

Direct observation of the flight speed of the Common Loon.— In March, 1948, while flying a Piper Cub J-3 about 17 miles north of Charlotte, North Carolina, and 3 miles east of the Catawba River, at an altitude of 1200 feet, I sighted a Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) crossing diagonally in front of the plane at a distance of about 50 yards—a distance at which the identification of the summer plumaged bird was unquestionable. I immediately turned to follow the loon, which went into a shallow dive (about 15 degrees). Although full throttle was given the plane, the loon was slowly pulling away when such a low altitude was reached that the chase had to be abandoned. The indicated air speed of the plane during the first part of the shallow dive (45 to 60 seconds) was 90 miles per hour. During this period the distance between the loon and the plane remained approximately constant or increased slightly. The airspeed indicator of the plane was checked and proved to be accurate within plus or minus 10 miles per hour at that speed. It may thus be concluded that the true air speed of this loon while being pursued was approximately 80 to 100 miles per hour.—JAMES A. PITTMAN, *Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston 14, Massachusetts, February 24, 1953.*