

The common loon is the state bird of Minnesota. It lives on large lakes and wetlands in northern North America in the summer and on lakes, rivers, and coastlines in the winter. The common loon is glossy, dark-green with lots of white patterns on its back. It is white underneath and has a long, sharp bill. It has bright red eyes. In the winter, loons lose their summer plumage and become a drab brown above and white below. Although it looks like a duck, the loon is totally unrelated to ducks. It is much larger than most ducks and its legs are placed in the back of its body, which makes walking on land a very difficult and awkward task.

Loons are named for their eerie calls, which often echo across the northern lakes at night or early in the morning. Sometimes, several loons call at once producing a chorus of yodels. The common loon is sometimes called the great northern diver because it can dive as deep as 200 feet in search of fish.

1. Since Minnesota's state bird is the common loon, what is probably true about Minnesota?

- A. It has a lot of lakes and wetlands
- B. It has a lot of deserts
- C. It has a lot of land
- D. It has a lot of mountains

2. The common loon...

- A. is closely related to ducks.
- B. looks nothing like ducks.
- C. is unrelated to ducks.
- D. has legs like a duck.

3. Which of the following would be unlikely?

- A. A common loon diving 150 feet under the surface of a lake
- B. A common loon swimming in a small pond
- C. A common loon floating in the ocean during the winter
- D. A common loon that looks brownish in the winter

4. Read the descriptions below. Which describes the common loon?

- A. The common loon is a glossy-green above and white below with lots of white patterns. It has a short, but sharp bill, and its legs are placed far back on its body
- B. The common loon is a glossy-green above and white below with lots of white patterns. It has a long, sharp bill, bright white eyes, and legs placed far back on its body
- C. The common loon is brown above and white below in the winter. It has a long, sharp bill and legs placed far back on its body
- D. The common loon is white above and brown below in the winter. It has a long, sharp bill and legs placed far back on its body