

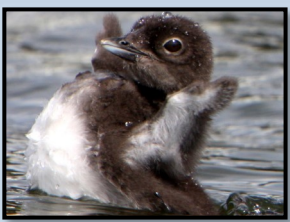


ADIRONDACK CENTER  
for LOON  
CONSERVATION

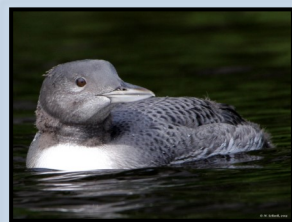
# NY Annual Loon Census Tips & Tricks

## On the day of the Loon Census....

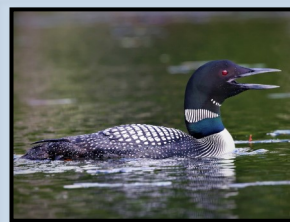
### Know Your Loons



**Chicks** have either black or brown down and are less than 2/3 the size of an adult.



**Immature** loons are fully feathered with light and dark gray feathers. They are 2/3 the size of an adult or larger.

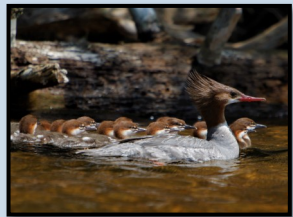


**Adult** loons are fully feathered with black and white feathers.

### Mistaken Identity



**Male mergansers** can be black and white early in the breeding season, and female mergansers can carry chicks on their backs like loons. *However*, mergansers often have many chicks—if you are seeing water birds with more than 2 chicks, it is probably a merganser. Unlike loons, mergansers can also stand on land.



Cormorants can swim underwater like a loon. *However*, their beaks are yellow, and unlike loons, cormorants are capable of standing.

- Try **NOT** to disturb the birds during your observations. *If they are constantly moving away from you with or without calling, this indicates that you may be upsetting the birds.*
- Please remember to use a separate form for each lake on which you conduct observations.
- Only report observations made during the Census hour from 8-9a.m. Observations conducted outside the Census hour may reflect a loon that was reported on other lakes, resulting in duplicate counts.
- Record only the first sighting of each loon or group of loons. Please take care not to count any bird twice.
- Do not count loons flying overhead. They should only be counted if they land on the lake, or were on the water originally and then took off.
- Remember to report “zero” when you do not observe loons. *A report of “zero” loons is an important observation (over time, these “zero” observations will enable us to determine if loons are using more or fewer lakes).*
- Note the location on the lake/pond and the direction in which the loons move or fly.
- Please note if you conducted observations on the entire lake or just a portion of the lake. If you covered only a portion of the lake, please note it on your map or with a detailed description of the area you observed.
- Include a sketch or map on the back of the form indicating where you stood, and where the birds were observed. These maps help us learn what parts of the lake loons use.
- Your comments on the form are also very helpful! *Please feel free to add any information that you feel is not adequately covered in the data portion of the form.* We also welcome photos from your census observations.

*Thank You!*