



20 GILSLAND FARM RD., FALMOUTH, ME 04105
PHONE: (207) 781-2330 FAX: (207)781-0974
maineaudubon.org

Dear Loon Counter:

June 2014

If you are new to the loon count, welcome! You join the ranks of more than 1,000 volunteers who regularly dedicate the early morning hours of the third Saturday in July to finding and counting loons. For all of you who have been with us for past counts, thank you for your efforts, and welcome back to our 31st year. Hard to believe we are entering our fourth decade of continuous annual loon counts throughout Maine!

This year's count will run from 7:00 to 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, July 19th. Keep your fingers crossed for a clear, calm, windless day! For a quick overview of the count, visit maineaudubon.org/wildlife-habitat/the-maine-loon-project/. Look at the bottom of the page under "Additional Resources" and click "Loon Count Overview".

Briefly, here's a summary of the task at hand for count morning:

1. **Count your area** (either whole lake or portion of a lake) **from shore or from a boat during the count period** (7 to 7:30 a.m., may be extended to 8 a.m. on large lakes ONLY).
2. **Mark your observation point** (if observing from shore) **or your route of travel** (if traveling by boat) **on the enclosed map with an "x" or dashed line. If observing from shore, please also shade the portion of the lake you can see.** Lake maps have been redrawn from the state's depth maps, and may not be completely accurate. Don't worry about minor geographical features, as long as the rough shape of the lake is correct.
3. **Mark the location of all adults and chicks you see and the time each bird was observed.** This is especially important when multiple counters are on a lake. New this year, **please break the adults into those seen as individuals (alone), those seen as part of a pair, and those seen in groups of three or more rafting together**. We are trying to get a rough idea of how many loons are breeders (more likely to be alone or in pairs) versus non-breeder (more likely hanging out in larger groups, or rafts). Thank you for your help with this extra step!
4. **If you already know the location of active nest sites, please mark them on the map.** However, do not search for nests, as that can be quite disruptive to nesting pairs. If you suspect a breeding pair is nesting in a given location, please make a note on the map.

Please fill out your count form completely, immediately after the count. Don't forget to fill in your name (you'd be surprised how many people do!) **Please return the form and map to me by August 1.**

Once I receive all the data sheets, I will forward them to Maine Audubon. A count summary will appear in the winter issue of Maine Audubon's quarterly newsletter *Habitat*. Complete count data will be available on-line at the Maine Loon Project home page after October 2014. Thank you again for participating in this year's loon count. The success of the count depends on your generous donation of time and energy.

Sincerely,

Regional Coordinator
Address:

Telephone: