We are very excited to have mezzo-soprano Jennifer Dudley honor us with two concerts this summer to benefit our loon conservation efforts in the Adirondacks!

Jennifer will enthral us with an evening of engaging jazz/musical theater bird songs to help support our ongoing loon research and outreach projects.

We hope you will be able to join us—either on August 18th at View, the arts center in Old Forge, or on August 19th, at Intervale Lowlands on River Road in Lake Placid.

Both events will begin at 4pm, and will include a reception, a brief presentation by Dr. Nina Schoch about the current projects of BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation, and Jennifer Dudley’s lively concert.

Finally, we’ll end the evening with a raffle (need not be present to win) and possibly a silent auction as well. To date, we’ve had some wonderful prizes donated: beautiful framed loon photographs, out-of-print loon books, and adorable “rubber loons”. Please donate a loon-(or non-loon) related item for the raffle!

All are invited! There is no charge, but a donation of $15 per person is suggested. Please RSVP at adkloon@briloon.org by August 15th if you can attend.

And...bring or send in your raffle tickets (in this newsletter or download them at www.briloon.org/adkloon) to win an exciting prize!

Do you have an item for the raffles or silent auctions?

Please contact adkloon@briloon.org or 888-749-5666 ext.145 to include your items, RSVP, or for more info about these events!

It has been a very busy year, as we have been analyzing a decade of our Adirondack loon data and preparing some very interesting reports summarizing the results.

I hope you enjoy reading how our Adirondack loon research is contributing to a broader understanding of the impacts of pollutants to wildlife and Adirondack ecosystems.

— Have fun watching loons this summer!

Dr. Nina Schoch, Coordinator
BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation
Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located in Gorham, Maine. Founded in 1998, BRI's mission is to assess emerging threats to wildlife and ecosystems through collaborative research, and to use scientific findings to advance environmental awareness and inform decision makers. In 1998, as part of a larger regional study, BRI initiated research in New York's Adirondack Park on the impact of airborne mercury pollution to Common Loons (Gavia immer) and aquatic ecosystems.

BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation was launched in 2009, evolving from this research and the former Adirondack Cooperative Loon Program. BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation is dedicated to improving the overall health of the environment, especially air and water quality, through collaborative research and outreach focusing on the natural history of the common loon and conservation issues affecting loon populations and their aquatic habitats. Through the ACLC, BRI provides greater regional, national, and global exposure for loon conservation, while increasing our capacity in and around the Adirondacks.

For more information:
BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation
P.O. Box 195 Ray Brook, NY 12977
888-749-5666 x145
adkloon@briloon.org
www.briloon.org/adkloon

Biodiversity Research Institute
19 Flaggy Meadow Rd.
Gorham, ME 04038
888-749-5666
www.briloon.org

~ LOONS, LEAD, AND LINE ~
HELP US KEEP ADK LAKES LEAD AND LINE FREE!

This spring, we have continued to receive an increase in requests to rescue loons who are tangled in fishing line or acting abnormally (e.g., beaching themselves or landing on a road). More than half of these unfortunate birds have been entangled in abandoned fishing line or dying from lead poisoning due to ingesting lead fishing tackle.

In 2011, we responded to just over 30 calls about loons potentially needing rescue, again more than half of which were fishing line related or dying from lead poisoning. With our very limited staff, rescuing injured loons is a volunteer effort, resulting in a large demand on our resources and time. Thus, we greatly appreciate your understanding if we are unable to respond immediately or a bird doesn’t allow us to capture it for rescue.

The incidence of injured loons related to fishing tackle in the Adirondacks and the Northeast increases dramatically during the summer fishing season, when the birds are more likely to eat a fish that has broken a line, and still has line or tackle attached. If a bird ingests lead fishing tackle which is still attached to a fish, the loon will endure a slow death from lead poisoning as the tackle breaks down in its stomach. And if there is still fishing line attached when a loon swallows a fish, it will fling the line around and around its head and bill in a futile effort to get it off, thus entangling itself even more. Such a loon will likely suffer an infection as the line cuts into its flesh, may be unable to eat, and it may experience a prolonged and debilitating death.

To address these growing threats to Adirondack loons, we are initiating a fishing line and lead fishing tackle recycling program throughout the Park, in collaboration with lake associations, fish and game clubs, fishing tackle shops, and the Paul Smiths Watershed Stewardship Program.

We are most grateful to the Freed Foundation for their support of this project. We would also like to thank the NYS DEC and North Country Wild Care for their assistance in responding to calls about distressed loons, and especially to NYS DEC’s Region 5 Wildlife and the Central Office Bureau of Wildlife staff for their excellent assistance with attempts to rescue injured loons.

"Prevent needless wildlife injuries and deaths by picking up abandoned fishing line and tackle!"

Want to host a fishing line recycling container at your lake or fishing tackle shop? Please contact adkloon@briloon.org or 888-749-5666 x 145 to learn more!
Results of our long-term study on New York’s Adirondack loon population confirms that environmental mercury contamination is harmful to the health of an icon of the Park—the charismatic Common Loon. Mercury is an environmental pollutant released through a variety of industrial processes, such as coal burning, waste incineration, and metal production. Mercury emitted into the atmosphere can travel great distances on air currents before being deposited in aquatic systems. Once in waterways, this contaminant is taken up by fish, which makes it a problem for all fish-eating species, including loons and humans alike.

We have now summarized our research findings over a ten year period in a scientific report—"Long-term Monitoring and Assessment of Mercury Based on Integrated Sampling Efforts Using the Common Loon, Prey Fish, Water, and Sediment." We traced mercury contamination throughout the food web, from zooplankton to loons, and found mercury in loons that increased their risk of reproductive harm.

We have also developed a general audience report, “Adirondack Loons—Sentinels of Mercury Pollution in New York’s Aquatic Ecosystems,” which provides an overview of Common Loon natural history, information about conservation concerns affecting their populations, and a summary of our scientific research on the Adirondack loon population. Additionally, a four-page summary brochure showcases the results of this long-term study in the Adirondack Park to assess the effect of mercury contamination on wildlife and aquatic ecosystems, using the Common Loon as an indicator species.

This research is a collaborative project between BRI, the Wildlife Conservation Society’s (WCS) Adirondack Program, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and many other partners. We are most grateful to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)’s Environmental Monitoring, Evaluation, and Protection program and numerous foundations and private donors for their generous support of our ongoing investigations focusing on Adirondack loons.

**ADOPT AN ADIRONDACK LOON!**

"Adopt" one of our color-banded study birds, and help support our exciting Adirondack loon conservation research and outreach efforts! As you follow the life of an Adirondack loon from year to year, your donation will help us learn more about the impact of environmental contaminants to Adirondack wildlife and their habitats, and increase public awareness of the many conservation threats affecting loon populations.

Participants receive a description of their loon’s personal history; a personalized Adopt-A-Loon Certificate; a fact sheet on loons and they are affected by mercury and lead; a Loon Appreciation poster; and an 8” x 10” color loon photo.

**ADOPT A LOON from one of our Adirondack study lakes by visiting:**

[www.briloon.org/about-bri/support/adopt-a-loon](http://www.briloon.org/about-bri/support/adopt-a-loon)
More than 500 observers participated in the eleventh Annual New York Loon Census on Saturday, July 16, 2011. The map to the right shows the locations and results for the lakes and ponds surveyed during the 2011 Annual Loon Census. One hundred and eighty-nine (95%) of the 200 Census lakes were in the Adirondack Park.

A total of 660 loons were observed on 149 (75%) of the 200 Census lakes, including 544 (82%) adults, 93 (14%) chicks, and 23 (3%) immature loons. The proportion of adult and young loons on the New York Census lakes has remained relatively constant from 2001 to 2011, as shown in the graph below, indicating that the reproductive rate of New York’s breeding loon population continues to be stable.

Two hundred and seventy-four Census reports were received in 2011, 13 of which were not included in the analysis because the observations were conducted outside the Census hour or were duplicated efforts on a lake. Thus, 261 reports were included in the 2011 Loon Census analysis.

The Annual Loon Census is coordinated by the Wildlife Conservation Society’s Adirondack Program in collaboration with BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation. The Annual Loon Census provides valuable information about the status and trends in New York’s summer loon population, enabling the Dept. of Environmental Conservation to better manage the population of these beautiful birds who breed in New York.

“Both adult loons were attentive to the chicks. At times both adults were diving and returning with food for the chicks.

The adults did not seem threatened at all by our quiet presence. We gave them lots of room.

What a wonderful way to spend an hour, observing the loon family on 6th lake! Thank you!”

~Sixth Lake
In 2011, adult loons without chicks were observed on 80 (40%) lakes of the 200 Census lakes, chicks or immatures were seen on 69 (35%) lakes, and no loons were observed on 50 (25%) Census lakes. The graph to the right shows the percentage of lakes where loons have been observed each year of the New York Loon Census. Although the number of lakes included in the New York Loon Census has varied from year to year, the percentage of lakes with loons has been quite consistent, averaging 74%, over the 11 years of the Census.

Interestingly, the percent of Census Lakes with only adult loons appears to be decreasing over time, from a high of 51% in 2002 to a low of 40% in 2011, and there is an increasing trend in the percentage of lakes with loon chicks or immatures, ranging from a low of 23% in 2005 to a high of 34% in 2011. This indicates that loons have been breeding on more lakes in New York over the course of our study.

We again greatly appreciate the assistance of our Loon Census coordinators who excellently organize many volunteers on the larger waterbodies (see below) to prevent duplication of Census observations:

- Adirondack League Club
- Canada Lake
- Chazy Lake
- Cranberry Lake
- Lake George
- Lake Placid
- Loon Lake
- Lows Lake
- The Northwoods Club
- Old Forge/Inlet Area
- Peck Lake
- Raquette Lake
- Schroon Lake
- St. Regis Canoe Area
- Thousand Islands region of the St. Lawrence River
- Upper Saranac Lake

LIKE TO WATCH LOONS?
JOIN US FOR THE
2012 ANNUAL LOON CENSUS!

SATURDAY, JULY 21, FROM 8-9A.M.

Invite your friends to look for loons on a new Census lake!

Visit www.wcsadirondacks.org and www.briloon.org/adkloon to learn how to sign up for a lake.

Results from the 2012 NY Loon Census will be analyzed over the winter of 2012-2013, and posted to our websites, www.wcsadirondacks.org, and www.briloon.org/adkloon, next spring.

“Juvenile just learning to dive but still being fed by adults. A joy to watch!” ~Wakely Pond
WIN A GREAT PRIZE IN OUR LOON RAFFLE—AUG 18 & 19!

Tickets are $3 each or 6 for $15—Please make checks payable to BRI. Clip and send your tickets by August 15th, 2012, to BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation, PO Box 195, Ray Brook, NY 12977. Need not be present to win. Good luck in the Raffle!

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Need not be present to win. Good luck in the Raffle!
Many Thanks!

Your generous donations provide essential support to enable us to continue our long-term loon monitoring studies and conservation efforts in and around the Adirondack Park. Through your thoughtful contributions, we have been able to increase scientific and public awareness regarding critical environmental conservation issues, and provide valuable scientific data to guide protection of wildlife and the environment.

We are deeply indebted to the many people and foundations who have kindly provided financial and volunteer support to Biodiversity Research Institute for our Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation! Although limited space in this newsletter prevents us from acknowledging each of you individually, please know that your considerate donations and time are most appreciated!

With much gratitude,
Dr. Nina Schoch, Dr. David Evers, and Dr. Jim Paruk

Yes! I Would Like to Support BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation’s Scientific Research and Education Projects!

Enclosed is my donation of: □ $25 □ $50 □ $100 □ $500 □ $1000 □ Other: $________

☐ I have enclosed a check payable to Biodiversity Research Institute

☐ Please charge my donation to my: □ Visa □ MasterCard □ American Express □ Discover

Card #: ________________________________ Expiration Date: __________________

Signature: _____________________________ Billing Zip Code: __________________

☐ I would like to make a contribution to the WCS Loon Conservation Fund at the Adirondack Community Trust to support both BRI’s and WCS’ loon conservation efforts in the Adirondacks. Enclosed is my check in the amount of $________, payable to the “WCS Loon Conservation Fund at ACT”

Yes! I want to do MORE to help BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation!

Please accept my additional gift of $_________ to help support the ACLC’s research and outreach work.

I would like to be an ACLC Field Staff Sponsor! Enclosed is my additional gift of $__________.

Name: ________________________________ Street Address: ________________________________

Phone: ________________________________ City, State, Zip: ________________________________

E-Mail: ________________________________

Please clip this form and return it to: BRI’s Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation
P.O. Box 195, Ray Brook, NY 12977

Your tax-deductible donation payable to Biodiversity Research Institute supports our Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation’s exciting and innovative research and education endeavors.

Thank you for your support!
Visit our website, www.briloon.org to find out more about Biodiversity Research Institute’s exciting wildlife conservation efforts, and the research and education projects of our Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation, including:

- Understanding the impact of environmental pollution to loons and other wildlife;
- Learning about the migratory patterns of birds and bats, and how they relate to siting of wind power facilities;
- Assessing the impacts of emerging diseases to wildlife populations; and
- Our fascinating wildlife webcams—watch bald eagles, peregrine falcons, and other birds raising their chicks!

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