

## Our Volunteers

Over twenty years ago, 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, pay online at [www.montanaloons.org](http://www.montanaloons.org) with PayPal, or mail this form and your tax deductible donation or membership to:  
MONTANA LOON SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 2386  
Missoula, MT 59806

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS	
Loon Chick ( <i>Student</i> )	\$10
Single Loon ( <i>Individual</i> )	\$15
Breeding Pair ( <i>Family</i> )	\$25
Territorial Pair ( <i>Sustaining</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 \_\_\_\_\_ 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.

**Montana Loon Society**  
**P.O. Box 2386**  
**Missoula, MT 59806**  
**[www.montanaloons.org](http://www.montanaloons.org)**



# 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](http://www.montanaloons.org)**  
**and**  
**FACEBOOK at Montana Loon Society**

## 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 volunteers to help observe and monitor Montana's loons. The MT Natural Heritage Program in Helena stored that early data. In 1986, Don began writing the MT Management Plan, implemented in 1989 by MT Fish, Wildlife and 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 with night capture.*

## Our Story

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

In 1989, MLS established the first systematic breeding survey known as "Loon Day." The last 20 year results show that Montana supports an average of 200-220 common loons, including an average of 40 chicks. Though that isn't very many, it is still the largest population of loons in the western states.

Between 1986 and 1992, researches 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 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 Montana's loon data and continues to hire loon rangers around the state.

## Our Accomplishments

- 1990** - Began first systematic Loon Day Survey with similar state surveys, maintaining volunteers to count and monitor loons on MT lakes.
- 1992** - Loon volunteers and managers began working together to reduce nest abandonment through education and use of floating signs at nest sites.
- 1996** - Banded first MT loons and tested for trace metals. (Most MT loons have low levels.) Testing continues.
- 1999** - Received MT non-profit status.
- 2000** - Helped develop FWP's Loon Ranger Program.
- 2001 - 2018** - Banding continues.
- 2003** - Developed website [montanaloons.org](http://montanaloons.org)
- 2005** - MT 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 Oregon and Washington coasts.
- 2006** - Created four educational loon trunks. To use trunks contact:
  - Tally Lake Ranger Station, Kalispell: **406.758.3544**
  - MT Natural History Center, Missoula: **406.327.0405**
  - CSKT, Pablo: **406.883.2888**
  - Murphy Lake Ranger Station: **406.882.8345.**
- 2010** - Produced MLS motor vehicle license plate available at Montana County Courthouses.

