

Our Volunteers

Over twenty years ago, local volunteers began monitoring common loons in Montana. These volunteers recognized that the increase of human recreational pressures on lakes, shoreline development and springtime angling in nesting areas were having an impact on Montana's loons. Today, that need is greater than ever.

To Help: Mail this form and tax deductible donation or membership to:

Montana Loon Society
P.O. Box 2386
Missoula, MT 59801

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS	
Loon Chick (<i>Student</i>)	\$10
Single Loon (<i>Individual</i>)	\$15
Breeding Pair (<i>Family</i>)	\$25
Territorial Pair (<i>Sustaining Member</i>)	\$150
Raft of Loons (<i>Organization</i>)	\$300
Loon Lake (<i>Life Member</i>)	\$800

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (*optional*) _____

E-mail (*receive meeting notices/newsletter*) _____

How did you hear about us:

Friend ___ Loon Ranger ___ Website ___

Newsletter ___ Newspaper ___

Loon Program ___ Other _____

Our Mission

- Monitor Montana's loon population.
- Protect and enhance critical loon habitat.
- Facilitate cooperation between government agencies, lakeshore owners, and the general public on behalf of loons.
- Identify management needs and obtain funds for these projects.
- Increase public knowledge and awareness of loons.

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P.O. Box 2386
Missoula, MT 59801
www.montanaloons.org

Support our license plate, too!



Welcome to The Montana Loon Society

The Montana Loon Society
is a nonprofit organization
dedicated to insuring
that common loons
continue to be a part
of the landscape of the
"Last Best Place,"
so our children can
experience the beauty
and the mystery of this bird
and its calls on our lakes.

www.montanaloons.org

Our Founders

In the 1970's, the late P.D. Skaar, author of *Montana Bird Distribution*, provided the first early information on Montana's loons.

In 1982, Dr. Skaar's son, wildlife biologist Don Skaar, started the Montana Loon Study, organizing the first set of volunteers to help observe and monitor Montana's loons. The Montana Natural Heritage Program in Helena kept the data. In 1986, Don began writing the Montana Management Plan, implemented in 1989 by MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

From 1989-1992, educator/wildlife biologist, Lynn Kelly, completed her master's thesis on loons, demonstrating that placing floating signs around nest sites played a pivotal role in chick survival.

In 1989, the Montana Loon Study transitioned into the Montana Loon Society.



Society volunteers help band loon chick.

Our Story

National concern for common loons began in the 1970's following increased awareness about the effects of DDT on waterbirds. Early loon research helped define nesting and nursery habitat requirements, clutch size, pair bond establishment, and general dates of spring arrival, nest initiation, and hatch.

In 1986, the Society established the first systematic breeding survey known as "Loon Day." **Results showed that Montana supported a total of 180 to 220 common loons, including 35-40 chicks each summer.**

Between 1986 and 1992, researchers determined that human disturbances during nesting season had a detrimental effect on breeding loons. MLS implemented a management program that relied on nest area closures using floating signs and public education at high use areas.

In 1997, the first banding and trace metal analysis for common loons was conducted in the state.

In 2000, the Common Loon Working Group, and MLS secured funding to implement a pilot Loon Ranger Program through Montana Fish, Wildlife and Park's internship program. Since, the CLWG has managed loon data.

Our Accomplishments

1990 - Began first systematic Loon Day Survey in conjunction with similar surveys in other states, maintaining a group of volunteers to count and monitor loons on local lakes.

1992 - Loon volunteers and managers began working together to help reduce nest abandonment through education and use of floating signs at common loon nest sites.

1996 - Banded first loons in Montana and tested for trace metals. Montana's loons overall have low levels. Testing continues.

1999 - Developed "Responsible Watercraft Use and Montana's Loons" brochure.

2000 - Helped develop a pilot Loon Ranger Program through FWP's internship program. Since 2004, three or more loon rangers are placed in state each year.

2001- 2010 - Banding continues on many lakes.

2003 - Developed web site at montanaloons.org

2005 - Montana loon made historic flight from Morro Bay, CA to Lower Stillwater Lake, MT traveling over 1000 miles in between 3 - 5 days. Also found MT birds wintering off coast of Oregon and Washington.

2006-Created four educational loon trunks.

To use these trunks contact: (All 406 area codes)

-Tally Lake Ranger Station, Kalispell: **758-3544**

-MT Natural History Center in Missoula: **327-0405**

-CSKT in Pablo: **883-2888**

-Murphy Lake Ranger Station: **882-8345.**

2007 - Developed membership brochure

2010-Produced

MLS motor vehicle license plate, now available at

Montana County Courthouses.

