

My casual observations of the Common Loon nest on Piseco Lake 2025:

- Sometime in early July 2025 I heard a rumor of a loon nest on Pine Island. On July 16th I paddled out there and observed through my binoculars a loon on a nest on the shore. The nest was on the east shore of the island, to the lower left of the eagle nest. Another loon was swimming close by. Note that this nest was in the exact spot that I had seen 2 loons attempting to create a nest in May of 2024. (That nest never amounted to anything.)
- On July 29th I paddled out there again, not expecting that the nest would still be there, but a loon was still sitting on the nest and another loon was, once again, swimming close by. While I was there a pontoon boat with 3 fishermen pulled up right in front of the nest. The bird in the water gave several frantic “yodel” calls (so that must have been the male since only they give that call). The female on the nest got into a “hangover” position but stayed on nest. The male moved farther away and continued to call “tremolo” calls. Eventually the fishing boat left and all returned to normal.
- A note about the July 29th visit: On that visit there were three eagles perched or flying over the island. One adult eagle was perched on the west side of the island, and another adult flew over. An immature eagle was perched on the east side of the island, in clear eyeshot of the loon on the nest. This year (to my knowledge) the eagles either had a very early nest failure (perhaps before we could even get out there in boats), or they didn’t attempt to nest on the island at all. I only mention this because we speculate a lot about the impact of bald eagles on loon reproduction success.
- On August 2nd I saw a baby loon riding on the back of an adult loon near the nest area. I observed this from shore through my scope (so, very far away).
- On August 3rd a member of the Piseco Lake Facebook page posted some photos of the baby on the loon’s back. The family was still very close to the nesting area.
- On August 5th I paddled out and noted the baby loon both riding on a parent’s back swimming between Half Moon Beach and the Knox estate, fairly close to shore. At some point the baby climbed off the parent’s back and swam very close to the adult. The other parent was also in attendance.
- On the evening of August 5th there was a notable and very loud loon ruckus that I heard from our camp on Arrowhead Rd. It sounded like at least 3, but possibly 4 or 5, loons calling very loudly. The calls were clearly distress or aggression calls of some sort. I could not see the loons from where I was, and the calls were coming from the direction of the island.

- August 5th was the last confirmed date that anybody saw the baby loon. (And we searched pretty hard for it.) There were several adult loons present on the north end of the lake.
- This is pure speculation, but I often wonder if the baby was killed by other loons the evening that I heard the ruckus. Intruding adult loons will sometimes kill unrelated baby loons, particularly late in the season, apparently to sort of “tie up” the territory for themselves for the next year.
- Because collisions with boats are a leading cause of loon mortality it should also be noted that on the 5th and the 6th a very loud, very fast boat called a “hydro stream viper” was active on that part of the lake. That boat can, and does, travel well in excess of 100 mph. Of course, it doesn’t have to be a boat traveling 100 mph to run down a loon, and we have a great deal of boat traffic on Piseco Lake.

- Cindy Kindle
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