

LOONS

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"We'll have as many as 2,000 pictures or something on a trail camera from just a day or two," he said.

Everything has to be done so as not to disturb or distress the loons. For example, egg counts are done with great caution and respect, he said.

"We come up on the side, we don't block the entrance in case a loon would decide to leave," Maanum said.

If the loon stands up or leaves the nest, they count the eggs and leave right away. Volunteers also leave if the loon stays on the nest.

"We know that if that's the response we're getting, chances are there's at least one egg on there, so we mark that down on our tally sheet with a question mark," Maanum said. "Maybe there's a second egg. But on another occasion when we're out there the next morning or something, maybe they'll be off the nest and we can see it, or if we have a trail camera there that can document 24 hours a day, we're going to get a count."

"We don't go in fast, we go very slowly, we go very quietly," he said.

Maanum said data can sometimes change based on what volunteers, such as photographers, observe.

"From photographers' viewpoints many times, research is being done, because with the hours we spend out there, we start seeing things that maybe back up research that's been done, or all of a sudden find that, wait a minute, that research is old research and it's not right anymore," he said.

The volunteers on Mantrap Lake also have assisted in larger research projects, such as one that began in 2011 with the United States Geological Survey out of La Crosse, Wis.



Contributed

On Feb. 2, loon expert Steve Maanum presented the history of Minnesota's state bird at the Douglas County Library.

The head researcher, Kevin Kenow, had a grant to study loons and their migration patterns in relation to the BP oil spill, as many loons go to the Gulf of Mexico in the winter months, Maanum said.

Another part of the study detailed Lake Michigan, where many loons go in the fall before heading south, and where a type of botulism killed thousands of shorebirds, 48% of which were common loons, Maanum said.

For the study, the group came to Mantrap Lake in 2011 to capture loons and put leg bands on them, geolocator tags on adults, and surgically-implanted internal satellite transmitters on the males.

The transmitters tracked the loons each day and sent the information to a computer, Maanum said.

The researchers returned the next year to take the geolocator tags off, from which they gathered information including temperatures and dive depths, he said.

"It was fun for me to see how they handled everything so well and so respectfully," Maanum said.

Although Minnesota currently has more loons than most of the other states, Maanum said that could change

in the future, pointing to a study by the Audubon Society that said by 2080, loons may no longer be here because of global warming.

"We'll just have to wait and see," he said. "It's certainly our initiative to try and keep loons active and healthy here in our state."

There are things ordinary people can do, as well, such as avoiding nesting areas when they are boating or fishing, and not discarding fishing line or lures in a lake, he said.

For his part, Maanum will continue to give presentations featuring his photographs to audiences of all ages.

"I hope each of them learns something about loons they didn't know before," he said. "I hope I can get them to smile or laugh at least once, and I hope that they will go away with the idea that they want to learn even more about loons or another wildlife species, and then find ways of sharing it, especially with kids."

Maanum's presentation was sponsored by Douglas County Library and Viking Library System. This project was funded in part or in whole with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

LOTTERY

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say Lottery leaders. The jackpot numbers were 4-12-27-29-41.

The odds of winning the Gopher 5 jackpot are 1 in 1,533,939.

Casey's will receive a \$1,700 bonus for selling the jackpot-winning ticket.

This is one of two winning tickets purchased in Minnesota over the weekend. A Northstar Cash ticket was sold at Townline Short Stop in Eveleth

worth \$164,945.

The release states lottery prizes over \$50,000 must be claimed at Minnesota Lottery headquarters in Roseville. Prize claims must be submitted within one year of the date that appears on the winning ticket.



Reuters / Lucy Nicholson

A woman holds Powerball lottery tickets on Jan. 12, 2016, outside Bluebird Liquor in Hawthorne, Los Angeles, California, United States.

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- Make checks to Echo Press



Winner will be announced in the February 18 issue of the Echo Press

All money raised by votes will be donated to Someplace Safe.

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