

# IUCN SSC Loon Specialist Group

2019 Report



David Evers

## Chair

David Evers

## Red List Authority Coordinator

BirdLife International (David Evers)

## Location/Affiliation

Biodiversity Research Institute, Portland,  
Maine, US

## Number of members

135

## Social networks

Website:

[https://www.wetlands.org/our-network/  
specialist-groups/diverloon-specialist-group/](https://www.wetlands.org/our-network/specialist-groups/diverloon-specialist-group/)



## Mission statement

The mission of the Loon Specialist Group is to contribute to increase current knowledge on the ecology of all five species across their entire geographic range of distribution and promote long-term conservation.

## Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

By the end of 2020, we envision that the population and distribution of all species of divers/loons will remain strong. Breeding populations are generally in protected areas (although stressors such as mercury pollution and oil drilling may have impacts in some areas), while wintering populations are potentially in conflict with stressors associated with marine ecosystems (e.g. oil spills, cyanobacteria outbreaks, degraded fisheries). To assess the status of each of the five loon species, an international symposium will occur in late 2020 followed by a 'State of Global Loon Populations' publication in a special issue of a peer-reviewed journal. A global stressor of particular concern for global loon populations is mercury. That concern will be assessed through the international symposium as well as through a new initiative to better understand mercury exposure and effects on loon populations and other IUCN SSC Groups.

## Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

### Act

Conservation actions: establish 1–2 new breeding populations of Common Loons (*Gavia immer*) in Wyoming, US.

### Network

Synergy: initiate and network with other SSC Groups on the new project called "The Global Footprint of Mercury: Understanding the patterns of exposure and effects to biota".

### Communicate

Scientific meetings: complete one international diver/loon conference.

## Activities and results 2019

### Act

#### Conservation actions

i. Assessment of one translocation site where 24 loons have been translocated found five individuals had returned, and one territorial pair has formed. (KSR #24, 27)

### Communicate

#### Scientific meetings

i. Scientific and local host committees are established for the international diver/loon conference. (KSR #18, 20, 25, 28, 29)

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Loon Symposium Steering Committee: Deb McKew, Lucas Savoy, Jim Paruk and Mark Pokras, and interest by the Seaduck Joint Venture. Thank you to Deb McKew for organising the April 2019 kick-off event, which featured the work of nine professional artists who exhibited a selection of species listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List.



Arctic Loon, *Gavia arctica*  
Photo: Denis Kochetkov

Pacific Loons, *Gavia pacifica*  
Photo: Ken Archer



### Summary of activities 2019

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 2/5

Act **1** |

Communicate **1** |

Main KSRs addressed: 18, 20, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29

KSR: Key Species Result



Red-throated Loon, *Gavia stellata*  
Photo: Ken Archer



Common Loon, *Gavia immer*  
Photo: Daniel Poleschook