



ADIRONDACK CENTER
for LOON
CONSERVATION

The Adirondack Tremolo

2020 Summer Newsletter (COVID-19 edition)

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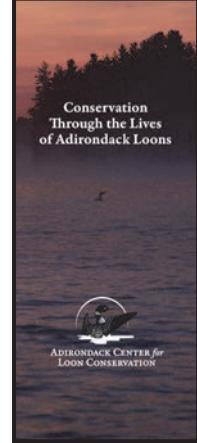
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Did you notice a change to our logo on this newsletter?

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are now all wearing masks at the Adirondack Loon Center (*even our loon logo!*), as we slowly reopen our doors. Like most other businesses in New York, we closed in March, and are just beginning to welcome visitors back to share our knowledge about Adirondack loons. So far, we have been very fortunate, as the support of our generous donors and a Paycheck Protection Program loan have enabled us to continue our education programs and summer research.

While in quarantine, we have made the most of our time—including:

- Revising our website, www.adkloon.org
- Writing summary reports of our scientific publications
- Updating our brochures
- Developing new programs, such as the Adirondack Loon-Friendly Lake Certification Program, field trips, and more! We look forward to partnering with you in our new programs to better protect Adirondack lakes and loons.



We hope you enjoy the results of our work!

As a precaution related to the virus, we are minimizing the number of in-person presentations we give this year, and are now offering [virtual presentations](#). Fortunately, we are still able to conduct our field research monitoring loons and programs where we can be socially distant, such as the [NY Annual Loon Census](#) and [field trips](#) on our study lakes—please join us to visit with some of our study loons!

I hope you are able to spend some time on the water this summer with the loons and other wildlife. This spring more than ever, I have been incredibly thankful to live here in the Adirondacks (*despite the long winters and slow-to-start springs*). Watching and hearing the birds as they return and seeing the flowers bloom has been welcome solace during these troubling times.

All the best for a wonderful summer, and *stay well!*

~Dr. Nina Schoch, Executive Director
Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation



~ACLC STAFF HAPPENINGS~

ABOUT THE ADIRONDACK CENTER for LOON CONSERVATION

The Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation (ACLC) is dedicated to promoting and inspiring passion for the conservation of Common Loons (*Gavia immer*) in and beyond New York's six million acre Adirondack Park.

The Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation evolved from research on the impact of mercury pollution on Common Loons and their aquatic habitats conducted in the Adirondack Park by Biodiversity Research Institute initiated in 1998. We became a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2017.

The Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation is led by a highly dedicated Board of Directors, including Susan Semegram (*Chair*), Dot Beatty, Gail Doering, Cathy Dove, Kate Fish, Linda Gorham, Bonnie Keet, Eric Potter, Chandler Ralph, Kathryn Ruscitto, Ramsay Tanham, and Jim Townsend.

Our Adirondack Loon Center, located in Saranac Lake, NY, provides an engaging experience for loon-lovers of all ages to learn about the Park's wildlife and environmental concerns through the lives of Adirondack loons..

With the loon as our centerpiece, the work of the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation encompasses conservation and management; scientific research; and educational outreach; to help ensure that Common Loons remain an integral and vital part of New York's wildlife heritage. Through our efforts, we hope the haunting call of Common Loons continues to echo across Adirondack lakes for generations to come.

For More Information:

Adirondack Center for
Loon Conservation
P.O. Box 195
Ray Brook, NY 12977
info@adkloon.org, 518-354-8636
www.adkloon.org
www.facebook.com/adkloon

Visit the Adirondack Loon Center at:
15 Broadway, Saranac Lake, NY
www.adkloon.org/adklooncenter

Last summer, **KT Shumway**, our former Sales Associate, was promoted to a new position as ACLC's Wildlife Conservation Technician. KT is continuing to learn and grow in their new role and is enjoying being part of our field staff this summer!



From left to right: KT Shumway, Liz Defonce, Hyla Howe

Liz DeFonce joined the ACLC team as our Administrative Assistant in the spring of 2019. Liz is our key behind-the-scenes guru who does our bookkeeping and manages the inventory for the Adirondack Loon Center. Thus, if you have any merchandise suggestions, please contact Liz at loon-store@adkloon.org.

Hyla Howe became our Environmental Educator in the fall of 2019. Hyla has been instrumental in developing a variety of new educational programs for ACLC and she is excited to expand our environmental stewardship opportunities throughout the Adirondacks. As a New York State Registered Guide, Hyla will be leading field trips this summer to introduce Adirondack residents, students, and visitors to the magic of loons!

~OUR 2020 SUMMER INTERNS~



Jesse Foley-Tapia is a recent Univ. of California-Berkeley graduate (first-generation Latino re-entry student). He's an aspiring journalist with goals of sports, music, and activist writing to help represent the underrepresented and be a voice for the voiceless. We are very pleased to have Jesse's help this summer with preparing grant proposals to help ensure the continuation of our loon conservation, research, and education projects in the Adirondacks.

Will Krohn is a rising sophomore at Colgate University who is double majoring in Environmental Studies and Biology. He is very interested in environmental justice and conservation. This summer, Will is working with the ACLC to develop surveys to measure the success of our Loon-Friendly Lake Certification Program. In his free time, Will enjoys rock climbing, hiking, biking, gardening, and reading a good book.



Jacob Nachamie will be a junior at Putnam Valley High School this September. As part of a 3-year Science Research class, Jacob will be working on ACLC's loon nesting success study. He is interested in animal sciences, as he aspires to become a veterinarian. Jacob's other interests include sports, particularly baseball, spending time with family and friends, and being outdoors, especially at a beach or a lake.

~2019 LOON CENSUS RESULTS~

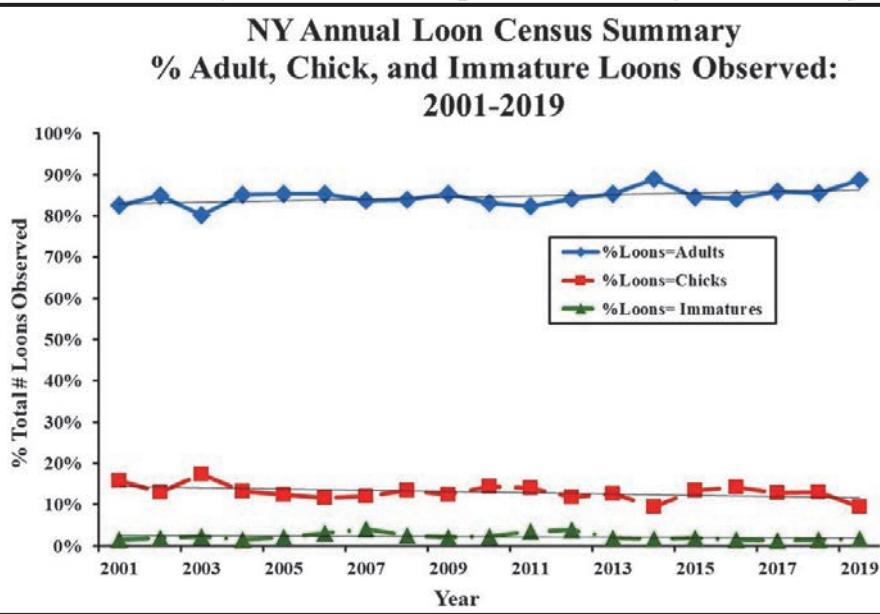
On Saturday, July 20, 2019, we were pleased to have 430 observers participate in the 19th New York Annual Loon Census. We received 214 Census reports in 2019, of which 209 were included in the analysis. Five reports were not included because their observations were conducted outside the Census hour or were duplicate efforts on a lake.

A total of 549 loons were observed on 125 (75%) of the 167 Census lakes, consisting of 487 (89%) adults, 52 (9%) chicks, and 10 (2%) immature loons. The 2019 NY Loon Census Map shows the locations and results for the lakes and ponds surveyed.

The Annual Loon Census provides valuable information about the status and trends in New York's summer loon population, enabling the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation to better manage the population of these beautiful birds who breed in New York.

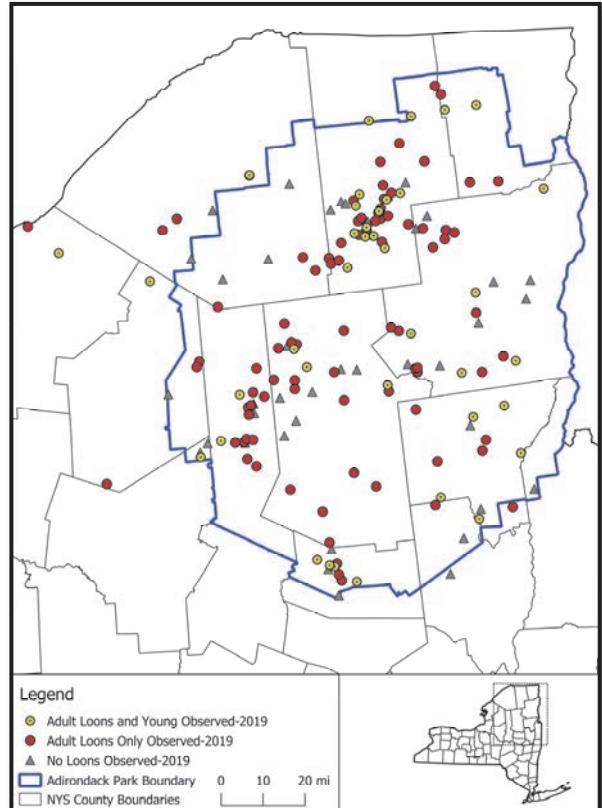
To see the full results of the 2019 NY Annual Loon Census, visit www.adkloon.org

Torrential rain events in spring and early summer have increased in frequency over the years with the changing climate. The intensity and total rainfall during the nesting period pose a serious threat to loon reproductive success. Chicks typically hatch in late June to early July, but in 2019, many pairs didn't successfully hatch chicks until late July/early August. This is likely due to flooding and poor weather conditions early in the nesting season. As a result, 2019 observers recorded one of the lowest percentages of chicks on the day of the census, compared to all other years. (see Graph).



Percentage of adult, chick, and juvenile loons observed from 2011-2019

"I was so excited to take part in the census again as I came upon a loon nest in early June in the marsh area off the main shipping channel of the SLR & in front of our camp. I checked the nest weekly for 4 weeks & found the loon on it each time. The day of the census, I paddled out & cattails had floated in and completely filled in where the nest was, so I observed zero! This was the first year we've had a nest here, but I'm concerned about what happened to them!"



2019 New York Loon Census Map

"Just when I thought we would not see loons this year, we spotted 4 adults who exhibited a tremendous display of calls and behavior! ... it's the highlight of my summer!" ~Paradox Lake

**Sign up for the 2020 NY Annual Loon Census
at www.adkloon.org**

We look forward to having you join us on July 18, 2020 from 8-9am!

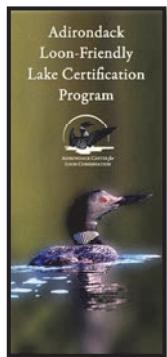


Thank you to all the Census observers who participated in the 2019 NY Loon Census –
We greatly appreciate your help!

~St. Lawrence River

~LOON-FRIENDLY LAKE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM~

The Adirondack Loon-Friendly Lake Certification Program promotes community-based environmental stewardship to better protect loons and their aquatic habitats. Adirondack loons face many threats — some natural, and some caused by humans, including:



- Human disturbance of loon nests and families
- Lead poisoning from accidentally eating lead fishing tackle
- Loss of nesting habitat due to shoreline development
- Avian diseases and parasites
- Injuries from fishing line entanglement, boating accidents, predation, and loon fights
- Flooding of nests due to water level changes from climate change-related torrential rain events, or hydroelectric reservoir management
- Environmental pollutants (e.g., mercury and flame retardants) that accumulate up the aquatic food web

HELP PROTECT LOONS!

SHARE THE LAKE — Please Keep Your Distance
Loons are easily disturbed when they are nesting and raising chicks. Motorboats, jet skis, and other watercraft can scare them away from their nest sites, causing them to leave their chicks, leaving eggs or chicks vulnerable to predators and other threats.
If loons are moving away from your calling, that means you are too close.
When you're boating, please help protect loons and other wildlife by giving them the space they need - Thank You!

Use Non-Toxic Fishing Tackle
Loons, eagles, and other wildlife can accidentally swallow lead fishing tackle when they mistake it for prey. Please use non-toxic fishing line and hooks, and never throw lead sinkers or rigs overboard.

PICK UP TRASH — Especially Fishing Line!
Loons and other birds are often entangled in discarded fishing line, causing serious injury, inability to eat, and even death. When you leave a fishing spot, please don't leave any fishing line behind.

Learn more about a variety of Species Concerns in New York State
Loons, bald eagles, and many other species are facing threats from climate change, habitat loss, and federal laws.
If you observe a loon being harassed or injured, please contact:
During Normal Business Hours: After Hours or On Weekends
Wildlife Hotline: (518) 402-3120 (518) 401-0210
Wildlife Office: Watertown (315) 785-2533
Learn more about loons from the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation at www.adkloon.org, info@adkloon.org, 518-354-8636

By working together, Adirondack residents and visitors can help minimize and address many of these challenges to better protect Adirondack loons and the lakes they share with us and other wildlife. This program provides lake associations and other interested groups with guidelines and conservation projects to ensure that their lake continues to support breeding loons for years to come.

Please Note: Although there is no charge to participate in the Adirondack Loon-Friendly Lake Program, a minimum annual donation of \$100 is requested to help continue this program.

Learn more at www.adkloon.org
or e-mail education@adkloon.org for more information!

~MAKE THE ADIRONDACKS SAFER FOR LOONS~ PLEASE RECYCLE FISHING LINE!

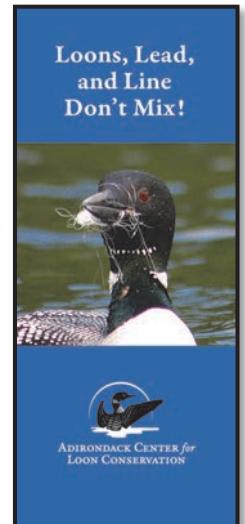


Abandoned fishing line and lead tackle can be fatal to loons and other wildlife. When a loon gets tangled in fishing line, it can lead to serious injury and even death. Fishing line entanglement is the primary reason the ACLC needs to rescue a loon, especially during the summer months, as there are more loons in the Adirondacks and more people out fishing. Fortunately, this problem is easy to solve—

Help Protect Loons and Other Wildlife... Please Pick Up and Recycle Fishing Line!

To help you recycle abandoned fishing line, the ACLC has constructed fishing line recycling containers to provide to interested community groups (*Note: there is no charge for a fishing line recycling container, but donations are always welcome to enable us to make more*).

This project was made possible by the generous support of Northern New York Audubon, Genova Products, the NYS Council and Lake Champlain Chapters of Trout Unlimited, Algonquin Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club, Coakley's Home and Hardware, Stacked Graphics, the New York Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, and Curtis Lumber.



Want to maintain a fishing line recycling container?
E-mail education@adkloon.org or call 518-354-8636 to get one today!

~ACLC BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHT: CHANDLER RALPH~

Chandler Ralph served as ACLC's founding Board Chair after her retirement in 2016 following 21 years as President and CEO of Adirondack Health in Saranac Lake/Lake Placid, NY. Previously Ms. Ralph had been President/CEO for Mercy Hospital in Watertown, NY, Senior Manager at Ernst and Young in New York City and Albany, and Vice President at Columbia Memorial Hospital. Ms. Ralph holds a Bachelor's in Biomedical Engineering, a Master's in Management and Industrial Engineering and a Master's in Business Administration, all from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY.

We have been honored to have Chandler guide us through our first three years of being a nonprofit organization—her insight, wisdom, and encouragement have been instrumental in our development, and have been most appreciated!



Chandler lives in Lake Placid with her husband, David, and their beloved dogs. When not volunteering with non-profit organizations such as the ACLC and the Girl Scouts, one of Chandler's favorite past-times is exploring new places with David on their Harleys!

~SCIENCE UPDATES~

Our recently released Science Summary Reports provide overviews of our scientific publications in the journal *Ecotoxicology* last fall, as part of New York's Mercury Synthesis Project led by Biodiversity Research Institute and supported by NYSERDA. The results of our long-term research on the impact of mercury pollution on Adirondack indicated that mercury levels in adult loons started to stabilize in 2010, likely related to the effectiveness of mercury emission regulations that were implemented in the 2000's. Additionally, our results indicate that several other factors, such as predation and water level rise, are becoming key issues affecting loon reproductive success.

This summer, we are continuing our field work to assess issues affecting Adirondack loon reproductive success, including monitoring the banded loons on our study lakes and using trail cameras to identify causes of nest failure or success.

~LOON RESCUES~

Although summer has just begun, we've already received numerous calls about loons potentially needing rescue. Fortunately, most of the calls have been from concerned people not knowing normal loon behavior, such as birds who were taking baths, incubating eggs, resting, or preening.



However, we have already rescued two loons who came down in storms, and have responded to two others who were tangled in fishing line (*but we so far have been unable to catch*). We are grateful to the NY State Police for assisting in the rescue of a loon who came down on Rt. 30 near Malone, and the staff of the Lake Placid landfill for helping to rescue another loon who landed in their compost pile during a bad storm.

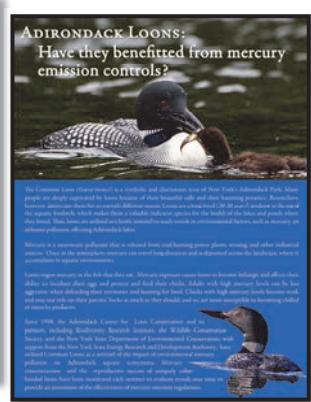
~LAKE JOCASSEE WINTERING LOON STUDY~

In late February, Dr. Schoch had the wonderful opportunity to collaborate with Dr. Jay Mager of Ohio Northern Univ. and Brooks Wade of Jocassee Wild. She spent a week with them on Lake Jocassee in South Carolina studying the feeding behavior of loons wintering there.

The wintering loons use a variety of different feeding strategies. Some birds hunted by themselves, taking big breaths and diving deep to catch a single large fish, which provided enough food for the rest of the day. Alternatively, other birds fed communally, making very shallow dives and catching numerous small fish. Kingfishers, gulls, and even eagles were attracted to the "feeding frenzy," diving in to join the swirling loons and snag some fish for themselves too!



Because the loons were transitioning from their winter to their breeding plumage, it was often possible to tell individuals apart based on their coloration—very different than the breeding birds on Adirondack lakes, where bands and size are the best way to tell the loons apart. And we were treated to a very special bird—a wintering Pacific loon! It was a sleek gorgeous bird, even in winter plumage!



Visit www.adkloon.org to learn more about these studies and download the reports.
Enjoy!

FIELD TRIPS!

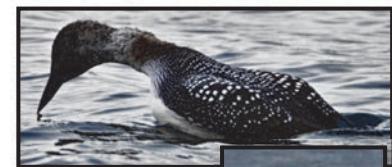
Have you always wanted to learn more about and spend time with loons? This is your chance!

We invite you to join ACLC's Environmental Educator and NYS Licensed Guide for a 4-hour paddle tour of an Adirondack lake to visit with some of our study loons.

In a small group setting, conducive to social distancing, you will learn about the fascinating lives of loons that travel to the Adirondacks each year to nest and raise their young. We will also discuss some of the conservation concerns that affect these beautiful birds and lakes where they live.

Field trips are limited to 10 participants only.

Learn more at www.adkloon.org/field-trips



WHAT'S NEW AT THE ADIRONDACK LOON CENTER?



We are excited to now offer new clothing, including slate gray long-sleeved t-shirts, maroon hoodies, gray fleece vests, and blue windbreakers. These comfortable tops are all perfect for cooler evenings and make great gifts! Plus new ties and of course, loon socks!

Additionally, we have a variety of new vendors, including hand-crafted fishing-lure based jewelry, hat pins, and zipper pulls by Saranac Lake's own Jill McKenty of Allurements.

These unique and beautiful designs are sure to be a treasured memento for all your angler friends!



Please Note—Donors to the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation now receive a discount for their purchases online and at the Adirondack Loon Center—Enjoy! (You will receive a discount card with your thank-you note)

We have also been expanding our exhibits, and more are in the works, thanks to support from our generous donors and our NYS DEC Smart Growth grant. We have continued to add to our "Children's Nest" with new games, including our loon trivia challenge, and other loon-related activities, some of which are now also available on our website at www.adkloon.org/education-outreach. New exhibits to be introduced this summer include:

- **"The Art of Studying Loons"** highlights three significant loon researchers with ties to the Adirondacks:
 - ◊ Dr. Judy McIntyre, the "matriarch of loon natural history," a scientist who wrote *The Common Loon—Spirit of Northern Lakes*, a definitive resource about loon natural history and behavior
 - ◊ Kip Taylor, a nature photographer who spent years taking images of Adirondack loons before the age of digital photography which he compiled in a beautiful book called *Loon*
 - ◊ Herb Cilley, a naturalist whose family lives in the Adirondacks and spent his retirement befriending and writing about a loon family on Bow Lake, NH
- **Quicksilver—Adirondack Loons as an Indicator of Environmental Mercury Pollution** provides an overview of how mercury pollution impacts aquatic ecosystems through the lives of Adirondack loons.
- **Expansion of our exhibits on loon diet, reproduction, plumage, migration, and flight**
 - ◊ As part of our exhibit on loon reproduction, we now have a beautiful taxidermy mount of a young chick backriding on a large male loon. While it is important to keep your distance from loons in the wild, feel free to closely look at this stunning loon and chick, which we are fondly calling "Kwimu" to honor the Native American tribes who shared their world with the Common Loon as we do today. Wabanaki folklore describes Kwimu the loon as a loyal friend and messenger for the hero Glooscap. Kwimu spies on humankind and uses his eerie calls to communicate with Glooscap, especially during times of need.



*Whether you're visiting the Adirondacks, or you live right around the corner, be sure to stop by the Adirondack Loon Center to see what's new and exciting!
(Please wear your mask for our safety and yours!)*



**Not able to come to Saranac Lake to visit the Loon Center in person?
Visit us online at
www.adkloon.org/adklooncenter**

Looking for a special loon gift for your friends and family? We add to our merchandise and exhibits all year long, and have been posting information about them on our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages. We hope you enjoy visiting us either in person or online! **Thank You!**

Like us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/adkloon, to stay updated about new happenings at the Adirondack Loon Center!

THANK YOU!

We are deeply grateful to all our donors, volunteers, and sponsors, such as yourself, whose support has helped us do so much for Adirondack loons. Your contributions, whether they be financial, volunteer, or in-kind—are essential to our continued success!

There are numerous ways to support the ACLC—whether it be an annual donation (*you can now become a Sustaining Donor with a monthly recurring donation!*); being a business sponsor; donating an unwanted car, boat, or truck; having a Facebook fundraiser to benefit ACLC, or becoming a member of our Annual Loon Legacy Society. *To learn more about the many ways you can help support our loon research and conservation programs in the Adirondacks, please visit www.adkloon/support.*

Whether you are a long-time donor or thinking of giving for the first time, please be assured that **your donations DO make a significant difference for Adirondack loons!** We also greatly enjoy your kind notes and photos sharing your encounters with loons with us—it's wonderful getting to know you and learn about your Adirondack adventures.

With much gratitude for your support!

~Dr. Nina Schoch and the staff of the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation



YES! I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A FRIEND OF THE ADIRONDACK CENTER FOR LOON CONSERVATION!

I would like to support the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation at the following level:

- Nesting Loon = \$50 Loon Chick* = \$250 Flying Loon*** = \$1,000
 Loon Egg* = \$100 Swimming Loon** = \$500 Other: \$_____

- I have enclosed a check payable to *Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation*.
 I will charge my donation to my credit card online at www.adkloon.org/support.
 I would also like to become a member of the Adirondack Loon Legacy Society to help support Adirondack loon conservation efforts long into the future! Enclosed is my additional gift of \$_____, payable to the "Adirondack Loon Legacy Fund at the Adirondack Foundation," or I will pay online at www.adirondackfoundation.org/funds/adirondack-loon-legacy-fund.
 I would like my donation to remain anonymous.

* Donors at the \$100 level (or more) will receive a 8x10" photograph of one of our Adirondack study loons.

** Donors at the \$500 level (or more) will receive a Kip Taylor out-of-print "Loon" book.

*** Donors at the \$1000 level (or more) are invited to join our staff for a field trip to observe our Adirondack study loons.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Phone: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation
P.O. Box 195, Ray Brook, NY 12977**

Your tax-deductible donation payable to the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, supports our scientific research and education programs focused on Common Loons.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!



ADIRONDACK CENTER
for LOON CONSERVATION
P.O. Box 195
Ray Brook, NY 12977

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SPONSOR AN ADIRONDACK LOON!

Do you like to give back to the Adirondacks? Looking for a meaningful gift? Fill the bill (*so to speak...*) by sponsoring an Adirondack study loon!

Every loon sponsorship comes with a personalized certificate that describes your loon's history from when we first captured and banded it, including information about the number of chicks it has raised over the years, as well as a beautiful loon photograph, the annual Loon Appreciation Week poster, an ACLC sticker, bookmark, and a fact sheet about loons.

Monitoring individual color-banded birds over many years provides valuable information that helps deepen our understanding of loon ecology. The Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation's loon sponsorship program greatly expands our ability to conduct this important research on New York's loon population.



~ TREMOLO BY E-MAIL! ~

Want to see the beautiful photos in *The Adirondack Tremolo* in color? *Please go green and sign up for our e-newsletter by emailing us at info@adkloon.org!* You'll receive:

- A color version of *The Adirondack Tremolo* that you can easily share with your friends and family; and
- Periodic updates about our research and upcoming events

Note: Because of increasing costs and a limited budget, we are reducing the number of printed copies we distribute. We realize some people don't have access to computers, so if you would like to continue to receive a printed Tremolo, please confirm this by sending us a note.

If you move, or change your e-mail address, please let us know, so you will continue to receive *The Adirondack Tremolo*.

Thank You!

**Like What We Do?
FOLLOW THE ACLC ON
FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, AND
TWITTER!**

Stay up to date all year long with our loon research, rescues, and what's happening at the Adirondack Loon Center!

www.facebook.com/adkloon
www.instagram.com/adkloon
www.twitter.com/adkloon