

WOLF'S EYE



Isle Royale Natural History Association Newsletter

Fall 1990

Membership News

By Ellen Croll

Our thanks to all of you who renewed your memberships, and a special welcome to all first time members—several of whom chose to join as Life Members. Membership has grown to 823 (289 Individual, 254 Family members, 84 Supporting and 196 Life members). It is especially encouraging to note that there was an increase of 25 Supporting Memberships over this time last year, with many choosing year after year to “support” us in this manner. Each dollar you contribute helps us with our publishing projects.

I recently received two letters, portions of which I will share with you.

“Enclosed is my membership fee. I got lucky and just happened to be on the Island at the same time as your annual meeting and enjoyed both the folks I met at the wonderful barbeque...And, I’ve made plans for returning to the Island at the same time next year...so will be at the membership’s annual meeting. I’m real excited about the counted cross stitch kit available. I have fond memories of finding a few greenstones on the beach by the lighthouse. So until then...”

S&B Kievit, Fennville, Michigan

“On Saturday I received the items I ordered and also my membership card. I enjoy looking through the back issues of Wolf’s Eye and was inspired to write thanks to the

letter from Tom Hall in the winter 1989. It suggested two things to me.

First, why not invite new Life Members to write something about what Isle Royale means to them, not necessarily for publication, but to get some thoughts from people who obviously love the place.

Secondly, how about a survey of all members about their most favored camping place? Unlike Tom, who has used the same route for eight years, I hiked all the trails. My past two trips have been canoe oriented and I still have areas along the north shore that I want to get to.

I agree with Tom’s high regard for the Todd Harbor camp, but I submit for additional

consideration the following:

Huginn Cove, Lake Desor North, Birch Island, Moskey Basin, Lake Richie canoe site, and Wood Lake. Perhaps the best spot is the one where you are that day, or where something special happened.

I would also like to submit my candidate for the the worst camp area: Lane Cove. We did it from land, not water. It was dark & dank and the hike out, back up to the Greenstone, is not a great joy.

I’m looking forward to enjoying my membership. My wife is giving it to me for my 62 birthday present. She wanted to know what I wanted most and that was it.”

Paul T. Brenner, Van Wert, Ohio

Welcome Life Members:

Kathy & David Raeside, Norman, OK
David M. Bousfield, Portage, MI
Paul T. Brenner, Van Wert, OH
Shirley Klapperich, Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Donations

Towards the Work of the Association:

Charles R. White, Auburn, AL
David & Mary Caskey, Rockford, IL
Muriel Otto, Grand Portage, MN
(In Memory of George B. Caruso)
Phil & Susanne Beilfuss, Bridgeport, MI
(In Memory of William Templeton)
John & Phyllis Titmus, Hendersonville, NC
(Who donated \$138.50 in useable postage stamps)

Special Recognition

*To our Supporting Members
contributing three or more years*

Mark Anderson, Lansing, MI
Mrs. Paul H. Caskey, Rockford, IL
John & Barbara Clark, Hancock, MI
Alice Downs, Detroit, MI
Tony Gambrel, Southgate, MI
Peter A. Jordan, St. Paul, MN
Georgia & Hugh Makens, Grand Rapids, MI
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J. Laurie Snell, Hanover, NH
Judy & Conrad Swanson, Brandon, FL
John & Phyllis Titmus, Hendersonville, NC.

Lava Flows

By Bruce Weber

Our summer membership meeting was highlighted by the illustrated talk "Lava Flows of Isle Royale" given by Dr. Bill Rose, IRNHA member and head of the Geology Department of Michigan Technological University. Too often we forget the volcanic origin of our verdant island. Among the fascinating facts Dr. Rose shared was:

- Isle Royale lavas are 1.1 billion years old, and part of the "mid-continent gravity high"—a system of dense rocks that extends all the way from Lake Superior to beneath Kansas.
- The lavas are mostly "basalts", which is the most abundant rock on our planet even though it's not the most common rock on the earth's surface. Our lavas are part of an accumulation of layers five miles thick that have been faulted and tilted. The layers are now exposed on the Keweenaw as well as on Isle Royale.
- Through magnetic testing, it's known that the earth's surface has shifted; a billion years ago the equator ran through Hudson Bay and Alaska and

Isle Royale was probably where New York is now.

- The mid-continent rift from which Isle Royale's lavas poured would have formed an ocean basin had volcanic activity not suddenly stopped after a few million years. Physically, our terrain resembled what's happening now in Iceland.
- The Greenstone Flow, which forms the ridge which is the backbone of Isle Royale, is the thickest single lava flow known on earth; it's greater than 400 feet thick on the island, but elsewhere it reaches a thickness of 1200 feet. The Greenstone Flow contained enough lava to cover the entire United States seven inches deep.

Dr. Rose hopes to do future geologic research on Isle Royale, particularly to interpret the diverse physical features of the Isle Royale flow and correlate this with exposed flows on the Keweenaw and north shore of Minnesota.

Our Condolences

We were saddened to hear of the death of Ingeborg Holte, long time resident of Wright Island in Siskiyou Bay, and author of the popular book "Ingeborg's Isle Royale." She passed away June 3 in Grand Marais, Minnesota. She was the daughter of fisherman Sam Johnson and eighty of her 89 years were spent on Isle Royale. She married Ed Holte in 1928 and continued to live at Isle Royale until the late 1970s. She considered herself more than a housewife. She played piano and concertina and was an active painter. In 1984 she wrote the book that bears her name, about her life at an island commercial fishery.

We have two other deaths to report. Sally Caskey, Tobin Harbor life lessee, died in Rockford, Illinois. She spent several summers with her family (the Connollys) living in tents in the cove near Scoville Point and moved to Cliff Crest Cottage when it was built in 1914.

George Caruso, active in the Civilian Conservation Corps during the park's formative years, also passed on this year. He, like the others, always had a love for Isle Royale.

NOTES

- ☐ Effective August 1, the Coast Guard granted the NPS a 25 year lease for Passage and Rock of Ages lighthouses. Previously, they gave a lease on the Isle Royale lighthouse at Menagerie island. Meanwhile, resumption of interpretive trips to Passage Island lighthouse on the tourboat Sandy is being considered for next season.
- ☐ The small boat study progressed well this summer and much was learned about our boat resource. It turns out there are approximately 70 old small wooden boats on Isle Royale and 38 of them now have had detailed measurements recorded.
- ☐ The end of the five year archeology study has come and more than 200 sites have been documented and investigated—including many habitation sites. This doubles the number of archeologic sites previously known on Isle Royale. Many of these will probably be included in a thematic nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (the nation's honor roll of cultural sites). The archeologists now know that many different prehistoric groups used Isle Royale over the past 4,500 years.
- ☐ Author Jim DuFresne backpacked and kayaked throughout the park in September in preparing the 2nd edition of his popular guidebook "Foot Trails and Water Routes of Isle Royale." The publisher, Mountaineers Press of Seattle, expects this update to be ready for sale in June.

The following recipe card was prepared by one of the park's seasonal rangers for his evening program on geology. It shows some of the ingenuity the ranger staff puts into interpreting the complex natural history of Isle Royale.

RECIPE for Isle Royale National Park

1. In a large bowl, pour alternate layers of lava and sand.
2. Allow to harden and age (Be prepared to wait several hundred million years).
3. Tip layered mixture at a slight angle, exposing edges.
4. Scrape with large blocks of ice. (This should be continued for 1-2 million years).
5. Surround with water, sprinkle with seeds, and wait 10 thousand years.
6. Enjoy at your leisure.

Isle Royale

Natural History Association

87 N. Ripley St., Houghton, MI 49931

A nonprofit membership organization that assists Isle Royale National Park by publishing and selling educational materials to park visitors. Gifts, bequests, memorials and memberships are U.S. tax deductible.

Membership Categories:

Single Membership \$5.00

Husband and Wife Membership \$8.00

*Supporting Membership \$35.00

*Life Membership \$150.00

**Corporate Sponsor \$1,000.00

**Corporate Patron \$5,000.00

(Life memberships may be paid for in two annual installments of \$75.00 each)

*Includes a gift copy of Isle Royale—Moods, Magic and Mystique.

**Includes a premium gift of a beautifully framed photo of an Isle Royale scene (16" x 20")

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Peregrine Falcon

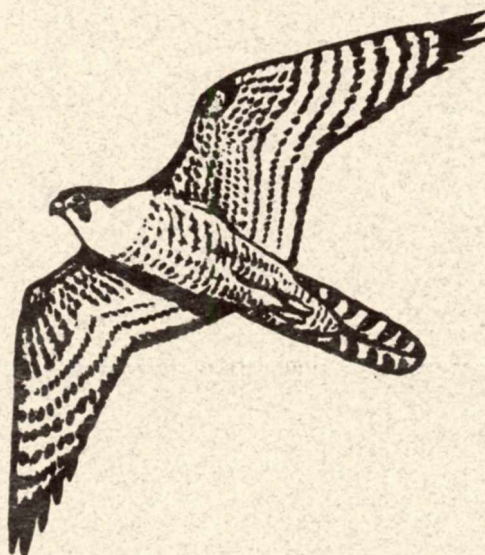
By Steve Fetting, Resource Ranger

Our program to reestablish peregrine falcon at Isle Royale went successfully this summer. Of 18 birds released, 16 birds reached independence. By now we presume all have departed the island for their winter wanderings.

This is the fourth year of releasing peregrine falcons at Isle Royale National Park. In 1987 and again in 1988, five falcons were released from the Feldtmann Ridge hack site, near the southwest end of the park. A male falcon from the 1987 release returned to Feldtmann Ridge in August 1988. Because of the possibility of returning falcons, a release site near Blake Point, at the northeast end of the park, was used in 1989. Ten falcons were released from the Blake Point site.

Sybella, a female peregrine falcon released from Feldtmann Ridge in 1988, returned to nest in Milwaukee for the second year. Last year she laid three eggs and one hatched. This year she laid four eggs which all hatched. All four grew into strong young females which successfully reached independence and have not been seen in the area for over a month.

Regionally, peregrine falcons are doing quite well considering that the



breeding population was completely eliminated during the 1960's. In 1989 there were 12 nesting pairs in the midwest with 9 pairs successfully producing young. This summer there were at least 17 nesting pairs with a total of 33 young produced. Three pairs nested in Minnesota along Lake Superior's north shore. Michigan's Upper Peninsula also

had three pairs; one at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore along the Lake Superior cliffs, one in the Trap Hills of the Ottawa National Forest, and one in the Porcupine Mountains.

Isle Royale has been part of an interagency effort to restore peregrines to Upper Michigan. Because of the nesting falcons in the Upper Peninsula, we released 18 falcons at Isle Royale this summer, including 12 that were originally scheduled for the Upper Peninsula. We used both the Blake Point and Feldtmann Ridge sites.

In addition to our releases, Ontario released 10 falcons this summer on the Sibley Peninsula. (Ontario released 16 falcons last year near Thunder Bay.)

The onset of fall migration has brought an abundance of other raptors to Feldtmann Ridge. Merlins, kestrels, broad-winged hawks and Cooper's hawks have all been involved in tail chases with our young peregrines. One immature goshawk avoided being chased by showing up near the box while all the falcons were away.

Other bird news: one bald eagle and three osprey successfully hatched this summer at Isle Royale.

Thimbleberry Galls

Scientists at Michigan Tech launched an investigation into the health and well-being of one of Upper Michigan's most sought-after summer delicacies—the wild thimbleberry.

Drs. Fred H. Erbisch, director of research services, and Ken J. Kraft, associate professor in the school of forestry and wood products and in biological sciences, say they received numerous reports from berry pickers around the Keweenaw Peninsula that indicate a marked decline in thimbleberry production. The Keweenaw is Upper Michigan's most famous thimbleberry belt and annually



attracts berry pickers from across the Upper Great Lakes region.

Erbisch and Kraft say that galls—large swellings on the plant stems—may be to blame for the perceived decline in the number of plants and berries produced this season. The Michigan

Tech biologists say the galls are caused by small wasps which feed inside the galls during their immature stages and then emerge from the plants as adults the following spring. Up to seventy wasp larvae have been found in a gall. This feeding activity within the stem can cause plants to wither and die.

Park Naturalist, Bruce Weber reports increased gall abundance on Isle Royale this summer, extending from one end of the island to the other. "Once we learned to recognise these galls and distorted stems, we began to see them in the interior as well as the outer islands", said Weber.

IRNHA Moose/Wolf/Loon T-Shirt

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Order by mail from IRNHA or stop by Park Headquarters.
Make checks payable to "IRNHA". Add \$3.00 for mailing;
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Isle Royale Natural History Association
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Houghton, Michigan 49931

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