



White Lake Loon Survey and Wildlife Observations Summer, 2022

*Brian Houle¹,
with Conrad Grégoire and David Overholt*

Since 2013, we have been providing loon counts on White Lake. Over the years, nesting pairs of loons have produced an average of 19 chicks per year up until 2020. In that year, an infestation of a specific black fly drove loons off of their nests and reproduction plummeted to only 5 chicks. The results were the same for 2021.

We are happy to report that the loon's fortunes have changed and populations have rebounded.

This year, the loon count took place over the entire summer. Adult pairs and their chicks were observed for a period of about three months. Not all of the lake was surveyed with the eastern part of the White Lake Village basin, the Canal area, parts of Hayes Bay and Sunset Bay omitted. Historically, these locations have hosted several nesting pairs with chicks. Thus, the numbers reported here for both nesting pairs and chicks are a minimum. Juvenile and adult loons which were not nesting were not counted.

In 2022, there were a total of 10 confirmed loon nests, each with two adults. These nests produced a total of 15 chicks with one perishing early in the summer. Typically, only about 50% of chicks survive to join their parents on the annual migration south.

These results are very encouraging and signal a turnaround for Common Loon populations on White Lake. White Lake is a very productive lake surrounded by wetlands. These factors make this lake an ideal habitat for loons.

The table below shows loon counts resulting from 9 years of observations.

¹ Brian Houle is a local wildlife photographer who enjoys observing wildlife and trying to capture behavioural moments to share a deeper appreciation for our fellow wildlife.

Observation	2013	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Adults	23	40	32	45	44	38	25	27	-
Nesting Pairs	7	10	11	19	10	12	2	5	10
Chicks	16	17	16	21	18	23	4	5	15



Other wildlife observations included:

- 9 osprey nests located around the lake. Each nest accommodated 2 chicks, although no formal count was made.
- 1 Bald eagle nest (2 in 2021) containing 2 chicks. Two additional eagles were observed.
- There were at least two families of otters located on White Lake



Loon on a Mission

Photo credit: Brian Houle