

## **Focused Loon Surveys** - Vermont Loon Conservation Project / Vermont Center for Ecostudies

Help us fill in the gaps on lakes and ponds where we could use more loon surveys. Is there a pair present this year? Has the pair nested yet? Are they still on nest? Have the chicks hatched out? Or, did the chicks make it through the summer to fledging age? We also want surveys from lakes where loon activity is not well documented. Do loons even use a specific pond or is a pair possibly forming? Knowing which ponds loons do not use helps us guide our efforts.

These focused loon surveys are ideal for people who like to get out to lakes but may not have the time to consistently observe a lake throughout the summer. **And you can go at any time and report in.** It's a great excuse to explore new areas or visit favorite haunts.

The Focused Loon Survey lists do not include lakes with highly active volunteers. Feel free to survey any lake in the state and report your findings even those not included here. Some of these lakes might have "adopt-a-lake" volunteers, but additional surveys will help us better assess territory status, etc.

### Lake Categories

- Priority 1 – territorial and nesting loons
- Priority 2 – potential pairs and recent two-loon sightings
- Priority 3 – tend to be smaller, occasional loon sightings, no breeding history

There are FOUR Focused Loon Survey lists:

- **Focused loon surveys - all season** (comprehensive – includes all lakes where we could use more surveys, including priority 3 lakes)
  - **Focused loon surveys - nesting/pair formation** (May/June)
  - **Focused loon surveys - nesting/nest outcome** (June/July)
  - **Focused loon surveys- chick survival** (August)
- The latter three focused surveys include breeding pairs (priority 1) and potential territories (priority 2) where we are lacking information during specific times of the breeding season (nesting, nest outcome, chick survival). These lists will be updated occasionally as information comes in. Contact Eric Hanson directly for details, nest locations, etc. to plan your visit. The "all-season" list is comprehensive and includes priority 3 lakes where loons have tended to be less active, but it'd be helpful to have more surveys conducted.

Instructions and guideline on next page

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Boat or shorelines surveys: the list includes a column if a boat is necessary or if doable from shore.
- Region: Lists are sorted by region of the state.
- The time-specific lists are focused around territorial loons (nesting, nest success, chicks). Add a priority 3 lake from the “all-season” list if you have time to add a few smaller lakes to your outing.
- Conducting Surveys
  1. Surveys can be conducted at any time, all spring and summer.
  2. Calm water is helpful for larger lakes; make a note if choppy water or difficult survey conditions.
  3. Partial vs. entire lake survey
    - a. Priority 1 lakes can focus on the territorial pair (partial survey).
    - b. Priority 2 and 3 lakes – make a note if survey was of entire lake or partial lake survey. E.g., observation from boat access of about 80% of pond, could not see bay to the north.
  4. **READ: Etiquette for confirming nests and checking on nest success.** IF you know where the nest is located, observe from a distance. NEVER approach a known nest closely; always use binoculars. If you do not know where the nest is located, contact Eric for details on the best way to observe it. Only search shorelines by scanning from 50-100 meters out from shore. Nest warning signs are not used at all sites.
  5. **READ: Etiquette for observing nest success and chicks:** Watch from a distance. NEVER pursue a loon family. A loon swimming away from you is a stressed loon.
  6. Note eagle activity, extra loon activity, interactions with other loons, specific locations and landmarks if pertinent (e.g., nest/raft location, where extra loons were)
- Reporting Survey Results

**If you survey a priority 1 or 2 lake (very loon active), please report survey results to the VLCP Coordinator soon after the survey.** This helps us target when we need to survey that territory next.

Eric Hanson [ehanson@vtecostudies.org](mailto:ehanson@vtecostudies.org) 802-586-8065

OR

Enter in VT ebird online and SHARE survey result with Eric by entering his email.

VT ebird data input instructions:

- Go to <https://ebird.org/vt/home>
- Register or sign-in, submit observations (you can enter all birds observed or heard), find your lake, etc. Toward the end under review your data, make sure you hit the “share your checklist” box and enter Eric Hanson’s email: [ehanson@vtecostudies.org](mailto:ehanson@vtecostudies.org)
- For complete ebird entry instructions, find the pdf or video tutorial on the VCE website: common loon conservation/loonwatch/participate and scroll down to “Focused Loon Surveys”
- NOTES: Whether you send email directly to Eric Hanson or use VT ebird, there are places to make notes about your observations.

Examples of notes:

\* adult on raft, 2<sup>nd</sup> adult on other side of lake.

\* no loons near raft, 2 adults on water.

\* 1 adult observed in SW area; did not find the nest site. Entire lake survey.

\* 1 chick with 2 adults east end; 2 other adults west end. Not interacting.

\* 3 adults swimming together, 0 chicks. I was told there was a successful hatch a week ago. Chick could have been stashed or is lost. I’ll come back next week to check again.

Thank you for making loon conservation happen in Vermont. The network of community science volunteers is key to monitoring how our loons are doing and guiding our management and research efforts.

# Focused Loon Surveys - All Season

Vermont Loon Conservation Project (VLCP)  
 Vermont Center for Ecostudies  
[www.vtecostudies.org](http://www.vtecostudies.org)

"All Season" list is comprehensive and includes priority 1, 2, and 3 lakes in need of more surveys.

**Lake Categories**

- Priority 1 – territorial and nesting loons
- Priority 2 – potential pairs and recent two-loon sightings
- Priority 3 – tend to be smaller, occasional loon sightings, no breeding history

If you want to "focus" your survey on lakes in immediate need of monitoring, look at the documents available at the VCE website [www.vtecostudies.org](http://www.vtecostudies.org) under loon conservation/loonwatch/participate:

- \* Focused loon surveys - nesting/pair formation (May/June)
- \* Focused loon surveys - nesting/nest outcome (June/July)
- \* Focused loon surveys- chick survival (August)

The lakes on the 3 lists above are a subset of the "all-season" comprehensive list

These lists do not include nesting loon lakes with highly active volunteers. Some of these lakes have volunteers already, but more surveys will help better assess pair status. Feel free to survey any lake not on the focused loon survey lists - the more surveys, the more we learn.

**If you survey a priority 1 or 2 lake, please report survey results to the VLCP Coordinator soon after the survey.**

Eric Hanson, VLCP Coordinator, [ehanson@vtecostudies.org](mailto:ehanson@vtecostudies.org) 802-586-8065

Or, enter data on VT eBird and share your observation with Eric (see VCE website for full eBird entry instructions)

Regions: cha-n: champlain valley north                      nc: north central  
 ec: east central                                                      nek: northeast  
 gm-s: green mountain south                                  wc: west central

Lake	Town	Region	Lake Area	best survey method	What to look for	Priority	Lake	Town	Region	Lake Area	best survey method	What to look for	Priority
Arrowhead	Milton	cha-n	760	boat	loon activity	3	Branch	Sunderland	gm-s	34	hike/boat	territory status	1
Carmi	Franklin	cha-n	1401	boat	pair activity	2	Gale Meadows	Londonderry	gm-s	195	boat	pair activity	2
Colchester	Colchester	cha-n	186	boat/shore	pair activity	2	Grout	Stratton	gm-s	84	hike/boat	pair activity	2
Fairfield	Fairfield	cha-n	446	boat	territory status	1	Harriman	Whitingham	gm-s	2040	boat	pair activity	2
Indian Brook	Essex	cha-n	50	boat	loon activity	3	Howe	Readsboro	gm-s	52	bushwhack	loon activity	3
Monkton (Cedar)	Monkton	cha-n	123	boat/shore	loon activity	3	Sadawga	Whitingham	gm-s	194	boat/shore	loon activity	3
Shelburne	Shelburne	cha-n	452	boat	loon activity	3	Sherman	Readsboro	gm-s	160	shore/boat	loon activity	3
Silver (Georgia/Farifax)	Georgia	cha-n	27	hike	loon activity	3	Somerset	Somerset	gm-s	1568	boat	territory status	1
Winona (Bristol)	Bristol	cha-n	244	boat	loon activity	3	Stratton	Stratton	gm-s	46	hike	pair activity	2
Abenaki	Thetford	ec	44	shore	loon activity	3	Sunset (Marlboro)	Marlboro	gm-s	96	boat/shore	territory status	1
Fairlee - south	Fairlee	ec	457	boat	activity	2	Wantastiquet	Weston	gm-s	44	shore	territory status	1

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Halls	Newbury	ec	85	boat	territory status	1	Adamant	Calais	nc	20	shore	loon activity	3
Hartland dam	Hartland	ec	215	boat	loon activity	3	Berlin - north	Berlin	nc	293	boat/shore	territory status	1
Mill	Windsor	ec	77	shore	loon activity	3	Berlin - south	Berlin	nc	293	boat/shore	extra loon activity	2
Miller	Strafford	ec	64	boat	territory status	1	Caspian	Greensboro	nc	789	boat	extra loon activity	2
Minards	Rockingham	ec	46	shore	loon activity	3	Clarks (Tildys)	Glover	nc	33	shore	loon activity	3
Morey	Fairlee	ec	547	boat/shore	pair activity	1	Coits	Cabot	nc	40	shore	pair activity	2
North Springfield	Springfield	ec	290	shore ?	loon activity	3	Curtis	Calais	nc	72	boat	territory status	1
Rood	Williamstown	ec	23	shore	loon activity	2	Daniels	Glover	nc	66	shore/boat	territory status	1
Runnemedede	Windsor	ec	62	shore	loon activity	3	Daniels-west (Rodgers)	Glover	nc	15	shore	territory status	1
Stoughton	Weathersfield	ec	56	shore	loon activity	3	Dog (valley)	Woodbury	nc	88	boat	territory status	1
Adams Res.	Woodford	gm-s	21	state park	loon activity	3	Eden	Eden	nc	194	boat/shore	territory status	1
Big (Woodford Lake) - Woodford	Woodford	gm-s	31	shore	loon activity	3	Elligo	Greensboro	nc	174	boat/shore	territory status	1
Bourn	Sunderland	gm-s	48	hike	territory status	1	Elmore	Elmore	nc	219	boat/shore	territory status	1
Ewell	Peacham	nc	51	boat/shore	territory status	1	Lewis	Lewis	nek	68	shore/boat	territory status	1
Flagg	Wheelock	nc	111	boat	territory status	1	Little Averill	Averill	nek	467	boat	territory status	1
Great Hosmer	Craftsbury	nc	140	boat	territory status	1	Little Salem	Derby	nek	50	shore/boat	loon activity	2
Green River	Hyde Park	nc	554	boat	territory status	1	Maidstone	Maidstone	nek	745	boat	territory status	1
Hardwick	Hardwick	nc	145	boat	territory status	1	May	Barton	nek	116	boat	territory status	1
Harveys	Barnet	nc	351	boat	territory status	1	Memphremagog	Newport	nek	5966	boat	pair activity	2
Joe's - 1st pond	Danville	nc	396	boat/shore	territory status	1	Moore	Waterford	nek	1235	boat	pair activity	2
Keiser	Danville	nc	33	shore/boat	territory status	1	Neal	Lunenburg	nek	186	boat	territory status	1
Kettle	Peacham	nc	109	hike/boat	territory status	1	Notch	Ferdinand	nek	22	hike	loon activity	3
Levi	Groton	nc	22	hike	loon activity	3	Nulhegan	Brighton	nek	37	boat	loon activity	3
Little Hosmer	Craftsbury	nc	180	boat	territory status	1	Pensioner	Charleston	nek	173	boat	territory status	1
Long (Greensboro)	Greensboro	nc	100	hike	territory status	1	Round (Holland)	Holland	nek	14	hike	loon activity	3
Long (sheffield)	Sheffield	nc	38	hike	pair activity	2	Salem	Derby	nek	764	boat/shore	pair activity	2
Lower Symes	Ryegate	nc	77	boat	territory status	1	Seymour	Morgan	nek	1769	boat	extra loon activity	2
Lyford	Walden	nc	33	in	territory status	1	South America	Ferdinand	nek	29	hike	loon activity	3
Mollys	Cabot	nc	38	shore	territory status	1	South Bay	Newport	nek	470	boat	loon activity	3
Mollys Falls	Marshfield	nc	397	boat	territory status	1	Stiles	Waterford	nek	135	shore	territory status	1
Nelson	Woodbury	nc	133	shore/boat	pair activity	2	Wallace	Canaan	nek	532	boat/shore	pair activity	2
Noyes	Groton	nc	39	shore	pair activity	2	West Mountain	Maidstone	nek	60	hike	territory status	1
Osmore	Groton	nc	48	shore/boat	territory status	1	Wheeler	Brunswick	nek	66	shore	loon activity	3
Parker	Glover	nc	250	boat/shore	territory status	1	Willoughby	Westmore	nek	1653	boat/shore	pair activity	2
Peacham - east	Peacham	nc	340	boat	territory status	1	Amherst (Plymouth)	Plymouth	wc	81	shore/boat	loon activity	2
Peacham - north	Peacham	nc	340	boat	territory status	1	Beebe (Hub)	Hubbarton	wc	111	shore	loon activity	3
Peacham - southwest	Peacham	nc	340	boat	territory status	1	Bomoseen	Castleton	wc	2360	boat	loon activity	2
Round (sheffield)	Sheffield	nc	13	hike	loon activity	3	Burr	Sudbury	wc	85	shore	loon activity	3
Shadow (Glover)	Glover	nc	210	boat/shore	pair activity	2	Chittenden - east	Chittenden	wc	702	boat	territory status	1
Sodom	Calais	nc	21	shore	loon activity	3	Chittenden - northeast	Chittenden	wc	702	boat	territory status	1
Stannard	Stannard	nc	25	hike	loon activity	3	Chittenden - west	Chittenden	wc	702	boat	pair activity	2
Thurman Dix	Orange	nc	123	shore	territory status	1	Colby	Plymouth	wc	20	shore	loon activity	3

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Ticklenaked	Ryegate	nc	54	shore/boat	territory status	1	Echo (Hub)	Hubbarton	wc	54	shore	loon activity	3
Turtlehead (Marshfield)	Marshfield	nc	69	outlet	pair activity	2	Echo (plymouth)	Plymouth	wc	104	shore/boat	loon activity	2
Upper Symes	Ryegate	nc	15	boat	loon activity	3	Emerald	Dorset	wc	28	shore	loon activity	3
Waterbury Res - North end	Waterbury	nc	839	boat	territory status	1	Fern	Leicester	wc	69	boat/shore	pair activity	2
Waterbury Res - South end	Waterbury	nc	839	boat	pair activity	2	Glen	Fair Haven	wc	206	boat	territory status	1
West Daniels	Glover	nc	20	shore	territory status	1	Hortonia	Hubbarton	wc	479	boat	pair activity	2
West Hill	Cabot	nc	46	shore/boat	loon activity	2	Inman	Fair Haven	wc	85	hike	pair activity	2
Wolcott	Wolcott	nc	74	boat	territory status	1	Kent	Killington	wc	99	boat/shore	territory status	1
Woodbury	Woodbury	nc	142	boat	territory status	1	Knapp Br1	Cavendish	wc	25	boat/shore	territory status	1
Wrightsville	Worcester	nc	190	shore/boat	loon activity	3	Knapp Br2	Cavendish	wc	35	boat/shore	loon activity	2
Zack Woods	Hyde Park	nc	23	shore/boat	territory status	1	Little (Wells)	Wells	wc	177	boat/shore	loon activity	3
Bean (Sutton)	Sutton	nek	30	shore/boat	territory status	1	Old Marsh	Fair Haven	wc	131	shore/boat	territory status	1
Beaver	Holland	nek	40	hike	territory status	1	Perch (Benson)	Benson	wc	24	shore	loon activity	3
Brownington	Brownington	nek	139	boat/shore	territory status	1	Rescue	Ludlow	wc	180	boat	pair activity	2
Buck	Woodbury	nek	39	shore/boat	territory status	1	Silver (barnard)	Barnard	wc	84	boat/shore	pair activity	2
Center	Newark	nek	79	boat/shore	pair activity	2	Silver (Leicester)	Leicester	wc	101	shore	territory status	1
Charleston (Charleston)	Charleston	nek	40	shore	loon activity	3	Spring	Shrewsbury	wc	66	boat/shore	territory status	1
Clyde	Derby	nek	186	shore/boat	territory status	1	St. Catherine - north half	Wells	wc	883	boat	loon activity	2
Comerford	Waterford	nek	777	boat	pair activity	2	St. Catherine - south half	Wells	wc	883	boat	loon activity	2
Crystal	Barton	nek	763	boat/shore	pair activity	2	Sugar Hill Res.	Goshen	wc	63	shore/boat	territory status	1
Derby	Derby	nek	207	boat	territory status	1	Sunrise (Benson)	Benson	wc	57	shore	loon activity	3
Great Averill	Averill	nek	828	boat	territory status	1	Sunset (Benson)	Benson	wc	202	boat/shore	pair activity	2
Island	Brighton	nek	626	boat	territory status	1	Tiny	Plymouth	wc	29	hike	loon activity	3
Jobs	Westmore	nek	39	shore/boat	territory status	1	Wallingford	Wallingford	wc	87	hike	territory status	1