

# Loon Lessons

Uncommon Encounters with the Great Northern Diver

JAMES D. PARUK

**The nature of the common loon, from biology to behavior, from one of the world's foremost observers of the revered waterbird**

"The magnificent loon is a stirring symbol of wilderness, captivating even for people who have never seen one. This account by one of the world's top experts, authoritative and accurate but written in a lively, engaging style, opens up the mysteries of the loon's world and makes it more fascinating than ever."

—Kenn Kaufman, editor of the Kaufman Field Guide series

"If you love loons—as I do—this book will amaze and delight you. It's a marvelous, deep dive into these ancient, iconic birds: how they came to be as they are . . . it's also a moving and compelling story of a scientist's passion for the bird he loves and the extraordinary lengths to which he'll go to fully understand it."

—Jennifer Ackerman, author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Genius of Birds*

"James D. Paruk has written a wonderful, personal account of loon biology. Highly readable and informal, this book is for anyone who wants to learn more about loons."

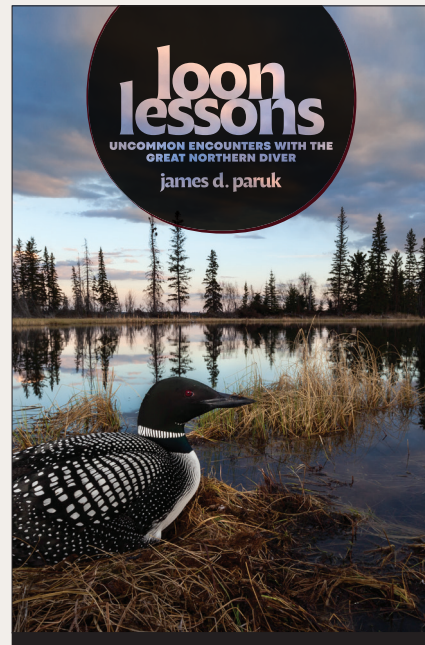
—Charles Walcott, former director, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology

"Anyone who has thrilled to the yodel of a loon on a moonlit lake will love this book."

—Scott Weidensaul, author of *A World on the Wing*

Even those who know the loon's call might not recognize it as a tremolo, yodel, or wail, and may not understand what each call means, how it's made, and why. For these and so many other mysteries, *Loon Lessons* provides evolutionary and ecological explanations that are curious and compelling. Written by one of the world's foremost experts on the subject, the book is a compendium of knowledge about the common loon and an engaging record of scientific sleuthing, documenting more than twenty-five years of research into the great northern diver.

James D. Paruk has observed and compared loons from Washington and Saskatchewan to the coasts of California and Louisiana, from high elevation deserts in Nevada to mountain lakes in Maine. Drawing on his extensive experience, a wealth of data, and well-established scientific principles, he considers every aspect of the loon, from its plumage and anatomy to its breeding, migration, and wintering strategies. Here, in the first detailed scientific account of the common loon in more than thirty years, Paruk describes its biology in an accessible and entertaining style that affords a deeper understanding of this beautiful and mysterious bird's natural history and annual life cycle.



**James D. Paruk** is associate professor of biology at St. Joseph's College in Standish, Maine, where he teaches ornithology, animal behavior, biology and anatomy, and physiology. He is adjunct professor of biology at the University of Southern Maine, where he holds an affiliate senior research position with Biodiversity Research Institute's Center for Loon Conservation. He was formerly at Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin, where he was chair of the research committee of Loonwatch, the flagship program at the Sigurd Olson Research Institute. For seven consecutive winters, he investigated the impacts of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill on loons off the southern coast of Louisiana with funding assistance from Earthwatch Institute.

#### NATURAL HISTORY

\$24.95 £19.99 Cloth/jacket ISBN: 978-1-5179-0940-6

\$24.95 Retail e-book ISBN: 978-1-4529-6365-5

MAY

256 pages 8 b&w illustrations, 26 color plates,

3 maps 6 x 9

