

## Big Gull Lake East End Cottage Association 2015 Loon Survey



*Photograph by: Annemarie Claremont*

This year, volunteers on Big Gull Lake participated in the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey (Table 1). The survey on our lake is one of many conducted across the country to determine the reproductive success of loons. Surveys are coordinated by Bird Studies Canada. Volunteers surveyed loons in early June (when loons establish territories), in mid-late July (when chicks hatch) and in late August (when young have reached more than half the size of an adult). Some volunteers reported observations at other times as well. The survey will determine how many young will survive to migrate south.

The Common Loon feeds on fish and because the loon is high in the food chain, the bird is a good indicator of lake health. Results of loon surveys across Canada have shown that loon reproductive success increases with lake size. However, acid participation (not a problem on Big Gull Lake) results in a decline in fish on which loons depend. Acid conditions also increase the availability of methyl mercury. High levels of human activity and development may negatively affect loon nests. Adults are long-lived (up to 20 years) and often return to the same breeding territory each year.

With sincere thanks to all of the volunteers,  
Lynda Corkum

**Table 1. The 2015 Big Gull Lake East End Common Loon Survey Results**  
(YOY, young of the year)

Area	June 6			July 17			August 22			Surveyors
	# singles	# pairs	# chicks	# singles	# pairs	# chicks	# singles	# pairs	YOY	
1	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	1	0	Nancy Kingston
2	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	Julie Carty, Prior & Keefer families
3	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	Virginia Grant
4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	Karen Saer
5	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	Jim Kuhr
6	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	Dave & Pam Cox
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Dave & Pam Cox
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Donna Commerford
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Donna Commerford
10	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	Donna Commerford, Lynda Corkum
11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	Kathryn Erickson and family
12	2	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	Debbi Burnie, Annemarie Clermont, Dan Hindson
13	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	Lynda Corkum, Sheena Ciborowski
<b>SUM</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	