

Common Loon (*Gavia immer*)

Conservation Concern Category: **Moderate Concern**

Population Trend (PT)

Stable/Declining—(Delany and Scott 2002; McIntyre and Barr 1997)

"has retreated from former southern range limits...breeding in 1980s in Pennsylvania and from 1970s to present in Massachusetts suggest incipient re-colonization...winter residence on southern reservoirs reported with greater frequency in the last decade...numbers decreased across southern range limit during early to mid-twentieth century, but increased 1969-1989 across range..." (McIntyre and Barr 1997)

"except for a few local or regional instances, available data indicates that Common Loon populations are stable or increasing through most of their Canadian range" (Scheuhammer et al. 2003)."

"overall population healthy and robust" and "results from winter counts indicate a steady increasing trend in the number of loons and long-term recovery in the overall breeding population since the mid-1900's" (Evers 2004).

Over 94% of the continental Common Loon population resides in Canada (Evers 2004). Thus the Common Loon is stable or increasing through most of their continental range.

Estimated apparent stable population trend (Marshbird Workshop 2005)

PT FACTOR SCORE=3

Population Size (PS)

575,000—(total individuals; Delany and Scott 2002; Groves et al. 1996; Evers 2000; Scheuhammer et al. 2002; an additional 5000 in Europe (Lack 1986))

"worldwide population estimated at 500,000-700,000..." (McIntyre and Barr 1997)

"607,011 to 634,701t" (Evers 2004)

PS FACTOR SCORE=2

Threats to Breeding Populations (TB)

"availability of safe nesting sites limits populations in some areas...territorial behavior limits numbers on many lakes...continues to be hunted by native people in parts of Canada...elevated PCB levels in dead loons...also exposure to mercury...poisoning

from lead sinkers and jigs...fishing traps and nets cause some mortality...development of shoreline and islands for marinas, summer homes and campsites reduces habitat...human recreational use of lakes blamed for population declines...jet skis are currently most threatening disturbance factor..." (McIntyre and Barr 1997)

Shoreline development increases loon predators such as raccoons, gulls, corvids...collisions with motorboats in open water...habitat changes resulting from acid rain...disease, especially aspergillosis...(Evers 2004)

Estimated significant potential threats exist but have not actually occurred to majority of population (Marshbird Workshop 2005)

TB FACTOR SCORE=4

Threats to Non-breeding Populations (TN)

"adult mortality during winter can be severe...oil spills are a threat..." (McIntyre and Barr 1997)

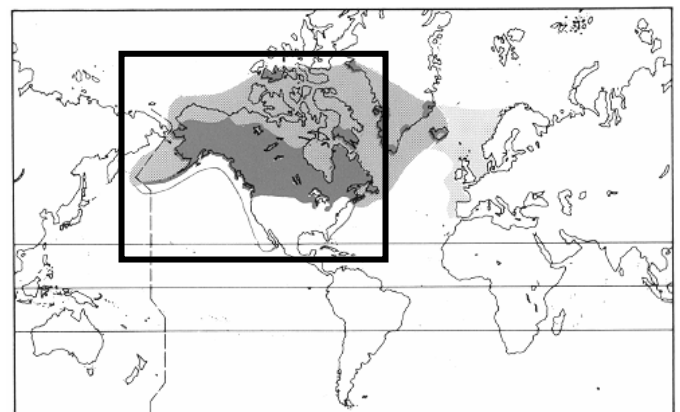
"disease (botulism and other organisms) is a major continuing problem for migrant loons on the southern Great Lakes in autumn migration with thousands dead in several of the past ten years..." (R. Russell, pers.comm.)

"bycatch from commercial gillnetting ...disease, especially emaciation syndrome..." (Evers 2004)

Potential threat of overfishing forage fish (Marshbird Workshop 2005)

TN FACTOR SCORE=4

Global Range (Harrison 1983; inset=plan area range)



MAP 19 GREAT NORTHERN DIVER Text p.210 Plate 6

Breeding Distribution (BD)

In North America--N US, Canada, Alaska
(Delany and Scott 2002)

5,324,800 km² (plan area distribution; estimated
from range maps)

BD FACTOR SCORE=2

Non-breeding Distribution (ND)

Coastal regions of North America, Great Lakes,
Southern states (Delany and Scott 2002)

14,137,600 km² (plan area distribution;
estimated from range maps)

ND FACTOR SCORE=2

Literature Cited:

- Delany, S. and S. Scott. 2002. *Waterbird Population Estimates – Third Edition. Wetlands International Global Series No. 12*, Wageningen, The Netherlands. Pp: 22
- Evers, D.C. 2004. Status assessment and conservation plan for the Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) in North America. U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hadley, MA.
- Harrison, P. 1983. *Seabirds: an identification guide*. Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, NY. Pp: 411
- McIntyre, J.W. and Barr, J.F. 1997. Common Loon (*Gavia immer*). In *The Birds Of North America*, No.313 (A.Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA.
- Scheuhammer, A.M., Money, S.L., Kirk, D.A., and Donaldson, G.(2003) Lead fishing sinkers and jigs in Canada: Review of their use patterns and toxic impacts on Wildlife. Canadian Wildlife Service Occasional Paper Num 108.