax purposes.

DUES: _____ DONATION: _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

Please remember to update your email address to make sure you're getting the latest TLA news, meeting notices and action alerts!

Anytime you change your email address please send your new address to **memberservice@tacomalakes.org**. We are happy to update our list so you can always receive the latest information from your Association!

TLA respects the privacy of its members and does not share contact information, including email addresses, with anyone.

Please mail completed form together with payment to:
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