



Our Loon Project Mentor, Lee Attix, has just completed the attached **2025 Belgrade Lakes Common Loon Monitoring Summary Report**.

The main takeaways from the 2025 Belgrade Lakes Common Loon Monitoring Summary Report indicate a **historically low overall productivity** for the 2025 loon population in Great Pond and Long Pond, despite a high number of territorial pairs (pp. 3, 9, 20). This highlights ongoing conservation challenges in the region.

Key Findings and Takeaways

- **Low Productivity:** The overall productivity in 2025 was 0.11 fledged young per territorial pair, the lowest recorded since monitoring began in 2019 (pp. 3, 9, 20). This is significantly below the sustainable population threshold of 0.48 fledged young per territorial pair (p. 20).
- **Territorial Pairs:** A total of **27 territorial pairs** were documented, the highest number in the last seven years, suggesting a strong breeding base in numbers (pp. 3, 5, 19-20).
- **Nesting Success:**
 - **Artificial Nesting Islands (Rafts):** These continued to be highly effective when used, with a 75% success rate for nests on rafts (pp. 3, 16).
 - **Natural Nests:** These had a lower success rate of 47% (pp. 3, 16).
 - **Great Pond Specifics:** None of the seven chicks hatched on Great Pond survived to fledge, resulting in an overall productivity of 0.00 for that lake (pp. 4, 10).
- **Nest Failures & Mortalities:**
 - Causes of nest failure included abandonment, mammalian predation, human disturbance, and flooding (p. 12). Human disturbance is a documented issue (p. 21).
 - Four adult mortalities were recorded in 2025 (p. 19).

- **Banding Program:** One new adult and two chicks were banded, and several previously banded loons were re-observed, providing data on survival and territory fidelity (pp. 4, 17-18).
- **Fidelity Concerns:** While return/survival rates are strong, mate fidelity is low, a concerning trend that has decreased since 2023 and 2024 (pp. 4, 21).
- **Collaborative Effort:** The project relies on a collaboration between professional researchers from Loon Conservation Associates (LCA), the Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA) volunteers, and student interns from Colby College (CC) (p. 3).
- **Recommendations**
- LCA recommends continuing standardized surveys and banding, strategic use of artificial nesting rafts, using cameras to determine causes of nest failure, and increasing outreach and education efforts to reduce human-related threats like disturbance, fishing line entanglement, and boat wakes (pp. 22-23).

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