



## Ecotours - BC.com

### “Grizzly Bears, Wildlife and Nature Adventures”

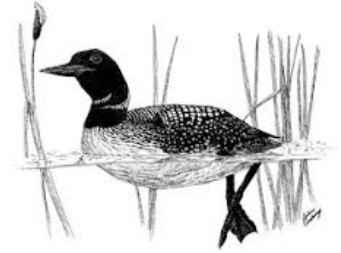
#### **NEW Specialist Birding Adventure**

#### **LOONS – “Gavia immer”**

#### **Canada’s Voice of The Wilderness**

#### **The Call Of The North**

#### **Loons and Their Chicks**



If you are an avid birder and crazy about Loons this special guided birding adventure on the many boreal lakes of the Cariboo Mountains is not to be missed. The distinctive mystical haunting call of the Loon is both magical and mysterious – the masterpiece of nature’s symphony. It’s the voice of the Canadian wilderness - the “call of the North” and truly herald’s the arrival of spring.

This nature adventure has special emphasis on Loons, their habitat, their families, lives, history and a whole lot more. While focusing on the loons you may also see a variety of other birds including raptors, hawks, nightjars, warblers, western tanagers along with a variety of wildlife including bears, moose, deer, mountain caribou, and perhaps wolves and lynx, and other delightful small animals.

This little known birding area, the rare interior ancient rainforest of the Cariboo Mountains in central British Columbia, is rich in birdlife with over 250 species from tiny hummingbirds and songbirds to raptors and water birds including the elegant Loons dressed in their brilliant black and white plumage. The myriad of boreal lakes throughout the mountains provide an ideal and spectacular natural environment for the loons to raise their chicks with backwater coves and protected shoreline shelter for nesting sites. The clear waters provide abundant food sources including fish minnows, nymphs and rich aquatic plant life. Watch these birds with their unique black and white markings as you learn about their evolution and watch as the chicks in their charcoal and black downy coats ride on the backs of the adult birds as they learn the ways of their watery wilderness habitat. Don’t miss this unique Canadian birding experience. An incredible birding experience in an authentic Canadian wilderness ‘classroom’ led by expert naturalists and birders. Minimum – 2 people. Season – mid-May through July.

A few facts about loons –

- Loons are the oldest living birds on earth with a history dating back over 20 million years.
- Loons are related to penguins
- Loons can live 24 – 30 years
- Loons arrive on lakes throughout northern Canada at ice-out and stay until late fall, often until lakes start to freeze.
- Nesting season is from mid to end of May. Loons lay only 2 eggs which both parents take turns incubating and which hatch in about 30 days.
- The Common Loon’s eyes turn red during mating season.
- Loons nest on forested lakes and rivers and winter on coastal bays and oceans south to the Gulf Coast.
- Loons are clumsy on land because of the set of their legs well back on their bodies, but are spectacular swimmers and divers capable of diving to depths of nearly 200 feet.
- Loons provide an indication of the quality of the aquatic environment they inhabit as they require clear water with an abundant food supply.
- There are five species of loons – the Common Loon or Great Northern Loon (*Gavia immer*), Red-throated loon (*Gavia stellata*), Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*), Arctic Loon or Black Throated Loon (*Gavia artica*) and Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*).

#### **Ecotours-BC**

PO Box 4299, Williams Lake, British Columbia, Canada, V2G 2V3

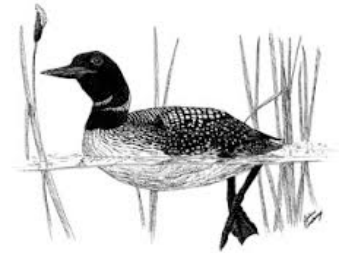
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## Description

The loon has a large, heavy body with a thick and pointed black bill. In the breeding season the plumage, head and neck are black with white bands on the neck and white spots on the back; in the winter the crown, hindneck and upperparts dark grey and the throat and underparts are white. Loons are expert divers whose eyes can focus both in water and in air. The call of the loon, is a loud, wailing laugh or a mournful yodel and has been described as "one of the most striking wilderness sounds, a strange, sad, mournful, unearthly cry, half laughing, half wailing".



## A Totem of Native Loon Mythology

The loon is a solitary bird of the wilderness that symbolizes tranquility, serenity and the reawakening of old hopes, wishes and dreams. The Loon relies on water and water is a symbol for dreams and multiple levels of consciousness, therefore Loons teach us to pay attention to our dreams, wishes and hopes. A Legend says that to see a Loon is a symbol of a dream come true or an answered wish.

## Why Ecotours-BC?

We are often asked what is unique about our tours. The pure intrinsic value of tours with Ecotours-BC lies in your total immersion and connection with nature. A tour with Ecotours-BC connects you with wild creatures in their natural habitat in ways you have never known. We put you on the inside of the forest - seeing with the eyes of the forest – and you become one with nature and the wild creatures. It is a pure natural nature connection. It's pure joy. And when you look back at the pictures you have taken its not just a picture of a bird or a bear or a moose or a bird or a mountain peak, its an experience that brings back the complete lifetime memory of the adventure and maybe even a life changing moment.

**Packages Include: Accommodations, meals, guides, necessary motorized equipment (boats, motors, vehicles), orientation and interpretive information.** Guests need to bring waterproof rain gear – pants and jacket, waterproof footwear, day pack sack, hat, clothing that can be layered – fleece is best, personal toiletries, cameras (preferably with a telephoto lens), memory cards/film, a good pair of binoculars.

**Not Included:** International airfares, staff appreciation gratuities (recommended 10% of package cost), liquor, applicable Canadian taxes, Wilderness Stewardship Levy, ground transport from/to Williams Lake airport is available - \$225.00 Cdn per vehicle – maximum 4 people.

**Payment & Cancellation Policy:** Bookings are confirmed with a 50% deposit with the balance due 60 days prior to arrival. In the event of cancellation 60 days prior to your scheduled arrival, and your reserved space can be rebooked, the deposit can be applied for an alternative date in the same season or the following season. All payments are final and nonrefundable. Payments May be made by bank transfer or personal cheque. Prices are subject to change without notice. Bookings confirmed with a deposit are guaranteed.

**Notes:** Ecotours – BC reserves the right to cancel or modify services as weather and local conditions warrant without notification in the interest of safety of all concerned. We view birds and wild animals in their natural habitat. The birds and animals are totally wild and unhabituated. This is natural wildlife viewing in their natural habitat. There are no viewing platforms and the animals are not enclosed in any wildlife preserve. With natural wildlife viewing there are a numerous variables that are out of our control including weather conditions, natural instincts and movements of the birds/wildlife, and human capabilities. We do not guarantee sightings, but do our best to give guests the best opportunities for viewing birds/wildlife and we have a very high success rate. Guests are required to sign a waiver of liability prior to participation in activities.

**Trip Planning –** Being prepared is an important part of maximizing your wilderness adventure and making it an unforgettable experience. At the time of booking we will provide you with a recommended equipment list to assist you with packing for your tour. Please note we do not accept liability for any circumstances which may result in the failure of your holiday arrangements which may be due to unusual or unforeseeable circumstances or events beyond our control or that we, our agents, suppliers and associates could have anticipated or avoided. We do not carry health, life, or personal property insurance for guest benefit.

**We strongly recommend you purchase trip cancellation insurance as well as extended medical insurance to cover life and health care risks while in Canada, emergency evacuation insurance (please ensure it includes wilderness activities) in case such need should arise, and personal property insurance to insure your personal belongings against loss.**

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