

## **Biological, Geographical, and Cultural Origins of the Loon Hunting Tradition in Carteret County, North Carolina**

Author(s): Storrs L. Olson, Horace Loftin, and Steve Goodwin

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## BIOLOGICAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, AND CULTURAL ORIGINS OF THE LOON HUNTING TRADITION IN CARTERET COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

STORRS L. OLSON,<sup>1,4</sup> HORACE LOFTIN,<sup>2</sup> AND STEVE GOODWIN<sup>3</sup>

**ABSTRACT.**—A tradition of shooting Common Loons (*Gavia immer*) for food and for bone fishing lures was established on Shackleford Banks, North Carolina, by the mid-19th century. This strongly ingrained tradition continued to be maintained, primarily by residents of nearby Harkers Island, when inhabitants of the banks moved inland about 1899. The practice probably arose because, on the east/west-tending Shackleford Banks, loons migrating northward in spring flew sufficiently low over land to be within shotgun range. Spring loon shooting, although illegal since 1918, grew to the point that dozens of hunters might be present on the banks on a given day. A strict law enforcement crackdown on this activity began in 1950, and the banks were effectively shut down for loon shooting. Loons continued to be shot opportunistically nearby, but a growing cultural intolerance of this practice brought the loon hunting tradition to an end. We document the existing memories and the few, scattered written sources concerning this unique local interaction between humans and birds. Received 30 March 2010. Accepted 23 June 2010.

On 6 May 1950, eleven federal and state wildlife enforcement officers staged a long planned, coordinated raid on Shackleford Banks, Carteret County, North Carolina, apprehending nearly 100 hunters, of whom 78 were formally charged with illegally shooting loons (Anonymous 1950) in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. This locally notorious event marked both the apogee and the rapid demise of a demographically narrow but strongly ingrained regional tradition, dating to the previous century, in which loons were hunted both for food and for use of their bones in making fishing lures. Loons do not usually factor so directly in human economy, nor does a similar loon hunting tradition seem to have evolved elsewhere, so we investigated whether some unique combination of biological and physiographical conditions may have given rise to the loon hunting tradition in Carteret County. We also attempted to document through interviews and published and unpublished local records, how the values and attitudes of one small community were molded by the perception of loons as an exploitable natural resource. The Carteret County loon hunting tradition has essentially been eradicated because of changes in the economic, legal, and ethical environment. Knowledge of this aspect of regional wildlife

heritage is in danger of vanishing, hence the importance of its historical documentation.

### METHODS

We interviewed residents of Carteret County, North Carolina, who had participated in loon hunting, or who had firsthand knowledge of some aspect of the circumstances under which loons were obtained or were directly employed for human use. We gathered numerous other sources that, although published, are of a very restricted or evanescent nature and mostly unavailable in major research libraries. These publications are held in the libraries of the Carteret County Historical Society, Morehead City, NC, and the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center, Harkers Island, NC; photocopies of pertinent portions, as well as all of our interview notes, have been filed in the Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

### GEOGRAPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The key component of this story is a physiological feature, Shackleford Banks, a long, 13.8 km (8.6 mi), narrow, barrier island with its northern shore separated from Harkers Island by Back Sound and whose southern shore is washed by the open Atlantic (Fig. 1). Unlike most Atlantic barrier islands that tend to run north to south, Shackleford Banks is oriented nearly east to west. The eastern end of the island is sheltered by Cape Lookout and lies somewhat farther south than the western end. This east/west orientation is of great significance when considering the spring migratory pathway of loons.

<sup>1</sup> Division of Birds, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, P. O. Box 37012, Washington, D.C. 20013, USA.

<sup>2</sup> Carteret County Historical Society, 1008 Arendell Street, Morehead City, NC 28557, USA.

<sup>3</sup> P. O. Box 2027, Beaufort, NC 28516, USA.

<sup>4</sup> Corresponding author; e-mail: olsons@si.edu

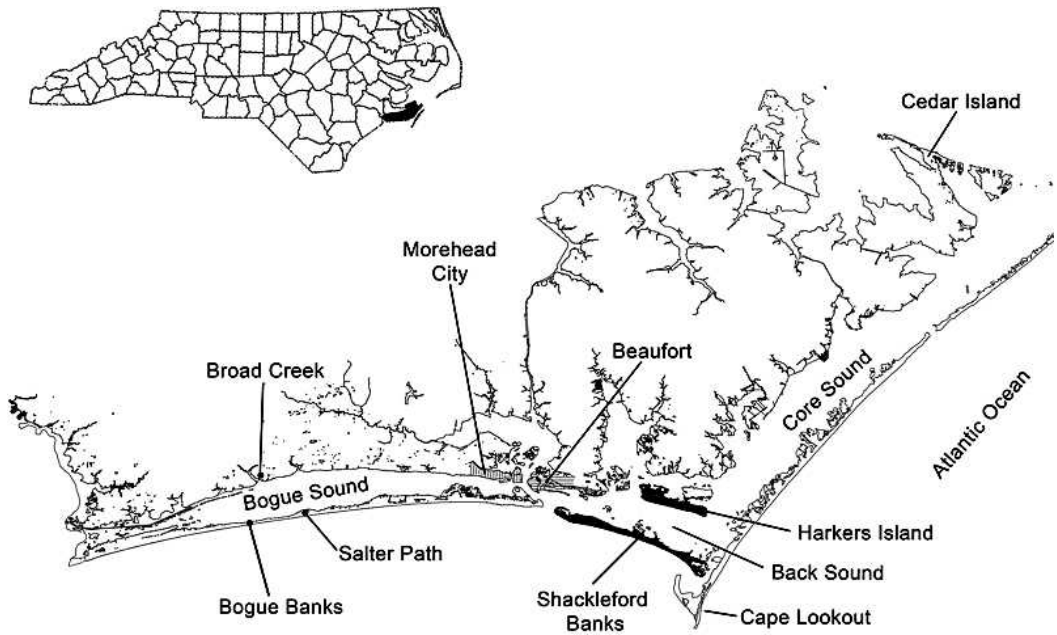


FIG. 1. Outline map of Carteret County, North Carolina, USA, showing localities mentioned in the text. Black emphasizes islands of particular importance in the history of loon hunting. Inset: Carteret County (in black) in relation to other counties of North Carolina.

Shackleford Banks was settled by the early 1700s and later came to have a considerable human population concentrated in two communities, Diamond City and Wade's Shore (or Wade's Hammock), whose inhabitants were mainly shore whalers who supplemented their livelihoods taking mullet (striped mullet *Mugil cephalus*) and porpoises (bottle-nosed dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*). A growing tendency for people to move off the banks to areas closer to commerce and other amenities was greatly accelerated in the late 19th century when the settlements were devastated, and Diamond City's high protective sand dune eroded away, by the great San Ciriaco hurricane that hit the outer banks on 17 August 1899. With the realization that the banks no longer provided a secure place to live, the Shacklefordians migrated inland, settling as far west as Salter Path on Bogue Banks, in the "Promise' Land" section of Morehead City, and to the northeast as far as Cedar Island. The majority, however, retreated to Harkers Island. Shackleford Banks was essentially uninhabited by 1902 and was used mainly as pasturage for hooved stock for most of the 20th century. Much of the preceding was summarized from Stick (1958). Shackleford Banks became part of the

Cape Lookout National Seashore in 1966 (Public Law 89-366).

#### LOON BIOLOGY AND BEHAVIOR AS PERTAINS TO HUNTING

The Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) is a large, fish-eating waterbird that breeds on fresh-water lakes of boreal forests across North America and winters at sea along both coasts as far south as Mexico. It is a heavy bird with males reaching a maximum of 7.6 kg (16.8 lbs) and averaging almost 6 kg (13 lbs), with females averaging 4.7 kg (10.3 lbs) (Evers et al. 2010). There is considerable variation in weight (Evers et al. 2010), but spring migrants would probably seldom weigh much less than 4.5 kg (10 lbs). Loons probably were taken opportunistically for food in any subsistence culture, but they were seldom included among game birds desired by North American commercial waterfowlers or sportsmen. Not only are loons difficult to hunt, but because they are fish-eaters, there is a perception that they would taste "fishy" and not be particularly desirable for the table, much as fish-eating mergansers (*Mergus*) are generally disdained.

Loons are foot-propelled diving birds that spend their entire lives at the surface of or

underneath the water, except when flying or incubating eggs. The Common Loon has a very high wing-loading and requires a long run across water to get airborne (Savile 1957, Evers et al. 2010). Common Loons do not experience an energetically costly wing molt on the lakes of their northern breeding areas, which freeze over soon after the young have fledged. Thus, molt is delayed until they arrive in coastal wintering areas where all flight feathers are molted simultaneously and the birds are flightless until the new feathers grow in (Woolfenden 1967). Loons are not only reluctant to fly at sea in winter because it is energetically costly, but for considerable periods of time they are incapable of flight. Loons are solitary or thinly distributed in winter and do not respond to decoys as do waterfowl. They also ride low on the surface of the water, making them a difficult target for hunters. Pursuit by boat, even rapid motorized craft, may be ineffectual because once a loon dives it is difficult to predict when and where it may briefly surface.

The shooting journal of George Henry Mackay (1929) exemplifies the difficulty of shooting loons under normal circumstances and their greater vulnerability during their northward flight in spring. Mackay was an avid hunter of waterfowl and shorebirds as well as an amateur ornithologist and conservationist who kept a detailed journal, including numbers of all species shot, of his hunting trips in New England from 1865 to 1922. Of the thousands of birds recorded in his diary, he shot only 22 loons, of which 19 were taken at West Island, Rhode Island, on dates spanning 13 to 25 April, when birds were evidently passing over land shortly after departing on their spring flight north.

In spring migration, loons fly northward either along the coast or overland (Evers et al. 2010), but once having left the water they gain altitude and fly far above shotgun range. Birds along most of the north/south-trending eastern Atlantic Coast reach such high altitudes over water, perhaps offshore out of sight of land, and are thus not susceptible to shooting.

Along Shackleford Banks, however, loons accumulate off the east/west running ocean shoreline in spring and take off directly over land where they can be intercepted by gunners. The original Shacklefordians took advantage of this flaw in the loons' usual immunity to put meat on their table. Harkers Island later became the focal point for the continuation of loon hunting because of its

proximity to the banks and the greater number of former Shackleford residents there (Fig. 1).

Many of the same conditions apply to Bogue Banks. Residents of the settlement of Salter Path in particular were known for shooting and relishing loons (Stephens 1984, Dudley 1993). Likewise, banksmen who settled on the mainland at Broad Creek crossed the sound to Bogue Banks for morning loon shoots near what is now known as Emerald Isle (Stephens 1984). We were told, however, that more loons cross at Shackleford Banks than farther west and this may come from a preference of loons to continue their northward flight over the waters of Core Sound, rather than over land.

#### LOON HUNTING IN CARTERET COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

We constructed the following history from interviews with local residents conducted in 2008 through 2010, augmented by a few scattered, generally recondite published sources. Most respondents' personal recollections date to the 1940s and early 1950s. Exactly when the loon hunting tradition arose is unrecorded, but one respondent's father told him that it was established by at least the mid-1800s. That seems reasonable considering that the practice must have been in place well before the Shackleford diaspora following the hurricane of 1899, as also suggested by Guthrie (1950). On Harkers Island, according to Paul and Paul (1996:13), the "sport... has been a part of their lives since the earliest days on the Island." Guthrie (1993:31) considered it "a favorite sport... since the conception of 'Diamond City' over a hundred years ago."

Loon hunting occurred in spring, beginning in March but mostly in April through mid-May. The usual procedure was for hunters to depart Harkers Island before daylight and leave their boats on the protected inner shore of Shackleford Banks. They dispersed on foot across the dunes to points along the Atlantic beach (Fig. 2) to await the flight of loons coming off the ocean that usually began at first light. Hunts occurred spontaneously as there was no deliberate organization. The recollection of one resident of Harkers Island was that shooting began so regularly at daybreak that "it was as good an alarm clock as you could ask for" and that at one point during World War II the shooting sounded like an invasion. The loons flew at their lowest altitude early in the morning and attained greater heights as the day progressed.



FIG. 2. Harkers Island resident Otis C. Willis (b. November 1918, d. June 1996) with the results of a loon hunt in 1943. Barely visible in the background in the photograph on the left is the Cape Lookout lighthouse and two boats proceeding northward through “The Drain” or Barden Inlet, which was created during the hurricane of September 1933. Thus, the photograph was taken at the easternmost end of Shackleford Banks. This photograph was incorporated as a patch entitled “The Loon Hunt” (illustrated in Amspacher 2009:94) in a community quilt on display in the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center, Harkers Island, North Carolina.

Wind direction had an effect on flights of loons. A northeast wind was favored for shooting because a head wind made it easier for loons to take off from the water and fly directly over the banks. A southwest tailwind would keep birds flying for a greater part of the day and was more advantageous for birds once airborne, but those birds would likely have had to take off farther out to sea and turn before crossing the banks.

We were told that certain hunters once sank barrels in the sand for concealment (or shelter?), but no blind was usually deemed necessary beyond perhaps crouching behind any convenient large object that might have washed ashore. Anti-submarine buoys that had broken loose were mentioned as one such object used during and immediately after WW II. At the height of the loon shooting, hunters spaced themselves so

regularly along the beach that there was hardly a place a loon could cross the banks without being in range of someone’s shotgun. At times hunters were forced to stand behind one another. Loons are large and tough, and heavy shot, usually #2 or #4, was used. Even experienced gunners could be foiled at times, as one former shooter remembered expending a box of 25 shotgun shells without bringing down a single loon, although he then bagged five with his next five shots.

The object was to shoot the birds so they would fall on the beach or in the dunes behind. Wounded birds that fell in the water might escape either by diving and swimming away, or, when dead, might float off if winds or currents did not bring them back to the beach. Birds were not field dressed and were taken back intact, which meant an arduous trek back over the island with a heavy

load. One respondent recalled a day, when he was too small to carry a gun, that he had accompanied his father and uncle to the banks on a morning when they shot and retrieved 18 loons. That was probably near the practical upper limit for two people to carry because 18 loons together would have weighed well over 90 kg (200 lbs). That day's take was transported to the boat dangling from a pole carried over the shoulders of the hunters, a common practice, save for one loon that the youngster dragged behind him. Later, on Harkers Island, the boy sold the birds for 50 cents apiece or whatever anyone would give him.

There was no fall loon shoot because birds would be flying high and sometimes at night when arriving from the north and crossing land. But once the local appetite for loons had been established, birds might be taken opportunistically, other than in spring, on the banks. One respondent told of becoming adept at shooting loons on the water with a pistol. Stephens (1984:124) reported that Bogue Islanders "used to go to the [Bogue] sound and firelight them in November," which would also involve shooting birds on the surface of the water, but in that case at night with aid of a lantern.

#### USES OF LOONS

*Food.*—The primary impetus for hunting loons was for food. For 19th century residents of Shackleford Banks who had survived a winter on salt fish, root crops, and such grits and flour as they may have received in trade for mullet and whale oil in the previous months, a loon represented a sizeable chunk of fresh meat as well as a welcome change in diet. Loons do not migrate north until well after most ducks and geese have left for breeding areas and the "hardy group of fisher-folk" on Harkers Island "would rather have a 'loon-in-the-pot' than the more popular goose, canvasback, or red-head duck" (Paul and Paul 1996:13–14). We made a point of asking whether cormorants (*Phalacrocorax*) were ever shot for food. It was admitted that a cormorant would probably be just as good to eat as a loon but they were not taken.

One of Stephens' (1984:124) sources said that "I love the skin the best in the world" and Dudley (1993:137), whose source may have been the same, mentions that the birds were sometimes "picked." The prospect of plucking a loon is daunting and would require a great amount of work, so that a person would really have to desire

the skin to go to the effort. Fat is what gives any kind of meat most of its flavor and most of a loon's fat is either attached to the skin or sequestered among the viscera. A loon with the skin on would likely be much more fishy-tasting than one that had the skin and feathers removed, although Dudley (1993:137) condescendingly avers that "fishy taste [is] barely discernable to the natives [of Harkers Island and Salter Path]." By far the greater number of loons prepared for cooking were skinned and usually only the breast and thighs were consumed. We have been assured that the end result did not taste fishy.

We inquired about loons of an acquaintance who came originally from Cedar Island and who had returned to Carteret County in retirement. He related that he had never shot a loon but would know exactly what to do if someone gave him one, and he proceeded to describe the entire process from carcass to stew bowl. Jocularly known as "Harkers Island turkey" (Amspacher 1987:217), additional sources for loon recipes (e.g., Stephens 1984, Amspacher 1987) are basically similar. The meat is soaked in water with salt or baking soda, browned in fried-out salt pork, and stewed to a thick gravy with some combination of onions, potatoes, rutabagas, and cornmeal dumplings. The process, which was at times done outside in large iron pots, would usually take most of a day.

*Fishing Lures.*—A secondary, but once important use of loons, was for fishing lures made from the bones, which were used for trolling with handlines, mainly for bluefish (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) and Spanish mackerel (*Scomberomorus maculatus*). H. Loftin remembers that in the 1930s loon bone lures were almost the only ones used for trolling in the Beaufort area. In addition to bones from birds shot for food, during WWII when tankers along the east coast were being sunk by German U-boats, bones for lures also came from loons that died from spilled oil and were cast up on the beach.

Almost all of our sources, both oral and published (e.g., Dudley 1993:137, Guthrie 1993, Paul and Paul 1996) insist that leg bones were used for the fishing lures and it seems from the descriptions that the tibiotarsus (drumstick) was meant. The femur of a loon is extremely short and curved, and the tarsometatarsus (foot) is flat and solid, so that neither of those bones would have been useful. That wing bones were also used is evident from the report that: "Watermen also



FIG. 3. Bones (A, B) of Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) and trolling lures (C–E) made from loon bones. A: complete left tibiotarsus and fibula; B: complete right humerus; C, D: from Dudley (1993:136); E: from collection of Roy H. Lewis, Stacy, North Carolina (photograph by J. R. Humphrey). The notch in D is clearly from hook wear.

want the wing and leg bones of the loons. They bleach them in the sun and cut them into 2 ½-inch [63 mm] lengths for fishing lures. The hollow bones are sometimes the only lures that will catch bluefish or Spanish mackerel” (Dudley 2001: 160). Furthermore, Dudley (2001:165), relates that “in olden days the hunters sold the leg and wing bones to Cheek’s Hardware in Morehead City for 10 cents a piece.” The only loon bone lures that we have been able to trace (Fig. 3 C–E) were clearly not made from any leg bone. They are all simple, completely terete cylinders that can only have been made from the humerus, the upper wing bone (Fig. 3B). The bone was beveled at one or both ends and the only one we examined personally (Fig. 3E) appeared to have been pared down to a smaller diameter. These bone cylinders were wired to a hook and the wire was said to have been twisted at the leading end of the bone in such a way as to give it a movement under water that was attractive to fish. An elderly resident of Harkers Island who agreed to demonstrate how to make a lure from a loon bone protested that the leg bones presented to him were too small for the

purpose, lending further support to the available evidence that it was the humerus that was fashioned into lures. It is possible that the tibiotarsus was also used, as its flattened proximal surfaces (Fig. 3A) would probably have imparted an erratic motion under water that might have been attractive to fish. Such a lure would have had thinner walls and been more subject to splitting than one made from a humerus, which may account for why none seems to have survived if they ever existed. The walls of the humerus of a loon are much heavier and denser than in any bone of a duck or goose, which, had they been used for lures, would probably not have lasted long before being broken.

Following the demise of loon hunting, the supply of loon bones was greatly diminished and following WW II, loon bone lures were replaced by metal spoons and other trolling devices. Loon bone lures have now nearly completely disappeared from tackle boxes and tool sheds of Harkers Islanders.

#### LORE AND LEGENDS OF LOONS IN CARTERET COUNTY

It is natural that an activity that was such an integral part of local traditions as loon hunting would be incorporated into local storytelling and literature. More or less apocryphal stories about loon hunting on Shackleford Banks are still in circulation and may be recognized in several variants. One involves a newcomer to the sport who was taken to the banks one morning and witnessed a loon flying parallel to the beach and having each hunter along the line shoot feathers out of it until it kept on flying off into the distance nearly nude, provoking the hope that it would freeze to death. A version of this is told by Paul and Paul (1996). As loons were normally shot flying over the island, not parallel to it, and loons are not prone to losing many feathers when shot, this is likely a carryover from some dove hunter’s tale. A similar anecdote that may be related involves a champion skeet shooter being invited to try his prowess on the banks who utterly failed to bring down a loon. In contrast with those failures, another story concerns a hunter returning from the banks to Harkers Island with a large haul. He repaired to the local movie theater, where he knew a large portion of the population would be, and announced that he had a skiff full of loons if anybody wanted one. Whereupon, the

theater emptied as people made haste for the skiff to get their loon.

Shooting and eating loons has also been incorporated into local humor, such as the joke about the man who was arrested and confessed to having shot a “seagull.” Before sentencing, the judge asked the defendant why he wanted to shoot a gull in the first place, and the answer was that if it was cooked right it was “nigh bout goods a loon” (Williamson 2009:44).

Even poetic inspiration has been invoked in loon lore. We were told by several residents of Harkers Island that they recalled a high school boy in the 1950s who had written what we were first told was a story but were later assured was a poem about loon hunting, but from the perspective of the loon. We have not been able to trace a copy of said poem but it must have been an evocative one for its existence to be recalled more than half a century later. A more concrete literary contribution to the subject is a mystery novel, *Shooting at Loons* (Maron 1994), set in Carteret County, in which the predilection of certain Harkers Island fishermen to poach loons illegally and make a stew of them is mentioned more than once.

#### THE END OF THE LOON HUNTING TRADITION

It became illegal to take or possess loons in 1918 with the adoption of the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Knowledge and enforcement of the law would doubtless have been scant and sporadic at first and the hardship years of the Great Depression, followed by World War II, would have made a limited local penchant for loon meat seem like a paltry Federal offense. But afterwards the Shackleford loon hunt became a victim of its own success. Too many people were participating in the hunt and were being joined to some extent by “sportsmen” from “off,” whose main interest in loons would have been in extending their season to be afield with a gun. This created an additional problem of birds left dead on the beach by shooters who did not share the locals’ appetite for stewed loon. Such conspicuous illegal activity could no longer be ignored.

In the late 1940s an undercover wildlife agent settled on Harkers Island with his family, where he came to be trusted by local residents, who conversed with him about fishing and hunting, including loon shooting. It was later perceived that his main purpose on Harkers Island, however,

had been to set up the inevitable raid on the Shackleford Banks loon shoot (e.g., Guthrie 1993), a perception that was reinforced by the fact that he left the island before or immediately after the raid. The raid occurred on Saturday, 6 May 1950, and was led by Robert Halstead, a Federal agent of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, who was joined by “Andrew Jones, chief state game protector” and nine other state agents. Some 100 loon hunters were “rounded up,” but only 78 were actually charged, of whom “approximately 70” were from Harkers Island. Fifty loons were seized as evidence and Jones “estimated that 200 more were killed.” We were told that some 25 or 30 other hunters escaped, which does not seem unlikely given the low ratio of agents to hunters. One of our sources, a teenager at the time, was among the escapees. The agents estimated that hunters were scattered “150 feet [45.7 m] apart for a distance of almost two miles [3.2 km]” and fired from “2000 to 2500 shots” in the first 15 min after the first shot at 0430 hrs. The math does not add up but it is clear there was a lot of shooting by a lot of people on that day. Decades later, Halstead provided his somewhat dramatized recollection of that day, complete with a photograph of 10 of the agents (the 11th was presumably the photographer) with some of the confiscated loons (Dudley 2001:159–163) but we have taken all portions in quotes above from a more immediate source (Anonymous 1950).

Those hunters who were convicted in federal court were fined \$25, which is equivalent to about \$225 in 2009 dollars, an amount that would have made an impression on those who had to earn that \$25 by their labors on the waters. One may imagine that \$1,750 of the entire 1950 economy of Harkers Island had a much more severe impact than would be conveyed simply by converting that figure into its modern spending power.

In retrospect, the May 1950 raid was a great deterrent success for law enforcement. There may have been no particular stigma (in fact perhaps the opposite) for most of those apprehended as loon shooters in Carteret County, but the public could no longer be unaware that such activity was egregiously illegal. The enforcers kept up their vigilance on Shackleford Banks for the next 2–3 years, after which any semblance of the loon shoots of old was abandoned.

Loon shooting persisted and probably still goes on to a limited extent. Hunting on Shackleford



Banks required leaving one's boat on the sound side to hunt on the ocean side, and, as a federally protected reserve, shooting there became too risky. But the occasional loon would still be taken along the "island shore," meaning the south shore of Harkers Island. One such incident resulted in a falling loon hitting a power line on the way down and knocking out electricity for part of the island, which "did not go over" well among some of those in positions of authority at the time. Even after the law had come down hard in 1950, residents of Salter Path and elsewhere on Bogue Banks continued to "sneak to the beach hills and elsewhere in an attempt to get a loon.... Some of them didn't kill many the whole spring. But if they killed two or three, they divided them with their family connections. It was a big thing. They called in their sister or father or mother or something like that" and still do so "if they can get a hold of them" (Stephens 1984:124). Dudley (1993:137) reported that at "Salter Path, the hunters sat on high knolls or dunes anticipating loon flights over low-lying areas or swashes. With the pressure of development and high-rise condominiums, this practice has nearly ceased. Today, loon hunters position themselves around their homes, or wherever they can obtain visibility of loon flights, and the shooting continues. Gun shots are still heard, and game wardens still abound." Given the pace of development on Bogue Banks since that passage was written, the incidence of surreptitious loon shooting there has by now probably all but vanished.

#### EPILOGUE

An impassioned, even lyrical, paean evoking the emotions and near ritual importance of the loon hunt was printed in the *Carteret County News-Times* shortly after the great raid of May 1950 (Guthrie 1950). Guthrie contended that the laws that overregulated hunting had come into effect because of "fancy" "upstate" sportsmen, whereas the Carteret County loon shooters participated in the "only exciting sport left untouched by the law. Their father had done it, their grandfather before, even before their forefather had moved from the outer banks. You weren't a man until you had shot a loon." Hours before daylight, fathers would rouse sons too small to carry a gun from their beds to cross the sound to the banks and participate in the Harkers Island rites of spring. In the later days of shooting on the banks, "the excitement of the forbidden hunt [would add] zest

to the sport" (Paul and Paul 1996:13). One of our respondents, now a pillar of the Harkers Island community, stirring up recollections over 60 years old, admitted that although he did not really know what it was like to be addicted to anything, he thought that he had been a loon hunting addict. The motivation was not the thought of a meal, it was the uniqueness of "the sport."

Old traditions die hard, but shooting and eating loons as part of the economy and culture of coastal Carteret County is now a nearly forgotten part of the past. The Common Loon has become the object of such romantic and mythical sentimentality in most of North America (Evers et al. 2010) that there could now be no tolerance for even a small unsanctioned harvest of this species. The day is not far away when no one on Harkers Island will recall the taste of stewed loon, just as there is almost no one alive who remembers how to fashion a trolling lure from a loon bone. This interesting and unique local tradition between humans and birds now exists almost only as a historical phenomenon that deserves to go on record.

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