

Wolf's Eye



ISLE ROYALE NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

2000 No. 1

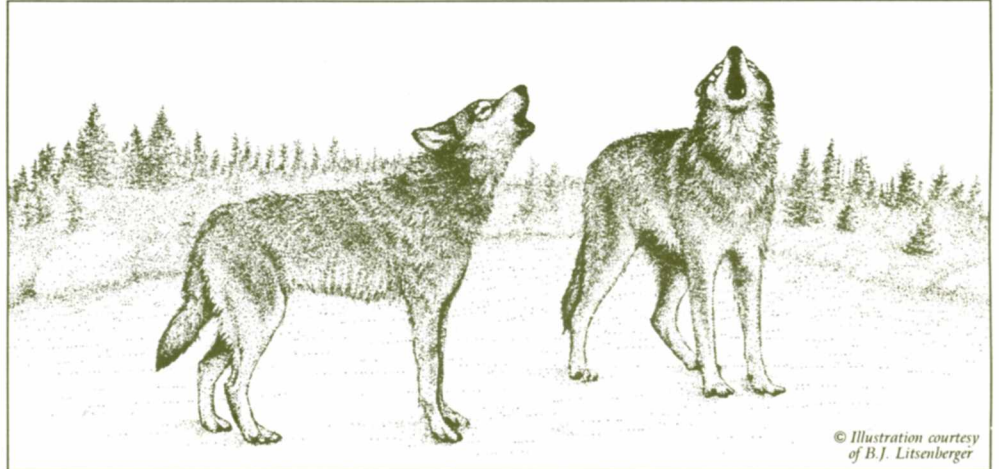
Letter from the Superintendent

Hello from stormy Houghton. If the number of snowmobiles going past my office window is any indication, winter is in full cry in the Copper Country.

Next week the annual winter study at Isle Royale begins. As most of you know, Dr. Rolf Peterson of Michigan Technological University, and the National Park Service conduct the study. It will be exciting to learn the status of the wolves since we know that pups were again present last summer in established packs. Perhaps you do not know that there are other studies that depend on the winter study period. They include research on forest succession, forage utilization, inland lake sediment study, and others. The study teams base out of Windigo. They access the park via ski plane from Minnesota.

The park base budget increased this year by \$175,000 dollars. A sizeable portion of this increase will be used to provide vital and mandated training for the staff in topics as far ranging as proper handling of hazardous materials, petroleum spill measures, and supervision. Another portion will be used to replace some seasonal ranger positions at the remote ranger stations with permanent rangers. We are doing this to provide rangers that can provide continuity from year to year. This should provide an increased margin of safety and response time for the visitor. This funding was gained through the support of the Michigan congressional delegation.

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WOLF RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECTS ECOSYSTEM

The way wolves respond to significant climate changes can have far-reaching consequences for the ecosystems in which they live, according to an article co-authored by Professor Rolf Peterson, which is featured on the cover of the October 28 issue of *Nature*.

The article details a study conducted by Eric Post and Nils Christian Stenseth of University of Oslo, Norway; Peterson; and Brian McLaren, Dept. of Forest Resources, St. Johns, Newfoundland, Canada. The wildlife data used in the study were collected during a long-term and continuing survey directed by Peterson on wolf-moose relationships on Isle Royale.

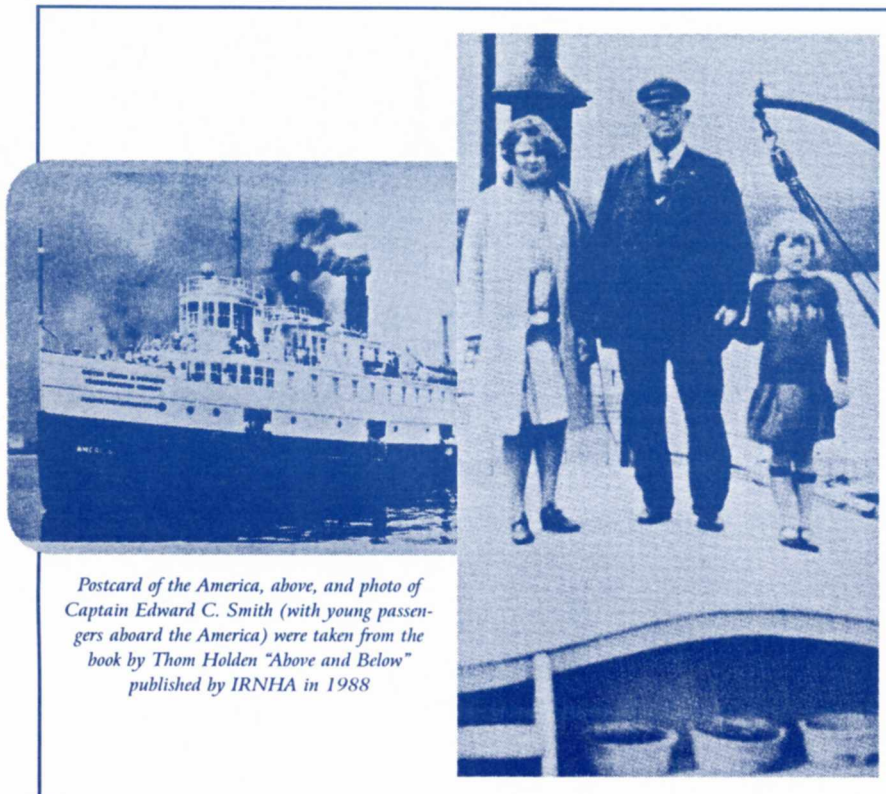
Scientists have known that predators at the top of the food chain exert considerable influence on ecosystems, and that responses to climatic change at the top have the potential to shape responses at lower levels. On Isle Royale, wolves regulate such a system by limited the productivity of moose, which limit productivity of fir trees.

"We investigated the ecological consequences of apex predators' responses to climate change by using data collected over 40 years on wolf behavior and how it affected moose and their impact on fir saplings on Isle Royale," Peterson said. "Wolves responded to increasingly snowy winters by hunting in larger packs, and consequently, were able to triple the number of moose killed per day compared to less snowy years when they hunted in smaller packs."

This greater killing efficiency by wolves brought a decline in the moose population that resulted in less browsing pressure on balsam fir saplings, which showed a noticeable increase one year after snowy winters. "We suggest that this evidence indicates that cascading behavioral responses of apex predators to climatic change may have a substantial impact on ecosystem function," he said.

The mean size of wolf packs on Isle Royale ranged from approximately 4.5 animals during the least snowy winters to 12 animals during the most snowy winters. The increase was due primarily to the fact that grown pups who would normally leave the pack to seek mates of their own remained with their family unit during severe winters. Both wolves and moose found it easier to travel along the shoreline of the island during heavy snow conditions, and this increased encounters between the two species and made more old moose and calves available to wolf predation.

The greater food supply for wolves during snowy winters made them healthier and able to reproduce more successfully, according to Peterson.



Postcard of the America, above, and photo of Captain Edward C. Smith (with young passengers aboard the America) were taken from the book by Thom Holden "Above and Below" published by IRNHA in 1988

ISLE ROYALE MEMORIES

On June 6, 1928, as I recall, I left Duluth Minnesota at 10:00 a.m. on the steamer America on my way to Isle Royale, Michigan. The trip was nice except for some hazy weather, but the water was rather smooth. We arrived at Washington Harbor at 1:00 the next morning landing at the Singer dock. The America left the dock and headed for the Washington Club, now called Windigo, after I departed and went to our cabin on Barnum Island, also known as the old "Johns Hotel," (the first hotel on Isle Royale). In the meantime, the steamer America left the Washington Club, and traveled down the harbor on her way around Isle Royale, but nearing the channel, known as the lower gap, the boat struck a small reef, the boilers exploded, and the boat sank near the mainland where it is located today. Stanley Sivertson's dad, Sam, was on the boat with crutches at the time and with the crew of the boat, managed to go to the Singer hotel and Sivertson's cabin. Captain Smith evidently intended to sink with the America because he stood on the bridge of the ship and would not leave until the boat had settled. With wet feet, the Captain finally left the ship on a raft.

Most dogs can swim, but a dog on the boat was chained and drowned; it later was brought up and buried. Speaking of omens, the America was hauling a large load of pig iron that previously was removed from another sunken ship. She was also carrying a thousand crates of strawberries at the time. Several attempts were made to raise the America, but failed each time. I heard the America was insured for \$100,000 and with the construction of the new North Shore Highway, the America's income was diminishing.

R.E. Johns.

Membership Meetings July 20th & 23rd

Some very special events are being planned for this year's membership meetings to be held in the Houghton/Calumet area on July 20 and Rock Harbor July 21-23. Mark your calendars now and plan to join us for a special Year 2000 celebration of the history of Isle Royale and IRNHA, and a tribute to Isle Royale artists and their new book *The Island Within Us*. We are planning a program by long time IRNHA members, an art exhibit, programs by past artists-in-residence, receptions for the artists, a history seminar, and an historical boat show. Plan now to participate in this very special four-day IRNHA event. Look for more details in your next Wolf's Eye.

Letter from the Superintendent, continued

We also will be improving the park's docks with major improvements at Windigo, replacement of the Hay Bay and Beaver Island docks, and if the funding arrives, completing the dock replacement at Snug Harbor. Again, the Michigan delegation assisted us here.

As you know, the park has completed the General Management Plan. We will be moving forward with its implementation.

Many of you had the opportunity to ride the Ranger III to or from Isle Royale this past summer. The new engines, bow thruster, and other improvements have been a resounding success. We are using less fuel with the new engines, and cutting time off of the trip. She is a brand new ship for all practical purposes.

As my ranger friend from the south says: Y'all come see us!

Doug Barnard

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(As of 12/31/1999)

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ISLE ROYALE NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION MISSION STATEMENT

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 and Keweenaw National Historical Park.

1999 HIGHLIGHTS

During Fiscal Year 1999, IRNHA—

- Published The Place Names of Isle Royale by IRNP Chief of Interpretation Smitty Parratt and IRNHA board member Doug Welker.
- Selected art work and edited text for The Island Within Us: Isle Royale Artists in Residence, and hired a designer and printer for the book which is due out in April, 2000.
- Applied for and was awarded two grants for publications costs of The Island Within Us—one from The Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs and one from The Parks Company.
- Published the second edition of the Isle Royale Park newspaper, The Greenstone.
- Formed a new permanent IRNHA committee to research and apply for grants and major gifts.
- Participated in the Great Lakes Booksellers Association trade show in Ann Arbor, West Michigan Sea Kayaking Symposium in Muskegon and The Small Craft Symposium in Saginaw, selling publications and distributing information about IRNHA and Isle Royale National Park.
- Worked with interns from Michigan Technological University to produce a new full-color wholesale brochure.
- Held our first membership meeting in conjunction with Keweenaw National Historical Park.
- Participated in week-long IRNP Interpretive Planning sessions on Isle Royale in July and in Houghton in November.
- Participated in planning and funding of the Windigo VC and Ranger III dedications.
- Increased sales at Windigo VC by 42% and overall sales by over 3%.
- Contributed over \$14,000 in cash to Isle Royale National Park—including almost \$8,000 for publications, \$4,500 for exhibits, \$1600 for research.
- Made an in-kind contribution to Isle Royale National Park of \$7,000 in staff assistance at visitor centers and administrative support in the Houghton office.

Aid to Isle Royale National Park 1999

Cash Contribution

Greenstone Newspaper	\$4,091
Exhibits for Windigo VC	\$4,376
Designer Fee for The Island Within Us	\$2,000
Loon Survey	\$1,600
Artist Brochure and Ticket Jacket	\$700
Wilderness Plan Printing	\$522
Artist in Residence Program	\$500
Malone and Amygdaloid Exhibits	\$137
Interpretive Materials	\$117
Refreshments for Dedication	\$176
Ranger Program	\$50
Miscellaneous	\$46
	\$14,315

In-Kind Contributions

Staff Assistance at Visitor Centers	\$5,260
Administrative Assistance	\$1,525
Book and Map Donations	\$202
	\$6,987

Total Aid to the Park **\$21,302**

Statement of Income and Expense for Years Ended September 30:

Income	1999	1998
Sales Income	\$125,799	\$121,973
Member Dues	\$21,132	\$20,867
Donations/Grants	\$6,268	\$12,063
Interest	\$1,936	\$1,369
Shipping & Handling Income	\$5,097	\$5,952
Total Income	\$160,232	\$162,224
Expense		
Cost of Goods Sold	\$69,686	\$57,870
Operating Expense	\$85,086	\$83,680
Total Expense	\$154,772	\$141,550
Net Annual Income	\$5,460	\$20,674
Aid to Isle Royale Natl. Park	\$14,315	\$11,423
Net Increase/Decrease	(\$8,855)	\$9,251

Balance Sheets for September 30, 1999 and 1998

Assets	1999	1998
Current Assets		
Cash and Investments	\$61,229	\$70,285
Receivables	\$2,114	\$2,818
Inventory	\$117,629	\$114,105
Total Current Assets	\$180,972	\$187,208
Fixed Assets (Equipment)	\$4,152	\$6,151
Total Assets	\$185,124	\$193,359
Liabilities and Equity		
Accounts Payable	\$5,800	\$5,318
Payroll and Sales Tax Payable	\$542	\$403
Total Current Liabilities	\$6,342	\$5,721
Equity	\$178,782	\$187,638
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$185,124	\$193,359

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Just a Reminder...

If you have not renewed your membership for 2000, it's time to do so. We hope you will keep your membership current by sending a check (800 E. Lakeshore Dr, Houghton, MI 49931) or calling us (800-678-6925) with your credit card payment today. Membership levels are:

Individual - \$15.00 • Household - \$25.00
Supporting - \$50.00 • Sustaining - \$100.00
Life - \$500.00 (can be paid in five annual installments)

Your membership entitles you to a year's subscription to the Wolf's Eye, a 10% discount on all purchases from IRNHA, and two product catalogs. This year we are offering a new premium at the Sustaining and Life levels—our long-sleeved IRNHA logo polo shirt.

We need your help to continue the work of the Isle Royale Natural History Association. This year we will be contributing over \$13,000 to help support interpretation and research at Isle Royale. Again this year IRNHA will pay the printing costs for the park newspaper, The Greenstone; we will supply funding for new exhibits for the Houghton and Windigo Visitor Centers, and will pay for a large portion of the Beaver Survey. In addition to our direct financial assistance, IRNHA assists the park by providing staff at the Visitor Centers in Rock Harbor and Windigo. We also help administer and jury the Artists-in-Residence Program, and this year we are serving on the Park's Interpretive Planning Team.

In order to keep your Wolf's Eye subscription current, we need to have your renewal by March. Keep up-to-date with special plans for the 2000 IRNHA annual meeting and historical celebration in Rock Harbor and what's going on at Isle Royale throughout the year by keeping your membership current.

LEONARD YEO MEMORIAL IRNHA has learned of the death of long-time park employee Leonard Yeo, who passed away in June. Leonard worked on the Ranger III for many years. We received a memorial contribution from Mrs. Ken Larson who said, "For many years my husband and I shared a wonderful relationship with Len. We always looked forward to the arrival of the Ranger III and his smiling face."



Isle Royale Natural History Association

800 E. Lakeshore Drive
Houghton, MI 49931
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e-mail: irnha@portup.com
website: www.irnha.org

IRNHA is a non-profit membership organization that assists Isle Royale National Park and Keweenaw National Historic Park by publishing and selling educational materials to park visitors.

Gifts, bequests, memorials and memberships are U.S. tax deductible.

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