

# WOLF'S EYE



Isle Royale Natural History Association

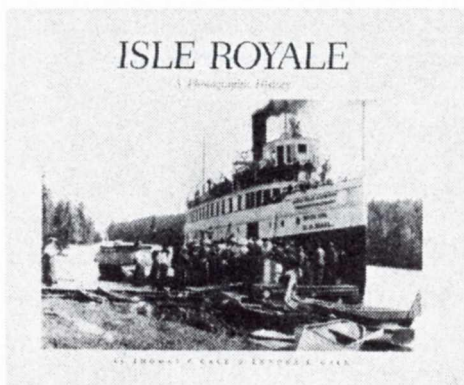
Fall 1995

## NEW BOOKS ON ISLE ROYALE

### *Isle Royale: A Photographic History*

Thomas and Kendra Gale

**Hardcover \$34.95 Paper \$24.95**



Tom Gale has had a long relationship with Isle Royale. His family has a life lease cabin in Tobin Harbor, a place where Tom learned to love the Island.

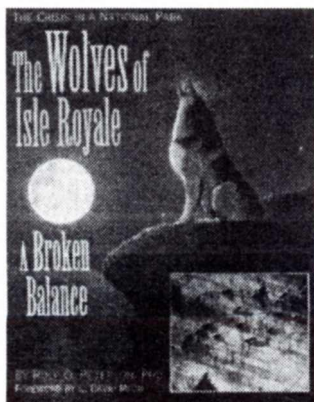
It took three years for Tom and his wife Kendra to collect the more than 160 photos and maps to make this work possible. The book covers the history of Isle Royale from early exploration in the 1600s to the birth of the national park. Each of the six chapters includes a narrative on different facets of the park followed by photographs. All photos are well-captioned to highlight their importance to Isle Royale. Sections on Douglas Houghton, Rock of Ages Lighthouse, the America, and the Rock Harbor Lodge provide an added insight to their unique significance to the Island. The book is a must for anyone who is interested in Isle Royale. 160 pages.

### *The Wolves of Isle Royale: A Broken Balance*

Rolf Peterson

**Hardcover**

**\$29.50**



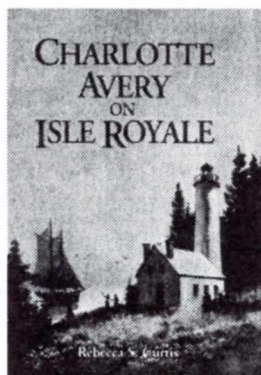
Isolated by the chilled waters of Lake Superior, Isle Royale National Park with its wilderness ecosystem is an ideal living laboratory for wildlife biologists. For 35 years, this island has been the site of the longest running study of any wild mammal. Author/wildlife biologist Rolf Peterson has the longest association (25 years) with this unique study. The Wolves of Isle Royale is his compelling and fascinating first-hand account of the Isle Royale dynamic. Illustrated with over 100 of the author's extraordinary photographs (including wolves hunting, bringing down moose, and wolves attacking other wolves), the vivid, sometimes violent, images complement the insightful and often eloquent text. Rolf is known worldwide for his wolf research. Although widely published, his fame usually makes him the subject rather than the author of articles. His photographs have been published in National Geographic, Audubon, and National Wildlife. 160 pages.

### *Charlotte Avery on Isle Royale*

Rebecca Curtis

**Hardcover**

**\$14.95**



After a dangerous brush with the Chicago fire of 1871, young Charlotte journeys with her family to Isle Royale where her father works for an island mining operation. During her year-long stay, she meets colorful local characters who introduce her to the natural beauty and rich heritage of this wild and isolated island. She learns about life and the world around her through island adventures and everyday life.

This delightful tale, some of which is taken from diaries of Isle Royale women, and in the Midwestern tradition of the "Little House" books, will inspire anyone to discover the rich history and natural wonders of Isle Royale. 192 pages.

**TO ORDER CALL:  
1-800-678-6925**

## A 1995 UPDATE

I am pleased to be able to report to all of you about our summer's activities and some upcoming issues. In spite of very curtailed numbers of seasonal personnel and a limited budget for supplies and materials, we had a good summer. We were able to recruit very good seasonal personnel, outstanding volunteers, and members of the Student Conservation Association for visitor services. Our visitation has been generally high and our weather has been very warm and humid.

To update you on specific issues:

\* Isle Royale Employees Housing Initiative -- through the highly successful efforts of the initiative undertaken by the Secretary of the Interior and the National Park Foundation, volunteers Carol Hicks of Northern Michigan University,

Don Paulosky of the Superiorland Home Builders Association, Bill Martin of First Martin Corporation, John Siller, and many more volunteers and donors, we have erected duplex units at Malone Bay and Amygdaloid Island, and a new log ranger station at Malone Bay. We expect to continue this effort in subsequent years with Windigo being the area of the next emphasis.

\* Status of the wolf -- The information provided by Dr. Rolf Peterson is that at the end of the winter there were 14 wolves on Isle Royale. Pups were born in two packs. This winter will tell us how many pups survived.

\* General Management Plan -- If funding is provided (we have no budget authorized by Congress yet) we will begin serious work on the Plan this year. This will include working group involvement and questionnaires or surveys to interested individuals. The NHA Board has authorized us to utilize the membership list for mailings concerning the GMP.

\* Solid Waste Management Plan -- We are currently writing an environmental assessment on this Plan as formulated by the contract engineering firm. A complete assessment of alternatives will lead to a preferred alternative for the National Park Service. Necessary steps for funding and implementation will follow.

\* Transportation services -- We are currently advertising all transportation services for the island (except for the Ranger III). This is done routinely at the end of the permit period for these services.

\* Annual meeting -- At the request of the park, your Board graciously changed the date of the annual meeting so that it would not occur during the extremely busy period of mid-July to mid-August. It is very difficult for the park and the concessionaire to provide logistics and support for the meeting at the "traditional time." I hope that you all can be with us the weekend of July 13, 1996.

I am sure that all of you have seen media reports of the state of the National Park Service. Generally, the backlog of construction and maintenance, and shortage of funding for operations is shared Service-wide. This is the reason that many superintendents are becoming "en-

trepreneurial" and asking the private sector to help with critical needs. In this spirit, the Board of the NHA has volunteered to publish a catalog of needs for the park. This is most appreciated. It will be coming to you after we at the park have a chance to catch our collective breaths after the busy summer and after a retrenchment in Houghton for the winter. Also, I do not think that Isle Royale National Park is in any danger of being closed or de-authorized. It is, after all, arguably the finest wilderness area in the lower 48 states. In my opinion it is also the finest park, from a purely park values standpoint, that I have had the privilege of serving in. Make no mistake, though: this park and all parks will be exactly what an informed citizenry insists that they be, through your contacts with your elected representatives.

*Douglas A. Barnard, Superintendent,  
Isle Royale National Park*

## The Little Owl

**A story by Stanley Sivertson  
and recorded by Matt Welter  
7/19/90**

Stanley Sivertson was out in his boat, one day, cutting his fishing lines. He had 700 feet to go. That's when he started to hear some ruckus. The gulls were making a lot of noise and diving at something about half a mile away. What was it, he wondered, those crazy gulls were diving at? Stanley could see it was perched in a spruce, close to the shore, and from its outline it looked like a small owl. The gulls kept on diving at it, but just missed it with each swoop.

Stanley continued cutting his lines, but kept an eye on all of the activity.

Suddenly, one of the gulls hit the owl and it was knocked into the water. Stanley saw it flapping in the water, trying to fly, but it wasn't getting anywhere. The gulls were abating their attack. He thought that maybe the owl didn't have oil in its feathers, like the gulls, and couldn't keep buoyant. It might have been sinking, but Stanley was still cutting his lines. So he kept at it.

Just as he was finishing with his lines, a breeze came along. He saw the

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ASSOCIATION 800 E. Lakeshore Dr.,  
Houghton, MI 49931  
Telephone: (906) 482-7860**

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

Individual Membership.....\$15.00  
Family Membership.....\$20.00  
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\*\*\*Corporate Patron.....\$5,000.00

Life Memberships may be paid in two annual installments of \$250.00 each.

\*Includes a gift of a royal blue canvas rolled bag.

\*\*Includes a gift copy of *Isle Royale: A Pictorial History*.

\*\*\*Includes a gift of a beautifully framed photo of Isle Royale (16"X20").

### Board of Directors:

George Anast, Chair, John Anderson, Alfred Angeli, Doug Welker, William Rose, John Dunn.

### Staff:

Gayle Pekkala, Executive Director & Wolf's Eye Editor  
Lori Honrath & Lauren Rastello, Mail Order & Membership Specialists

owl catch it, and begin to flap, rising a bit above the water. But before the owl could get anywhere, the older, white gulls, started diving at it again. They knocked it right back into the water. Stanley could take it no more.

He steered the boat over to the sinking owl, scooped it out of the water with a leather net, and placed it under a pail so that the gulls could no longer see it. Under the pail it would be safe and it could still breathe. The tiny owl didn't move around or make a single "whoot".

That evening, Stanley had a party to go to at Windigo. Who's party? Why, his own! It was October 6, Stanley's birthday. The head ranger at Windigo, Stimpson, was holding a party for him up at the ranger's barracks. There was to be music and dancing, but Stanley wasn't going to tie on a single schottische. Ironically, at this party the guest of honor had to play his concertina so that everyone else could dance and yip it up.

Stanley came with his new friend, the owl. It perched itself on his finger as if it were invited too. But Stanley had brought along his little guest with intention. Before the rangers came to Isle Royale, all the fishermen had dogs. But once the island became a park, no dogs were allowed or cats for that matter. But Stanley knew that Mrs. Stimpson had a pet parakeet.

When Stanley got to the party, he went right to Mrs. Stimpson with the owl perched on his finger, and said to her, "I was wondering if my owl could stay with your parakeet? I need a cage to keep it in. Maybe they could share your cage together?"

Mrs. Stimpson didn't catch the humor in Stanley's little joke. She looked at the owl as if it had planned to eat her precious parakeet. She gave out a screechy, "No!" and everyone laughed.

With so many people around the owl got a tad nervous and flew. It landed a short distance from Stanley, on top of the ranger's main refrigerator, located along a wall towards the middle of the room. It turned its head back and forth, blinking and watching everyone. It calmly watched everybody milling about as the party began.

Well, Stanley played a couple waltz-

es, and a few other dance tunes and then they got to the schottisches. All of the Norwegians and Swedes went crazy, spinning, stomping, and kicking up their feet. Stanley looked up at his little friend, who was still on top of the fridge. The owl was watching everyone turn circles. Stanley thought he wasn't studying the owl close enough. It looked like that bird was spinning his head all the way around, trying to keep up with everyone. He didn't see the owl ever untwist its head. He thought that the bird just kept revolving its head around and around. The owl must have turned it back when he glanced away! The music got faster and the people danced faster, and the owl blinked its eyes and turned its head faster.

All of the sudden, the owl took to flying about the room, like a big bat. People couldn't duck out of its way, because it came so silently up behind them. Mrs. Stimpson yelled out, "Stanley, get your big bat out here!"

He tried to catch it. It landed back on the fridge and everyone calmed down. He took it, perched on his finger, out the door. When they got out into the dark, Stanley gave the bird a tiny lift. It flew up, and entered back into its element: the woods at night. Stanley watched the little owl for about ten minutes as it silently flew over the tops of the dark trees. When he last saw this owl which he had rescued from not one, but two mobs that day, it was half a mile away, heading up Washington Harbor. His little friend disappeared forever.

--Author's note: according to Betsy Bartelt, this little owl was probably a saw-whet owl. They have appeared at Isle Royale, especially in late fall and have virtually no fear of humans.

## ISLE ROYALE DREAMING

What can you do when city life overwhelms you and you itch to get away from it all? When the sight of subdivisions and skyscrapers makes you want to scream? When the smell of the polluted air forces your nose to turn up in disgust? And what about the omnipresent droning

noise of the city? You need a vacation from it all and there's no better place to vacation than Isle Royale National Park, an island archipelago in Lake Superior, 45 miles north of Michigan and only 12 miles south of Canada.

After being engulfed by black and gray pavement and surrounded by buildings, the views on Isle Royale will be a feast for your sore eyes. As you hike across the Island you'll be surrounded by maple, spruce and fir trees. As the sun filters through the canopy above you it creates a rainbow of greens. From the absolute pure green of the broad leaf aster on the ground to the mint green of the shoulder high thimbleberry bushes, your eye wanders to the dark black-green of the firs in the deep forest. The shadows of light and dark add a fourth dimension to the scene creating tangible colors with depth and substance. Following a bend in the trail you may be lucky enough to find a moose standing guard in the forest. If he shifts his stance the light will play upon his rich brown coat and you'll see more shades of brown than you ever thought imaginable.

On the ridgetops the sights stop you in your tracks. The forest of trees is broken by the deep clear blue of the inland lakes. The Canadian shoreline dances on the horizon. The fair blue of Lake Superior merges with the sky and only the clouds distinguish water from air. Creeping out of the dense basalt rocks the dainty pink and yellow wild roses caress your eye with their beautiful softness. After experiencing the abundance of colors on the Island you then realize how inadequate a box of 64 Crayola crayons is.

Living in a city exerts a toil on your nose and lungs. The obnoxious odor of car exhaust and the terrible feeling of inhaling smog pervade life today. But on the Island breathing is pure pleasure. In your first few hours there you'll want to gulp the crisp air. Its pure freshness cleanses your nose and lungs. The damp rich soil smells alive and nourishes your nose as you hike along. As you walk through the forest the smell of pine and cedar mingles with the scent of thimbleberry bushes, making your mouth water form the thumb-size raspberry-like fruit.

Near the bogs the wild iris perfume the trail and on the sunny ridges you can smell the wild roses long before you see them. Old Man's Beard, a blue-white feathery moss, only grows in areas with crystal clear air and on the Island it decorates the trunks of the trees.

By now you're probably desensitized to the raucous noises of the city: the constant drone of the cars and buses, the shrill of the horns and the squeak of the brakes. Muzak and the murmur of conversations can surround you and hold your cars captive. When you first arrive at Isle Royale you're overcome by the beautiful sound of quiet. The stillness is so real you can feel it. As you walk along your ears hear the songs of the Island: the distant rap-rap-rap of the pileated woodpecker looking for lunch; the scolding call of the squirrel as she chases her husband; the scream of the bald eagle soaring high above. On the shoreline with the waves breaking, the heartbeat of Lake Superior sweeps through your blood. In the evening as you prepare your dinner the spring peepers will serenade you with their ephemeral chorus. And when the wind kisses the birch trees the dancing leaves are as soft windchimes blowing in the forest.

Nights in the city have their own special appeal but they can't compare to

nights on the Island. As you nestle your tired body into your sleeping bag your mind replays the glorious scenes of the day. With the droning of the mosquitoes safely outside your tent, your eyelids get heavier and heavier. The clear air tastes sweet and intoxicating as your breathing gets slower and slower. The call of the white-throated sparrow reverberates in your ears and the loon's echoing haunting wail signals the dance of the northern lights. Red, green, and yellow drench the bright white stars and the night sky pulses with movement.

When you're overwhelmed by city life, leave it behind and head north to relax and replenish your senses in the magic of Isle Royale.

*Randi Morris*

## DUES INCREASE

The Board has elected to increase membership dues starting in 1996. The rates will be Individual-\$15.00, Family-\$20.00, Supporting-\$50.00, Life-\$500.00. The two corporate levels will remain the same.

This action was deemed necessary as the Association recorded a fiscal loss for 1995. This was largely due to increased aid to the park, which has increased significantly due to budgetary

cutbacks in the park funding by Congress.

## PASSINGS

Captain Roy Oberg, 84 of Grand Marais, MN died Tuesday, October 3, 1995 in Grand Marais, MN. He is best remembered as the long time captain of the *Voyageur* and *Voyageur II*, along with several other boats. He retired as captain in 1987.

Memorial services were held in Grand Marais, MN.

He is survived by four daughters, two sons, two sisters, and a brother.

## ANNUAL MEETING CHANGE

The annual meeting at Rock Harbor will be held on **July 14, 1996**. This is being done to lessen the burden of increased visitation at the end of July. We are informing our members well in advance so that they can make their plans.

We plan to have fine programs, tours, activities, and the Sunday barbecue. We hope to see you there.

**We wish all our members a  
Happy Holiday Season.**

# WOLF'S EYE

Isle Royale Natural History Association

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