



est. 1890

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER
2020

We're dedicated to keeping Charleston Lake beautiful in every way!

www.charlestonlakeassociation.ca

President's Message

Covid 19 has been a difficult time for all and has brought a lot of changes for us at Charleston Lake.

Because the US/Canada border remains closed, things are quiet here at the lake with boat traffic down and many cottages not yet opened. Responding to the current pandemic and with no end in the immediate future, we have been forced to make many difficult decisions and have had to cancel/postpone many events.

You will find in this newsletter an article detailing the many changes. It may appear that CLA/CLEA has shut down but nothing could be further from the truth. We are meeting virtually and continue to monitor issues in and around Charleston Lake. Your dues are still needed to help us continue efforts to Keep Charleston Lake beautiful.

Thanks goes out to Robbie Gibson, George Bellisle and Cody Johnston who got the shoal markers in place this spring despite the cool weather.

Please note fireworks, planned for Saturday July 4th, will not take place this year.

We still welcome your comments and questions. Please do not hesitate to contact us at www.charlestonlakeassociation.ca.

Wishing you all a great summer on Beautiful Charleston and I hope that conditions will change to allow all to enjoy this wonderful place.

Stay safe.

Bill Hallam

COVID- 19 UPDATES FOR CLA/CLEA

As Summer 2020 approaches, the Directors of Charleston Lake Association and Charleston Lake Environmental Association Boards have been holding regular virtual meetings. We have been monitoring information from the Government of Ontario and Public Health Ontario and reviewing our plans for the Summer of 2020. At our May meeting, we made the following decisions:

- **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, scheduled for Saturday, July 11, 2020 is postponed indefinitely. Financial reports which would have been presented at that meeting are included in this newsletter. Any concerns can be sent to our President, Bill Hallam or to any Board member.

- The annual **DOUG HALE GOLF TOURNAMENT**, scheduled for Saturday, August 8, 2020 will be postponed for this year. We thank all those whose participation resulted in "sell-outs" over the past few years and look forward to your participation next year.
- **CLA SUMMER CAMPS** at Sand Bay County Park will not be held this year. We have reached this decision reluctantly as we know how important these camps are to many families at the lake and in the immediate area. However, the logistics of having a number of children together in a small area without sufficient sanitation and running water would not meet any current distancing regulations and would be difficult to organize safely.

- **CLA INFORMATION CENTRE** on Charleston Lake Road will not open for regular hours this summer. Dues can be paid online through e-transfer on the website or by mail to Box 609, Athens, Ontario K0E 1B0. Environmental cleaning products will be available from Lakeline Marina.

The marinas and boat ramps are now open and the Provincial Park is opening trails. Thanks to Robbie Gibson and his crew, the shoal markers are in place and cottagers and boaters will be returning to the lake gradually.

Though this will be a very different summer for us all, the lake remains as beautiful as ever and will be our special place of calm and isolation.

Charleston Lake Association & Charleston Lake Environmental Association

Comparative Combined Financial Report Statement of Revenue & Expense

Revenue	2019		2018
Membership Dues	\$23,831		\$19,560
Club \$100 Donations	\$12,250		\$10,475
Golf Tournament	\$5,269		\$4,999
Other Donations	\$291		\$1,964
Interest and Other Income	\$1,789		\$1,713
Total Revenue	\$43,430		\$38,711
Expenses			
General Administration	\$11,346		\$9,823
Information Center	\$4,440		\$6,665
Youth & Social Programs	\$558		\$8,378
Safety	\$6,368		\$1,958
Miscellaneous	\$2,749		\$2,325
Total Expenses	\$25,461		\$29,149
Total Environmental Project Costs	\$15,764		\$7,552
Total Expense & Project Costs	\$41,225		\$36,701
Unexpended Funds Current Year	\$2,205		\$2,010
Unexpended Funds Prior Years	\$83,317		\$81,307
Unexpended Funds at Dec. 31st	\$85,522		\$83,317
Balance Sheet at Dec. 31st			
	2019		2018
Cash on Hand	\$24,988		\$23,469
Cash Invested	\$70,828		\$58,807
Accounts Receivable	\$7,485		\$5,013
Total Assets	\$103,301		\$87,289
Accounts Payable	\$17,779		\$3,972
Unexpended Funds	\$85,522		\$83,317
Total Liabilities & Unexpended Funds	\$103,301		\$87,289

Prepared by: Wayne Gill
Secretary Treasurer CLA & CLEA

A BODY OF CONCERN



Has there been a time in our memories where we've ever been so deeply concerned about the health of our bodies? The 'body of concern' had me thinking about health of bodies from another perspective – bodies of humans, and bodies of water.

Charleston Lake is a body – of water – the health of which has been front-of-mind for many, for decades. But its health, compared to humans, is perhaps more precarious. We're lucky in that we can move out of harm's way if we see danger coming. We can invent vaccines, we have a healthcare system, and we come with a total wrapper, our skin, that helps limit what gets into our bodies.

Lakes, on the other hand, are somewhat disadvantaged. They can't move and must take in whatever comes at them – from upstream, from the air, from whatever crosses over their surface. They have no protective wrapper as do we. And they're at the mercy of people who can decide to fix issues that ail it, or not.

Years ago, the Charleston Lake Association made the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust aware of just how fragile and precarious the health of the lake really is. And for years now, we've worked with CLA, other conservation partners and people around the lake to be a part of the body of care for the lake.

Together, we can work away at buffering and filtering harmful things like chemicals and excess nutrients from flowing into the lake. While our own circulation system is inside us, the lake's vital circulation system is outside, upstream of that body of water. There are just a few major arteries, the streams, but there are hundreds of capillaries, the trickles of creeks, ponds and rivulets in the thousands and thousands of acres of land in the basin, that watershed, in which Charleston's body lies. Protecting the watershed's filter system is vital to the lake's health.

And that's what the Land Trust as a lake partner has been doing for years. So far, over 2,200 acres of filtering, buffering and wildlife-rich lands have conservation strategies in place. Now, the land trust is working on the largest artery and capillary network for the lake, Leeders and Beales Creeks and the myriad wetlands and small streams that feed them. There are landowners upstream of you who care deeply about the future health of their own lands, and about the well-being of the big lake downstream from them – Charleston.

But just as in any healthcare system, as we've become very aware in the past few months, healthcare takes the will and support of its community to be effective. The health of the lake is guaranteed only if we show care by doing our part while living around this fragile body, and by pitching in to support the work with landowners upstream. Think of conservation work in your lake watershed as PPE for the lake. Donate as you can – it takes a little money, but also time and talent. As of a month ago, TIWLT owns 206 acres purchased near the head of Leeders Creek – a property that has four more small streams and many rivulets flowing to the creek. We're working on conservation easements on another two properties for 291 acres more this year. And we have two more landowners' letters of intent for easements on nearly 700 acres in this area. To pull it together for the lake's benefit will take more resources.

About the time you read this, you'll find a completely new website for the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust – TIWLT – at tiwlt.ca. There, you'll find videos, and how it all works.

And, stay well yourselves.

Don Ross,
Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust

THE GRAY RATSNAKE – OUR UNDER-APPRECIATED NEIGHBOR

A native of Ontario, the Gray Ratsnake is nationally and provincially designated as a species at risk. The Great Lakes/St. Lawrence population (all Gray Ratsnakes in The Frontenac Axis) is listed as “Threatened” under the provincial and federal endangered species acts, while the Carolinian population (southwestern Ontario) is listed as “Endangered.”

A non-venomous constrictor that poses no threat to humans, it is one of the largest snake species in Canada, commonly about 1.2 m (4 feet) long. Although one of the few Canadian snakes that spends any appreciable time in trees, it is found most commonly on the ground or underground. Shy, it prefers not to meet up with humans. If you do meet a Gray Ratsnake, perhaps basking in the sun, you can't help but be impressed with its size and beauty.



Gray Ratsnakes can be useful

Snakes play an important role in their ecosystems by acting as both predators and prey. Many people are pleased to have Gray Ratsnakes under their porches or in trees near their home because they eat rodents. They in turn provide food for larger predators such as ospreys, foxes, and coyotes.

If you don't want the snakes near your home, you can still have the advantages if you provide alternative habitat.

Once you seal holes in your home, snakes living there will look for another place to live. Consider helping them move. The key is not to move the snakes further than 100 metres (325 feet), because their established home ranges and hibernation places are critical to survival. Release them at a safe place away from people, pets and buildings.

They are creatures of habit. They survive best in familiar areas where they know hiding places, where to hunt, where to lay their eggs and where to overwinter. Move them further and you risk killing them.

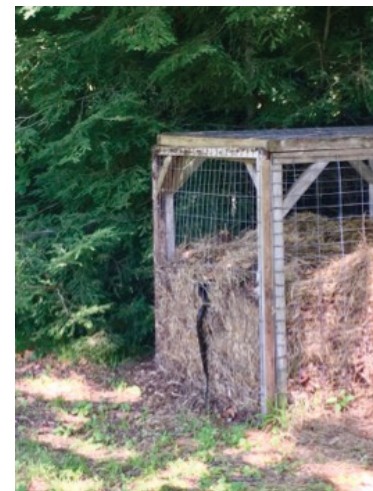
Not everyone likes snakes. If you want to discourage their presence near your home or children's play area, here are a few effective strategies:

- **Close openings around your house**

Openings under porches and walkways are prime spots. Check for openings around the top of your house because Gray Ratsnakes can climb. Points of entry can include eaves and soffits, roof vents and chimneys. By identifying and sealing openings into buildings you will also exclude rodents and bats, which can cause damage and health problems. The best time to close openings is in mid- to late October, when snakes have left for the winter. Gray Ratsnakes will not stay in an attic over winter in Ontario.

- **Keep the area clear of debris.** Snakes use wood piles, compost, or leaf piles as a refuge.
- **Keep grass short**
- **Relocate bird feeders and bird houses.** They can attract rodents that snakes feed on.

Building Habitat



Since 2005, the Leeds-Grenville Stewardship Council has been designing, building and installing Gray Ratsnake nesting boxes. The goal is to increase nesting sites, while collecting information on nesting materials and temperatures required for successful hatching of eggs.

The nesting box project has had relatively good success over time. Monitoring results show that between 2009 and 2019 our nest boxes successfully hatched over 1,600 Gray Ratsnake hatchlings.

For more information on Gray Ratsnakes visit
<http://www.lgstewardship.ca/gray-ratsnake.html>

BEARS AND COTTAGERS



As the weather warms up and people start to spend more time outside and around their cottages, so do Black Bears. At this time of year, Black Bears are especially apparent, as the small amount of natural food available in the bush draws them into areas where they can find a meal, and in Spring the lack of foliage in the woods makes them more visible.

However, with the knowledge that at this time of year bears are almost entirely motivated by trying to put on weight for the next winter, we can easily eliminate most negative interactions with these animals.

By keeping your property free of attractants such as bird feeders, garbage and compost, dirty BBQ grease traps and so on, bears will not waste time on your property and will move on to the next easy meal. If entire communities work together to avoid attracting bears, almost all potential negative interactions with bears can be eliminated.

If you see a bear on your property, the safest thing to do is go back inside and give it some space. If you feel comfortable, and it is safe to do so, scaring it off by shouting, banging pots

and pans or spraying it with a hose, can all be effective ways to teach bears that your yard is not a comfortable place to be.

If you encounter a bear on a trail, give it plenty of space and you should not have any problems. Try to back away from the area while keeping an eye on the bear. If the bear approaches you, try to make yourself look larger, make some noise and show the bear that it should not mess with you. Making some noise when you walk, keeping dogs on leash and carrying bear spray can all be effective preventive measures as well. Never turn and run, try to climb a tree or swim away from a bear – the average bear is far better at these activities than even the fastest humans.

For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.ontario.ca/bearwise>. To report a bear sighting or for specific advice, you can call MNRF Bearwise hotline at 1-866-514-BEAR(2327). In an emergency situation where there is an immediate public safety risk, call 911.

Trevor Horvatin
Wildlife Technician - MNRF – Kemptville District Office

CANADIAN LAKES LOON FACT SHEET (2019)

Bird Studies Canada helped develop the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey nearly four decades ago, as “dead” lakes caused by acid rain were being discovered in central and northern Ontario. It quickly grew into a national research program that assesses the long-term health of Common Loons, and the lakes on which they depend.

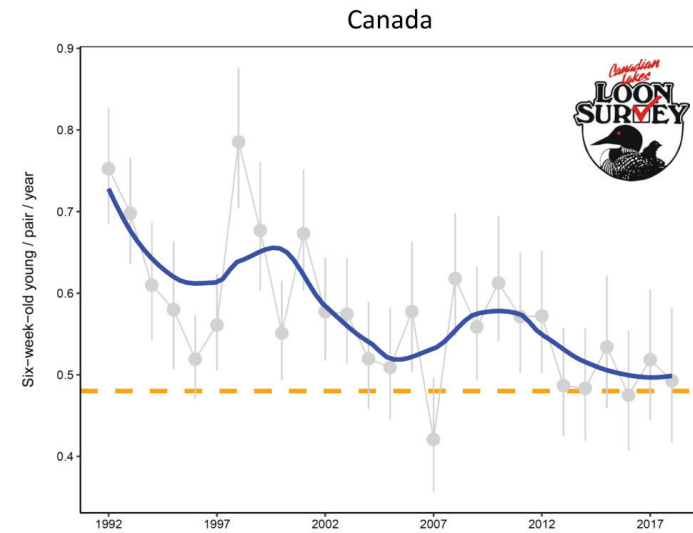
Loons are excellent indicators of broader lake health. Loon reproductive success can tell us what impacts lake acidification and other conditions are having on fish stocks and aquatic life.

Each summer, hundreds of Canadian Lakes Loon Survey participants watch their lake at least once in June for signs of nesting, once in July for chicks, and once more in August to see whether the chicks survive long enough for their first flight. The surveyors submit their observations to Bird Studies Canada.

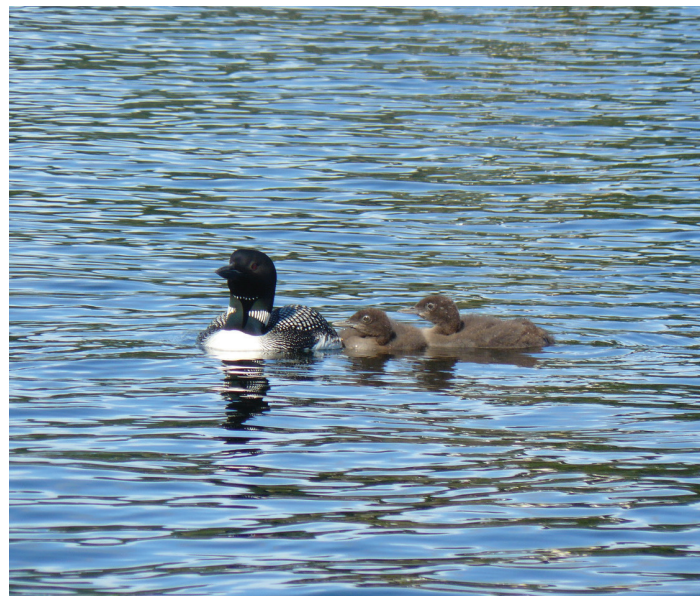
Data collected through the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey over many years confirm that acid and mercury levels in lakes decrease loon chick survival. As well, loon productivity has been consistently higher in western regions of Canada (British Columbia, Yukon, and the Prairies) than in the east (Ontario, Québec, and Atlantic Canada).

Ongoing threats facing loons across Canada include increased boating activity, water level fluctuations, contaminants, and habitat loss due to shoreline development. A new postdoctoral research project starting this year in Ontario supported by Bird Studies Canada’s Long Point Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Program and in collaboration with Acadia University will help disentangle which of the many threats are contributing most to ongoing declines in the numbers of chicks being produced.

The Canadian Lakes Loon Survey and its participants believe educating lake users and residents is the most effective safeguard for loon populations in Canada. Cottage and Lake associations, marinas, schools, and the general public can order signs and brochures about loons and loon-friendly activities through the program, or download electronic copies of materials at www.birdscanada.org/loons.



Average number of Common Loon fledglings per pair per year reported by CLLS participants across Canada between 1992 and 2018. Dots are annual estimates with the amount of uncertainty in the estimates shown by vertical bars (i.e., 95% confidence intervals). The curved line shows the general trend over time (i.e., a loess line of best fit). The red horizontal line is the minimum number of young required to maintain a stable population. Calculations based on the best statistical model in Tozer et al. (2013), which accounts for differences in longitude and lake area. The average number of fledglings produced across Canada has been getting lower and lower over time. (Tozer, D.C., Falconer, C.M., Badzinski, D.S., 2013. Common Loon reproductive success in Canada: the west is best but not for long. *Avian Conservation and Ecology* 8(1): www.ace-eco.org/vol8/iss1/art1).



LOONS NEED YOUR HELP

Loon chick production is declining

We need your help to identify what’s causing declines in chick production and to find solutions. Here are some great ways you can get involved.



HELP
US
LEARN

More volunteers are needed to monitor loon chicks!

If you will spend at least one day a month on a lake in Canada this summer please participate in the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey.

Visit birdscanada.org/loons for more information, and to join today.



Keep it wild

Let native wetland plants grow along your shore. Natural shorelines provide shelter and food for both fish and loons.



Keep it calm when boating

Slow down near wetlands and shorelines and keep your wake to a minimum. Wakes can wash out nests or separate young loons from their parents, which makes chicks easy pickings for predators.



Steer clear

Steer clear of loons, waterbirds, and other wildlife. They may not be able to escape your path. Adults can’t protect the young if they are separated.



Dispose responsibly

Take trash and fishing line to shore for proper disposal. Garbage including plastics and tackle can injure birds and other wildlife. Food and scraps may increase predators around nests.



Reduce your impact

Use less electricity and fossil fuels. Climate warming raises lake temperatures, causing more heavy metals to accumulate in wildlife tissues. Don’t add pollutants, like household hazardous wastes, to our rivers and lakes.

DONATE

Give your support

Donate to organizations that monitor and support the health of our lakes. **Birds Canada** supporters sponsor the loon survey.



Get involved

Be an advocate for loons and lakes. Raise awareness of air pollution issues and join your lake association.

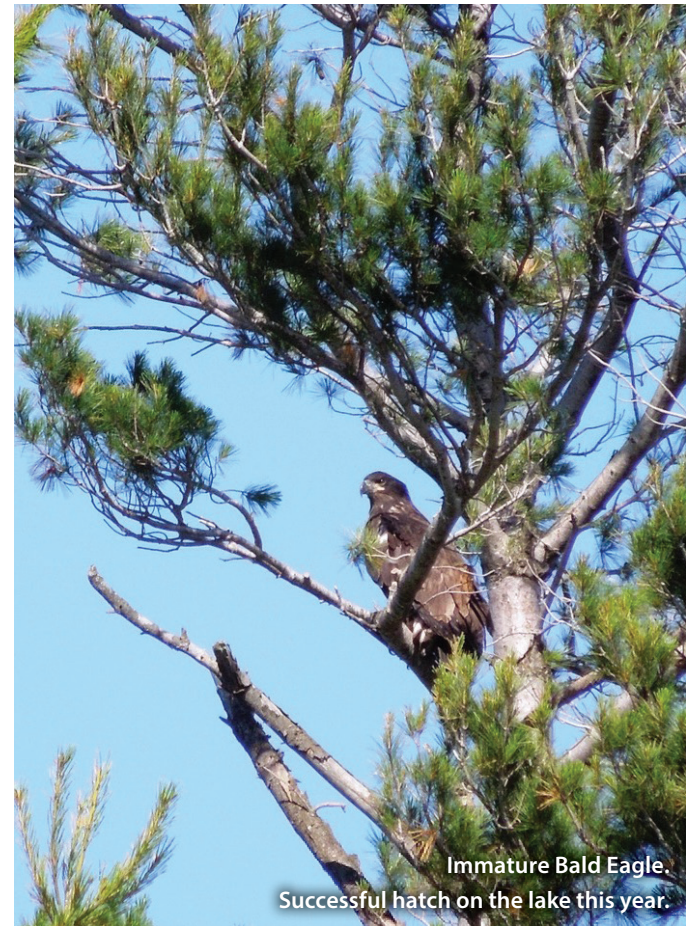
birdscanada.org/loons

volunteer@birdscanada.org, 1-888-448-2473 ext. 124





Baby Great Horned Owl



Immature Bald Eagle.
Successful hatch on the lake this year.



Trumpeter Swan

CHARLESTON LAKE ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

We just re-launched the Charleston Lake Association Website. Our new look is easier to use and has lots of new content. You now have access to all the past newsletters, and many useful links relating to lake life. There will be regular updates on Summer Camps, the Doug Hale Golf Tournament and other events.

It is also easier to pay your membership or to make donations using etransfer.

Visit Charlestonlakeassociation.ca and let us know what you think about the website using the online feedback form

*Sue Wilson
John Webster
Website Editors*

Charleston Lake Association Directors

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Wayne Gill – Secretary/Treasurer

Dwayne Struthers – Fish and Wildlife

Robbie Gibson – Safety and Law Enforcement

Pierre Menard – V.P. North/ Golf Tournament

Jay Kyle – V.P. South/ Natural Edge Programs

Mary Mansworth – Newsletter/Youth Programs

Rocci Pagnello – Fish and Wildlife/ Ontario Youth Summit

Charleston Lake Environmental Association Directors

Steve Arthur – Secretary/Treasurer

Roy Angelow – Municipal Contact

Wayne Ashford – Provincial Park Liaison/ Golf Tournament

Rob Ross – Counties Liaison

Sue Wilson – Website/Golf Tournament

John Webster – Website

Michael McAdoo – Director-at-large