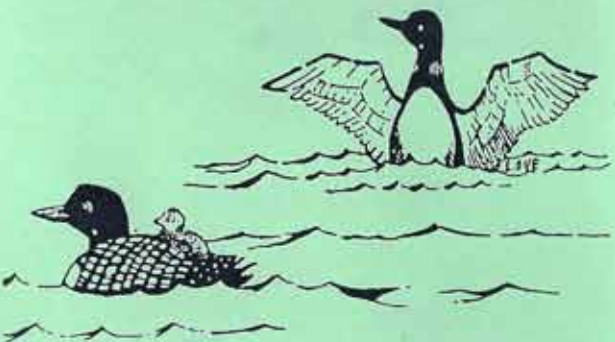


## Other Threats facing the Common Loon in Michigan

Loons in Michigan face a special threat. Commercial netting on the Great Lakes has resulted in the drowning of unknown numbers - perhaps in the hundreds - of loons yearly in the past. Research supported by the MLPA has shown that by enlarging the mesh size of the trap in these nets, fewer loons are lost. We continue to address this issue.

Loss of habitat, pollution, mercury poisoning, infections and trauma all cause mortality. Nesting loons and pairs with chicks are especially vulnerable to disturbance by boats and personal watercraft approaching too closely. Anglers can help by avoiding nesting loons, and giving plenty of space to loon families. About 100 yards or so is sufficient. Go slow near loons to avoid collisions.



## The Michigan Loon Preservation Association

The MLPA is a nonprofit affiliate of the Michigan Audubon Society and the North American Loon Fund, formed to protect Loons. The concern arose because of dwindling loon numbers due to many causes, among them lake development, pollution and loss of safe habitat.

The mission of the Michigan Loon Preservation Association is to conserve and enhance the Common Loon population through research, habitat protection and restoration, species protection, and public awareness and involvement.

### For more information, contact us at:

Michigan Loon Preservation Association  
6011 West St. Joseph Highway, Suite 403  
PO Box 80527  
Lansing, Michigan 48908

Or visit us at:  
[www.Michiganloons.org](http://www.Michiganloons.org)



The Michigan Loon Preservation Association is an affiliate of The Michigan Audubon Society and the North American Loon Fund.

## Information for Fishermen

# Lead Poisoning in Loons

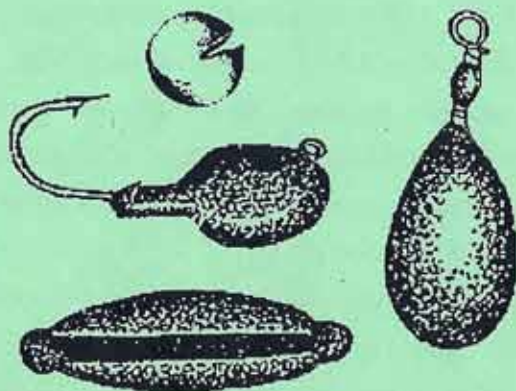
[www.Michiganloons.org](http://www.Michiganloons.org)

Birds commonly eat small pebbles to grind food for digestion. Small lead sinkers and jigs may be mistaken for these pebbles, or lures with fish and lead attached may be consumed by the bird directly. A bird that eats lead will become ill and die. Ingested lead enters the gizzard, where a combination of stomach acids and abrasion breaks down the metal. It then is absorbed into the bloodstream.

A bird with lead poisoning will exhibit physical and behavioral changes including loss of balance, gasping, tremors, and an impaired ability to fly. The weakened bird is more vulnerable to predators, or it may have trouble feeding, mating, nesting, and caring for its' young. It becomes emaciated and often dies within two or three weeks after eating the lead. Just one lead sinker or jig can poison a water bird.

## Extent of the Lead Problem

Lead, once dispersed into lakes, may persist for up to 300 years, though degradation can be more rapid depending on soil conditions and other factors. At least 27 different species are known to be affected by lead poisoning, including numerous duck species, the Trumpeter, Tundra and Mute swans, Bald eagles, Sandhill cranes, and the Common Loon, a threatened species in our state. Studies in the northeast have shown that over 50% of loons autopsied died of lead poisoning. In Michigan, lead accounts for about 25% of autopsied loon deaths.



*Lead sinkers and jigs.*

*(Drawing: Michael Cooper, Environment Canada)*



## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP Michigan Loon Preservation Association

Yes! I want to help preserve the Common Loon in Michigan by joining the MLPA. Enclosed is my membership fee for the current calendar year.\*\*

- Introductory ..... \$10
- Family/Student/Senior (62+) ..... \$15
- Supporting..... \$20
- Contributing ..... \$25
- Sustaining ..... \$50
- Award ..... \$100
- Benefactor/Life ..... \$500 or more
- Organization\* ..... \$50

(\*This category would include lake associations, environmental groups, individual Audubon chapters, etc.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Fee\*\*

Includes subscription to MLPA newsletter, decal, and voting privileges. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*I would like to make an additional contribution to MLPA\** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to MLPA and mail to:

Luanne Jaruzel, MLPA  
10181 Sheridan Road  
Millington, MI 48746

\* Michigan Charitable Trust #MICS1782  
\*\* Applications received after August 1 will not expire until December 31 of the following year.

## What you can do to help prevent loon deaths from lead poisoning: The Voluntary Solution

Switch to lead free substitutes. Jigs, particularly, have been found to account for most of the lead poisoning deaths in Michigan loons. Encourage your sporting goods store to stock these substitutes. Reel in your line when loons are near. Loons take live fish and have been known to ingest lead from fish on anglers lines. Pick up discarded monofilament line. Loons can become entrapped and hurt or killed by monofilament line. Help the MLPA educate the public about the dangers of lead. Pass this brochure along, or refer others to our web site.



### Fish Lead Free!

