

Wolf's Eye



ISLE ROYALE NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

2000 No. 2

Isle Royale Wolves Doing Well

Preliminary reports from this year's Winter Study on Isle Royale show that the wolf population is doing well. Although one adult wolf was killed this winter, five pups were born within the past year, bringing the island population to 29. Just two years ago, the number of wolves had dropped to 14 causing concern about the species' continued survival on the island.

Dr. Rolf Peterson, who has conducted the annual wolf/moose survey for almost three decades, reports that this year there has been a realignment of pack territories on the island. "Whereas we used to have three packs dividing the island, now there are essentially only two," said Peterson. "The Middle Pack, which had three surviving pups from last year and now numbers 12 animals, has virtually taken over the former West Pack territory. The West Pack's numbers have steadily declined, and they are simply no longer able to defend their territory." According to Peterson there may be a couple members of the West Pack still alive, but that has not been confirmed. The East Pack successfully raised two pups from last year and now has 10 members, which continue to control the east end of the island. According to Peterson, there are two other adult pairs roaming the island, as well as a single adult wolf.

The Middle Pack now controls about three-fourths of the park's area, and by taking over the west end of the island they have increased the number of moose

continued...

Share Your Memories of Isle Royale

Memories made at Johnson Fishery, photo by B.J. Litsenberger

As part of the IRNHA annual membership meeting on Isle Royale, and in keeping with the historical theme of the weekend, we are planning an informal story-telling, memory-sharing event. We have set aside a couple of hours between the Sunday afternoon reception and the evening picnic to give long-time IRNHA members a chance to share with the rest of us some of the history of the organization and the members and events that have shaped it.

If you have a long connection with Isle Royale and IRNHA, we hope you will help us compile an informal history of IRNHA by participating in this special event.

We invite you to join us in Rock Harbor on Sunday, July 23, to tell your stories and share your photographs or slides of "the old days." You don't need to make a formal presentation, but come prepared with about 15 minutes of stories, recollections, and reminiscences to share. Present Board member and past president Chuck Boyle has agreed to serve as MC.

If you cannot attend the weekend events at Rock Harbor, we hope you will still participate by sharing your memories with us in writing. Write up for us some of the events and people that you remember most fondly from your association with IRNHA over the years, and send them to us. We will have someone read your letter at the meeting.

We hope to record these stories for posterity by video-taping the entire session and printing a written record of the stories, letters, and photographs shared. These video tapes and printed records will be retained in IRNPS and IRNHA archives and will be made available to our members.

This is your opportunity to record for history your memories of Isle Royale and the Isle Royale Natural History Association. Please let us know of your willingness to participate by contacting Jill Burkland by phone at 800-678-6925, by mail at 800 E. Lakeshore Dr., Houghton, MI 49931, or by e-mail at irnha@portup.com.

We look forward to hearing from many of you!!!

Superintendent's Letter

MEMORIES OF ISLE ROYALE

In looking forward to the millennium event for the Isle Royale Natural History Association's annual meeting in July, I also began to look back. Although my contact with the park is fairly recent in comparison to lots of other folks, I realize that there have been some mighty big changes in this time.

I first experienced Isle Royale as a brand new college graduate in 1964 as a seasonal ranger. I kind of expected a pack of wolves to greet me, but instead was greeted by this wonderful island and all of its charms. I was assigned to Windigo and moved into the old bunkhouse with all of the other seasonal park service employees. We were an odd mix with green rangers and crusty long time maintenance employees all getting a bunk (army surplus) with the next guy about 3 feet away and a common kitchen where we all took turns cooking. The basic food supplies were supplied by the Mott Island mess (THEY had a darn good paid cook!). After the deduction for the room and board I believe my paycheck was about \$57 for two weeks, and after starving out in college I was darn glad to get it! I got to do a lot of boat and foot patrol and was lucky enough to get to know the Sivertsons, Eckmarks, Rudes, and other wonderful people pretty well. Roy Oberg and his ace helper Merle could always be counted on for a few laughs and the dances where Stanley played the "squeeze box" were great. There was a lodge and a restaurant at Windigo and US Coast Guard (coasties) at the Rock of Ages Lighthouse. They swore that the lighthouse was haunted, but that is another story.

The season ended much too fast and I decided that I needed to do this again! Back I came in 1965 and was fortunate enough to get even more acquainted with the backcountry. I spent some considerable time in the old Feldtmann ranger cabin, the Siskiwit Bay CCC mess hall/bunk house building, and the Island Mine ranger cabin. All are gone now. I helped lay out the trail from Feldtmann Lake to the tower that year. That trail is now almost completely rerouted. One day off that summer I walked to Feldtmann Lake (little day hike from Windigo) and caught north-

erns on literally every cast for about two hours. I also remember the sore arm from the exercise. I found the greatest spring in the world at the base of Feldtmann Ridge and drank the best coffee in the world at the Rude's place at Fisherman's Home Cove. Clara Sivertson's cookies were the best, by the way, and the last fish cake brought to the potluck by Laura Edisen was darn near worth a fight. As a young bachelor that was quite important to me! Also, neighbors were really important and we always brought NEWS!

The park couldn't get rid of me! Back I came in 1966! This time the park stationed me at Malone Bay. I thought I had passed on to my reward. A little piece of heaven here on earth. I soon found out that I had made a life change decision a few months earlier as I had taken and passed the exam to enter federal service, applied for the National Park Service, and was notified that I was to report to the Albright Training Center by July 4th.

What has changed? Certainly the wonderful residents of the island have changed dramatically. There were seldom any small boats in the park of the type common today. Technology has changed that dramatically. There were many fewer hikers and the gear was certainly different. I remember a two-day August foot patrol from Windigo to Feldtmann tower and back to Windigo via Siskiwit Bay and the



CCC Barracks at Siskiwit, Photo by Bob Janke

Island Mine Trail without seeing another hiker. I don't think that would happen today. In my time on the island I never saw a canoe outside of a protected harbor, and darn few of them. I saw one kayak that came over on the Voyageur. It was a foldboat type of thing that the owner put together on the spot. That was an event as none of us had seen a kayak before!

A lot has changed. A lot has stayed the same. The park will continue to evolve and change. Hopefully that feeling of immersing yourself in the natural world will stay. I miss the old timers, and guess I am getting to one myself. I love this park. It is truly a special land apart from the everyday world. I am extremely honored to be return here and help protect and mold it for the future generations to come.

Come see us!

Doug Barnard, Superintendent

Isle Royale Wolves Doing Well *continued...*

available to them for food. The East Pack, however, while having a smaller territory, still maintains control over that part of the island with the greatest number of moose.

Isle Royale's moose population has increased slightly, from 750 last year to 850 this year. Peterson says that the population seems stable, but calves are scarce so overall growth potential of the herd appears minimal. "I was surprised to see so few calves," he said. "It's one of the lowest levels we've ever recorded. We don't know why, but it could be weather-related." He said hot, dry summers such as the island experienced in 1998 create stress for moose. "Moose don't perspire," he explained, "so hot weather causes them to overheat, and they don't eat as well as they should and as a result, aren't as healthy." Early spring and hot summers also result in higher tick production and greater infestation on moose.

"This was almost a non-winter on Isle Royale," said Peterson. "So for the moose's sake, we should hope for a cool, moist summer. The short-term success of the island's herd probably depends as much on the weather as anything else."

IRNHA/IRNPS MILLENNIUM CELEBRATION JULY 20-23 Plans are taking shape for a fantastic Millennium Celebration, a joint effort by Isle Royale National Park and Isle Royale Natural History Association. Included in the four-day celebration will be two IRNHA membership meetings, a history symposium, boat tours, programs by our artists-in-residence, and much more. If you haven't already made plans to attend, we hope the schedule below will entice you. Here's what we have planned for you:



This mackinaw boat being built by the North House Folk School in Minnesota will be sailing to Isle Royale and will be on display in Snug Harbor July 22, 23. If you know of any historic boats related to Isle Royale that we might include in the Millennium Celebration, please let us know.

THURSDAY, JULY 20:

Community Arts Center, 124 Quincy, Hancock

- 7:15 p.m. Annual IRNHA Business Meeting
- 8:00 p.m. Artists in Residence Program

Reception and Book Signing

A program of songs, poems, essays and images by artists who have participated in Isle Royale's Artists-in-Residence Program, followed by a reception for the artists, book sales and signing of The Island Within Us: Isle Royale Artists in Residence 1991-1998.

FRIDAY, JULY 21:

Ranger III in Rock Harbor

- 7:00 p.m. Maritime Program
- By the crew of the Ranger III*

Rock Harbor Auditorium

- 8:30 p.m. - Songs Celebrating Michigan
- Singer/Songwriter Tom Hodgson will give a performance sponsored by the Michigan Council for the Humanities.*

SATURDAY, JULY 22:

Rock Harbor Lawn

- Times to be announced - Performance
- Grand Portage Band of Minnesota Chippewa Drum Group.*

Snug Harbor

- Throughout the Day, Tours of Historic Isle Royale Boats
- Several boats with historical connections to Isle Royale will be available for tours.*

SATURDAY, JULY 22: continued

Rock Harbor Auditorium

- 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Isle Royale History Symposium
- Presentations are scheduled to last approximately 1/2 hour followed by Q&A. Speakers to Include: Tim Cochrane: Jesuit Diaries, Vernacular Boats; Susan Martin: Aboriginal Copper Mining in the Lake Superior Basin; Dick Moelle: Rock of Ages Lighthouse Lens Project; University of Arizona Researchers: Ethnography of Commercial Fishing on Lake Superior; Liz Valencia: Isle Royale as a National Park (see schedule at Rock Harbor VC for specific speaker times).*
- 8:00 p.m. Artists-in-Residence Program
- Reception and book signing. Songs, poems, essays and images by artists who have participated in Isle Royale Artists-in-Residence Program, followed by a reception for the artists, book sales and signing of The Island Within Us: Isle Royale Artists in Residence 1991-1998.*

SUNDAY, JULY 23:

Snug Harbor

- Throughout the Day, Tours of Historic Isle Royale Boats
- Several boats with historical connections to Isle Royale will be available for tours.*

Rock Harbor Auditorium

- 3:00 p.m. Annual IRNHA Business Meeting
 - 3:30 p.m. Reception, book sales and signing for The Island Within Us: Isle Royale Artists in Residence
 - 4:00 p.m. IRNHA Reminiscences
- A chance for long-time members of the Isle Royale Natural History Association to tell stories and share reminiscences of the history of the IRNHA. Chuck Boyle will serve as MC. (See call for participants on page one.)*
- 6:00 p.m. Picnic dinner. Specifics on place and price available at Rock Harbor VC.

All events except the Annual Business Meetings are open to the public • All events except the Picnic Dinner are free of charge.

LONG RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN FOR ISLE ROYALE & KEWEENAW

Representatives from the Natural History Association have been actively involved in helping to develop long range interpretive plans for both Isle Royale National Park (IRNP) and Keweenaw National Historical Park (KNHP). The goal of a Long-Range Interpretive Plan is to develop a cost-effective, tightly focused, high quality park interpretive program that shares the most important stories of the park with its many audiences. The plan describes the park's primary interpretive themes and recommends ways to communicate those themes to park visitors and other audiences through the use of media, programs, exhibits, and access to resources. Long-range plans recommend actions to be taken over the next five to ten years.

KNHP is just beginning their planning process. IRNHA Board member Nancy Leonard participated in the initial planning meeting in March, and Executive Director Jill Burkland will take part in a full three-day planning session in May. Look for further articles in WE on that interpretive plan as it develops.

Meanwhile IRNP is well on their way to a final plan, a process which began last summer when park staff, representatives from IRNHA, media experts from Harpers Ferry Center, representatives from the National Park Service regional headquarters met on Isle Royale to spend several days traveling the island, assessing present and potential interpretive sites, evaluating facilities and materials, and developing ideas for future possibilities. Jill Burkland and board member John Dunn have been IRNHA's representatives in this planning process.

The planning team met again in November for a four-day workshop in Houghton. Out of that meeting came lists of interpretive themes, visitor goals, and audience profiles, as well as

a full description of existing conditions and visitor experiences, and a list of recommendations for the future.

Developing a list of primary interpretive themes was the first and probably most important step of our planning process. That list will provide the foundation for interpretive programs and media at the park. They are the key ideas through which the park's significant resources are conveyed to the public.

THE SIX THEMES WHICH THE PLANNING TEAM AGREED ON FOR ISLE ROYALE ARE:

- Isle Royale's isolation and habitat protects and maintains the biological diversity of the Lake Superior fishery, which provides a native gene pool for the lake's restoration.
- Wolves' chance colonization of this protected area allowed scientists to better understand wolves' relationship to their prey, to humans, and the ecosystem, turning public opinion about this misunderstood predator.
- Isle Royale's physical isolation and primitive wilderness challenged human use for centuries; ironically, changing human values have converted isolation and wilderness to the island's main attraction.
- Isle Royale is a large island with unique geological features dominated by powerful Lake Superior; its relatively simple ecosystem is a living

laboratory providing insight into evolution, relationships between species, and biodiversity.

- Because overt impacts from centuries of use (logging, fishing, mining) have been curtailed, Isle Royale serves as a benchmark for worldwide indirect human impacts such as air pollution, global change, and exotic species.

- Isle Royale is one of 380 National Park units and part of the National Wilderness Preservation System, which together protect and provide enjoyment of this nation's natural, cultural and wilderness resources.

These six themes will guide IRNP staff and IRNHA in planning future publications, exhibits, programs, and facilities that will further interpretive efforts for Isle Royale National Park. By identifying and stating the primary interpretive themes of the park, we have made the first step in sharing with park visitors and other audiences the stories that define Isle Royale National Park.

Look for more information on Long-Range Interpretive Plans for Isle Royale and Keweenaw in upcoming issues of the Wolf's Eye.

IRNHA BOARD APPOINTEES

The Isle Royale Board at its March 25th meeting appointed three of its directors to serve additional terms. Appointed to serve second terms are Nancy Leonard, IRNHA Treasurer, and

Chuck Boyle, Membership committee chair. Appointed to a third term is past president John Dunn, Chair of the Finance Committee. Nancy, Chuck and John will serve through 2003.

IRNHA Welcomes New Business Manager

Donald Durfee joins the IRNHA staff this month to fill our newly created position of Business Manager. Don will be working half time in our Houghton office, taking care of accounting duties and overseeing our membership program. We look to him to bring our membership files up-to-date, computerize our data base, update our website, and improve communication with our members and customers.

Don holds a degree in Business Administration from Michigan Tech University, and is presently working on a graduate degree in Industrial Archaeology there. He is a member and officer of The Hancock Historic Preservation Committee and the Hancock Pewabic House and Museum Society.

Keweenaw Hires New Interpreter

Brian Hoduski is the new Park Ranger for Interpretation and Museum Services for Keweenaw National Historical Park. He will be in charge of developing the Park's Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (see related article on this page), planning for future museums, curating exhibits, and establishing a park library. Brian will serve as Keweenaw's liaison to IRNHA, working with us to develop publishing and product development plans and establishing aid-to-the park procedures. He comes to Keweenaw after six years at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore where he served as District Interpreter and Park Curator. His outdoor activities include canoeing, hunting, fishing, and hiking.

Isle Royale Natural History Association
800 E. Lakeshore Drive
Houghton, MI 49931-1895

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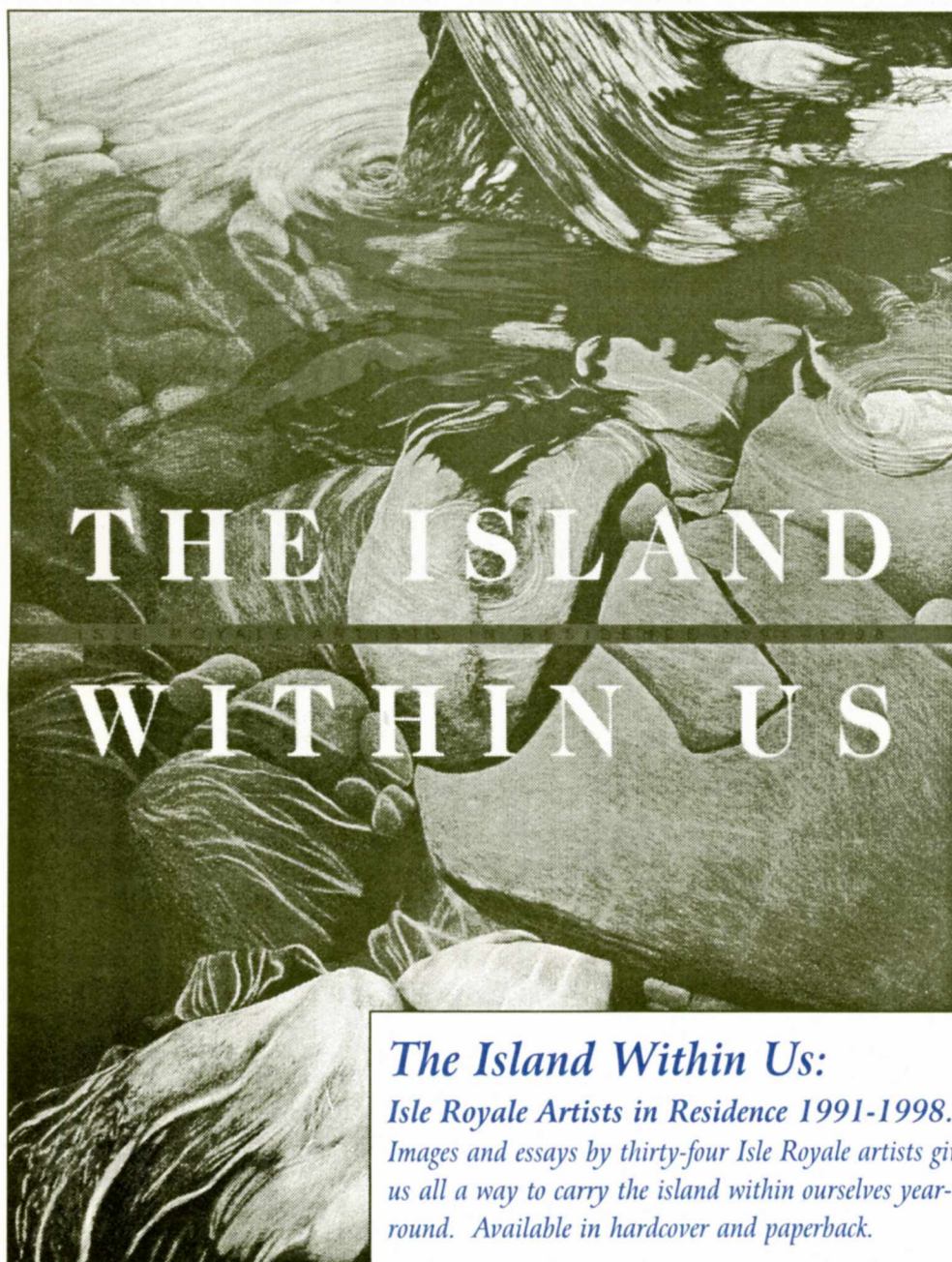
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The Island Within Us:

Isle Royale Artists in Residence 1991-1998.

Images and essays by thirty-four Isle Royale artists give us all a way to carry the island within ourselves year-round. Available in hardcover and paperback.

Order yours today at 1-800-678-6925 or www.irnha.org.



Isle Royale Natural History Association

800 E. Lakeshore Drive
Houghton, MI 49931

Tel: 906-482-7860 or 800-678-6925

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.

Membership Categories

Individual	\$15
Household	\$25
Supporting	\$50
Sustaining	\$100
Life Membership ...	\$500*
Corporate Sponsor .	\$1,000
Corporate Patron. .	\$5,000

**Life memberships may be paid in 5 annual installments.*

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