

WOLF'S EYE



Isle Royale Natural History Association

Spring 1997

Isle Royale Moose Herd Continues Decline

After several years of concern about whether wolves would survive the ravages of canine parvovirus on Isle Royale, park officials and researchers have now turned the focus of their attention to the island's moose herd.

Park Superintendent Douglas Barnard reported that a survey of moose and wolf populations completed this winter shows about 500 moose on the island, compared to an estimated 2,400 in 1995. "We knew that we lost a lot of moose during the especially long, harsh winter of 1995-1996" said Barnard, "but no one anticipated that losses would be this large." After completing field work on the island in March 1996, biologists estimated that there were 1,000 to 1,200 moose within the park. By then, surviving moose were severely stressed from lack of food, deep snows, and a heavy infestation of winter ticks. The moose population was dealt yet another blow, the late arrival of spring greenup, which resulted in additional moose mortality from starvation.

Dr. Rolf Peterson, wildlife biologist at Michigan Technological University, conducts the annual survey for the National Park Service. Peterson notes that the park's moose population had grown dramatically over the past 15 years. This was due to a population crash in 1981-82 of their only predator, wolves. That wolf decline coincided with the arrival of canine parvovirus in the region.

"The carrying capacity of the moose range on Isle Royale has been greatly exceeded, resulting in serious overbrowsing that grew worse each year as moose continued to increase," says Peterson. "The length of last winter proved especially costly for calves and older, weaker

moose, but it also killed a surprising number of young adults."

Peterson says the only thing that saved most of the moose that survived was an abundance of balsam fir browse on the east end of the island. Both Barnard and Peterson believe that the reduction in moose numbers is good from the standpoint that it gives the island's vegetation a chance to recover from years of overbrowsing. They expect moose numbers to increase slightly if this year's calf population is good, but wolves should play a significant role in determining the size of the moose herd in the foreseeable future.

"Everything depends on the wolves now," says Peterson. "There are so few moose that if wolves are able to continue increasing, they should be able to keep moose at a relatively low level.

While the Isle Royale moose have had their problems in the past couple of years the park's wolves have been gradually building their numbers. Peterson says there are 24 wolves on Isle Royale now, and that's two more than last year and 12 more than the all time low of 12 recorded in 1988-89 and again in 1991-92.

"Seven pups survived from last year's litters, so despite five deaths during the year, the total number of wolves increased by two," he says. "The East Pack produced two young, the Middle pack successfully raised three pups, and a lone pair of wolves had two pups; the West Pack failed to produce any young." He says the Middle Pack now has nine members, making it the largest pack on the island.

The annual wolf-moose study on Isle Royale is funded by the NPS, the National Science Foundation, and Earthwatch.

To order a copy of the complete 1996-97 Wolf-Moose Report, see order form on inside back page.

Changes Afoot

It is 62 degrees this afternoon in Houghton, Michigan. Rivulets of water drain rapidly from the ever-shrinking snowbanks. The ice in Portage Canal is slowly releasing its grip on the Ranger III. Nuthatches, chickadees, robins, and a host of other birds are serenading the release of winter's grip. On its heels another summer season at Isle Royale fast approaches, and with it many changes.

Speaking of changes, I'm Smitty Parratt, the new Branch Chief of Interpretation and Resource Education, and serve as the Cooperating Association Coordinator at Isle Royale National Park. My wife, Shawn, and I moved here in February from Redwood National and State Parks on the northern California coast. Previously, I worked at North Cascades National Park Service Complex, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Olympic National Park, Death Valley National Monument, and Lassen Volcanic National Park; all of these positions were associated with interpretation and resource education. I look forward to working closely with your Executive Director, Jill Burkland, the Board, and Members of Isle Royale Natural History Association.

Another change for Isle Royale is the development of a General Management Plan. You've already read of the moose population decline at Isle Royale. The complex natural balance, diverse visitor needs, facilities, and other factors are being considered in a two-year planning effort which will chart the next 10 to 15 years at Isle Royale.

The project started up in the fall of 1995. With public input all along the way, we have reaffirmed the purpose and significance of Isle Royale. The process has identified possible alternatives to deal with issues, concerns, and desired future conditions. The public has had the

opportunity to comment on five draft alternative plans for the future of Isle Royale. At this time, the planning team is analyzing public comments and preparing a draft preferred alternative for our General Management Plan. The public will have the opportunity to comment on the draft preferred alternative this fall before it is revised and a final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement is published. Following its publication, the plan will be implemented.

The Houghton Visitor Center is in the final stages of remodeling to more effectively serve visitors and its operational demands. New shelves brighten the area along with a smartly designed visitor reception area. These new shelving units

will also improve the look of Windigo and Rock Harbor Visitor Centers following their renovation. Sales and displays have been thematically integrated with an eye to visitor flow and visual perspectives.

Isle Royale Natural History Association is creating a web page; Isle Royale National Park is preparing to spruce up theirs. Each will reference and complement the other in a true sense of partnership and creativity. Isle Royale Natural History Association and the Isle Royale National Park are working diligently to infuse this spirit of synergism into all aspects of our operations, our plans, and our dreams for the future. We're glad that you, as members of Isle Royale Natural History Association, will be part of this bright future.

-provides high quality educational products and services which promotes an increased understanding of Isle Royale National Park, resulting in better stewardship of this unique park and the natural world.

-the primary educational partner for Isle Royale National Park, maintains excellent communication and cooperation with the National Park Service and provides financial support for research and interpretation.

-continually expands the scope of its outreach by increasing membership, developing a more diverse constituency, and promoting partnerships with additional communities and organizations.

--maintains a knowledgeable, committed board which recognizes the need for informed leadership, fiscal responsibility, communication, and flexibility critical to the success of a non-profit volunteer organization.

Isle Royale Natural History Association
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IRNHA is a non-profit 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.....\$15
Family.....\$20
Supporting.....\$50
Life Membership.....\$500*
Corporate Sponsor.....\$1000
Corporate Patron.....\$5000
* Life memberships may be paid in two annual installments.

Board of Directors

John Dunn, President, David Duchamp, Nancy Leonard, Bob Linn, Gary Pethe, Bill Rose, Doug Welker, Charles Zam-zow.

Staff

Jill Burkland, Executive Director & Wolf's Eye Editor. Lori Honrath and Lauren Rastello, Mail Order and Membership Specialists.

New IRNHA Mission and Vision Statements

In February the IRNHA Board began a strategic planning process to help us map our course over the next ten years. One of the first steps in the process was to agree on a Mission Statement. A mission statement is a short description of an organization's purpose. It specifies the basic reason for an organization's existence. The new Mission Statement for IRNHA is:

The Isle Royale Natural History Association, in partnership with the National Park Service, promotes the public's understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of Isle Royale National Park.

In April the Board continued their strategic planning process, agreeing on a Vision Statement and several goals and action plans. A vision statement is a description of a desired future state an organization should work toward. It is a destination, a target for which to aim. The new IRNHA Vision Statement reads:

The Isle Royale History Association....

In Memoriam

Word has reached us of the death of IRNHA Life Member Donald Wolbrink of Shelton, Washington. Mr. Wolbrink worked for the National Park Service at Isle Royale in the 1930's and continued his association with the park until recent years. He is survived by his wife Florence (Tutu) Stack Wolbrink, leaseholder of the cabin on Hotel (Minong) Island in Tobin Harbor.

Memorial Gifts

We are pleased to announce two major memorial contributions to IRNHA. Phyllis Titmus of Henderson, North Carolina has given the funds necessary to buy new bookcases for all three IRNHA Visitor Centers-- Houghton, Rock Harbor, and Windigo. The gift is in memory of her husband, John, who was a loyal visitor to the Island every summer and a member of IRNHA since 1979.

We have also received a very generous contribution in memory of an anonymous Life Member. This contribution will be used to publish a new series of brochure to inform Isle Royale visitors about the Park's new fee schedule.

The Isle Royale Natural History Association

1997 Election of Board Members

Following is information excerpted from letters from the two persons who have been nominated to stand for election this year. All members of IRNHA are eligible to vote in this election. Please select from among the following **ONE** individual you believe will best serve on our Board of Directors for a proposed three-year term. Your ballot is on the bottom of this page. Please return in the enclosed envelope. We encourage you to complete our membership communications survey on the back of your ballot. **To be valid ballots must be received by May 23.**

CHARLES J. BOYLE

(Marinette, Wisconsin)

•Retired business-person.

•Has visited Isle Royale at least once a year since 1959.

•Graduate courses in conservation of natural resources at the University of Michigan.

•Served several terms as a member of the IRNHA Board of Directors in the 1970's.

•Twice elected President of the IRNHA Board of Directors.

•Life Member of IRNHA for 23 years.

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WAYNE G. TREPANIER

(Daffer, Michigan)

•Retired teacher, school administrator and public administrator.

•Has visited Isle Royale at least once a year since the mid-1950's.

•Seven years as a school principal and superintendent.

•26 years as an employee of the Michigan Department of Education

•Extensive, long term involvement with the Boy Scouts.

•Elected and re-elected for the past 25 years as a Board member of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District.

•In 1996 elected Township Supervisor for Daffer Township.

•Outdoor interests include photography, fishing, and hiking.

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Isle Royale Natural History Association

Board of Directors Ballot 1997

Vote for no more than ONE

_____ **Charles J. Boyle** -- Marinette, WI

_____ **Wayne G. Trepanier** -- Daffer, MI

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

We encourage you to attend all or any part of this summer's membership meeting on Isle Royale. It is an excellent opportunity to learn more about your association and to meet or renew acquaintances with others who share your love for Isle Royale.

Friday, July 11

8:00 p.m. Interpretive Program by current Artist-in-Residence in the Auditorium .

Saturday, July 12

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Day Trip (Destination to be Determined.)

8:00 p.m. Annual Meeting Speaker, Wilke Nelson from the National Park Foundation will talk about the Foundation, what it is, what it does, and how it can help Isle Royale National Park and the Isle Royale Natural History Association. Nelson serves as program officer at the National Park Foundation where he manages grants programs and the Friends Initiative. Auditorium.

Sunday, July 13

4:00 - 5:00 p.m. Annual Membership Meeting in the Auditorium at Rock Harbor.

5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Membership Reception.

8:00 p.m. Interpretive Program in the Auditorium at Rock Harbor.

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MEMBERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY

IRNHA would like your help in strengthening membership communication. Please take a minute to answer the following questions, and return this form with your ballot.

1. Do you read the quarterly *Wolf's Eye* Newsletter? ____ YES ____ NO
2. If you answered "yes" to the question above, what do you like about the newsletter?

What elements of the newsletter could be improved? _____

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3. If your answer to question 1 was "no" what are your reasons for not reading *Wolf's Eye*?

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4. Would you be interested in receiving IRNHA news via e-mail? ____ YES ____ NO.

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being "Highly Effective," how would rate the overall membership communications efforts of IRNHA? _____

NEW PRODUCT PRE-SALE

"The Spirit of Isle Royale" by Tykie Ganz

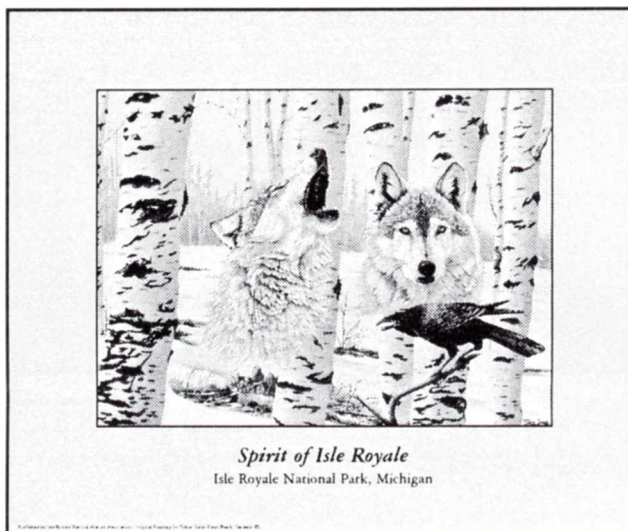
This brand new poster was designed by one of our 1996 Artists-In-Residence, Tykie Ganz. The poster is approximately 18"x 24" printed on heavy, high gloss paper in subtle shades of grey, white, black and tan.

A limited edition of signed and numbered copies of the poster is available to IRNHA members. Special edition posters can be purchased rolled and mailed in a tube or vacuum mounted on foamcore and shrink-wrapped. They also include a card from the author explaining the concept behind the image.

Available through July 1 only. Please allow 4-5 weeks for delivery.

Rolled poster without mounting.... \$29.95 plus \$4.00 shipping

Mounted and shrinkwrapped poster.....\$49.95 plus \$5.00 shipping.



"Annual Report: 1996-97 Wolf-Moose Study" by Rolf Peterson

This year's report from the winter study on Isle Royale includes the latest information on the wolf and moose populations on the Island. A clearly written report with charts and photographs details changes in population numbers between winter '96 and winter '97 and discusses causes and trends for these changes. Also included is information on other wildlife and weather, snow and ice conditions for the year.

\$3.50 plus \$3.00 shipping (Includes member discount).

Order Form:		Date:	Ship To:
Item	Quantity	Price	Name
			Address
			City
			State
			ZIP
			Phone
			Method of Payment: Check
			Visa/Mastercard Discover AmEX
			Credit Card #
			Expiration Date
			Signature Required
Shipping Charges		Total Purchase	U.S. Funds Only
Up to \$10	\$3.00	Less 10% for Members	Make Checks Payable to IRNHA
\$10-\$30	\$4.00	Subtotal	Send to: 800 E. Lakeshore Dr. Houghton, MI 49931
\$30-\$50	\$5.00	MI Residents add 6% Sales Tax	Telephone Orders Accepted
\$50-\$75	\$6.00	Shipping (see chart at left)	Phone: 800-678-6925 or 906-482-7860
Over \$75	\$7.00	Additional charge for Priority Mail	Please allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery
U.S./Priority Mail		Membership Fee	
Add \$3.00			

Thanks

...and welcome to our newest life members, Chuck and Nancy Albert of Commerce Township, Michigan and Nancy Bain from Dallas, Texas. Nancy writes, "My parents (the Cawthornes) loved Isle Royale; hopefully my membership will keep me in contact with the island they loved even though I may not be able to visit often."

...to Life Members Charles and Mary Ellen Finch for their very generous contribution to this year's Artist-in-Residence program

.....to all of you who have become members or renewed your memberships in response to our recent membership invitations. If you haven't renewed yet, thanks for doing so soon.

Fee Passes

The new demonstration fee system instituted this year includes a \$50 annual pass which allows the holder of the pass unlimited use of Isle Royale facilities with no further fee for the year of purchase. The fee money returned to the park will be used primarily for maintenance and improvements to the trails and docks on the island. Regardless of your individual time spent on the island,

purchase of this pass would be a convenient way to make a meaningful donation to the park and be assured of effective use of your contribution. These passes would also make a nice gift for anyone who is an Isle Royale or national park supporter. An individual Season Boat Rider Pass is also available for \$150. This pass allows the operator and all passengers on a private boat to come to the park during the season for no additional cost. This is another possible donation to the park.

The optional season passes can be purchased in person at the Houghton Visitor Center or at the Rock Harbor or Windigo Ranger Stations. Passes can also be purchased by calling (906) 482-0984, faxing (906) 482-8753, or by writing to Isle Royale National Park, 800 E. Lakeshore Dr., Houghton, MI 49931. (e-mail: ISRO_userfee@nps.gov). Make checks payable to the "Department of the Interior NPS." VISA and Mastercard are accepted. When requesting the Individual Season Pass, please include the recipient's full name, address, and telephone number. When requesting the Season Boat Rider Pass, please include the owner's name, address, telephone number, boat registration number, length, make, color, type of craft, and name of the boat if applicable.

By-Laws Changes

The Board of Directors has amended the By-Laws as follows:

Old Article IV, Section 1, subsection a:

a. A Board of Directors consisting of nine members elected by the membership. The elected Board shall elect a President and a Treasurer from among those elected to the Board by the membership/

(Sections 2,3,4,5,6 were replaced by the new Section 1 and subsections b through k, reflecting the new Section 1(a) below

New Article IV, Section 1, subsection a and d:

a. The business of this organization shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of nine directors, a majority of whom must be elected, and as many as three of whom may be appointed. The terms of office of the directors shall be for three years. These terms shall be staggered in such manner as will allow three directors to be appointed each year

d. An elected or appointed Board director may serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms, except the Board may, with a minimum of a two-thirds vote of the full Board, appoint a director to a third full term of office.

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Houghton, Michigan 49931-1895

Isle Royale National History Association

WOLF'S EYE

Nonprofit Organization
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Houghton, Michigan
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