

Wolf's Eye



ISLE ROYALE NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

2002 No. 4

Winter Comes to Isle Royale

Isle Royale has closed its doors on another season. The last public services to Isle Royale for 2002 ended with the final voyage on October 27 of the *Voyageur II* out of Grand Portage, Minnesota. The park officially closed to all visitors on November 1 and will reopen on April 16, 2003.

The closure is necessary to protect fragile winter biological communities on the island. Winter is a critical time for Isle Royale animals, and every day is a battle for survival for those who remain.

The dynamic and fragile balance between Isle Royale's top predator, wolves, and their main winter food source, moose, continues to fluctuate. The moose herd, of 1,100 in addition to this year's calves, should find more forage available to see them through the winter. The wolf population dropped from 19 to 17 individuals from early 2001 to February 2002, in spite of seven pups being born. The next annual winter study, from early January through early March of 2003, will reveal how the wolf and moose populations have changed over the year.

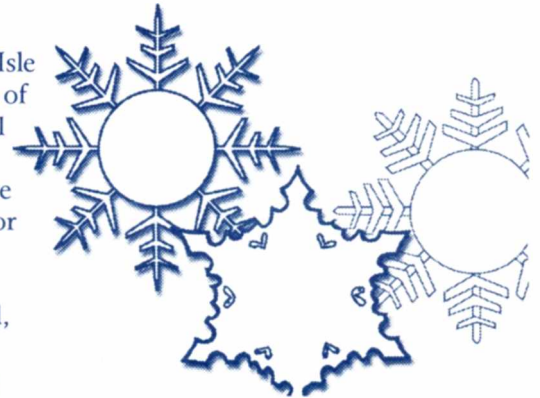
Meanwhile, the Houghton Visitor Center, located at 800 East Lakeshore Drive in Houghton, Michigan, remains open over the winter. Hours are weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. throughout the winter. Drop in, consult the park website at <http://www.nps.gov/isro>, phone (906) 482-0984, or write: Isle Royale National Park, 800 East Lakeshore Drive, Houghton, Michigan 49931, for information about Isle Royale or to plan a trip for the summer 2003 season.

Keweenaw National Historic Park Captures Copper Country Memories

Keweenaw National Historical Park is working to preserve the history and legacy of the copper mining industry in the Keweenaw Peninsula. As part of this effort, the park has initiated an oral history project, with a goal of interviewing, recording, and preserving the memories of the people who worked in mining or related industries, and those with memories of growing up amidst this activity.

To date, Park staff have interviewed retired miners, administrative clerks, hoist engineers, foremen, and many others about their experiences working for a mining company. They have talked to nurses about their careers working for the Calumet Public Hospital. They have also interviewed numerous residents about their memories of the theatres, the C&H Library, and the Copper Country's active social scenes.

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Merlin Tuttle

Myotis (Bat)

2002 BAT SURVEY

Although most people who have spent time on Isle Royale know that there are bats on the island, their species has been little studied or understood. This past summer, researchers sought to correct that lack of information by conducting the first Isle Royale bat survey.

Surveys were conducted at several Isle Royale sites during June, July, and August. Sites were located on both the east and west ends of the island, in wilderness and non-wilderness areas. Each site was monitored for two consecutive nights each month. Each night of monitoring began one half hour before sunset and concluded approximately five hours later.

Two different survey methods were used. Mist nets were used to capture eighty individual bats from three species. Sonar software was also used to identify bats by their calls. Through

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Keweenaw...Memories

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The information gathered from this project will be used for three main purposes. First, the interview tapes and transcripts will be housed at the Keweenaw History Center (C&H Library) for the use of historians and researchers. (Many interviews are already available for people to listen to on an appointment basis.) Second, the recordings will become a crucial component of the park's interpretation program, allowing visitors to hear the history of the Keweenaw in the voices and words of those who lived it. Third, the project will contribute to effective management decisions for rehabilitation of historic landscapes and structures.

Abby Sue Fisher, Chief of Museum, Archives, and Historical Services, provides overall guidance for the project, and works with Oral Historian Jo Urion, who conducts the personal interviews.



Big Brown Bat

BAT SURVEY...continued from page 1

the use of sonar identification another three species were identified.

Species captured included little brown bats and northern long-eared bats, whose calls were also recorded, and big brown bats whose calls were not recorded. Species identified through sonar identification were red bats, hoary bats, and silver-haired bats.

The capture of some pregnant females as well as juvenile bats indicates that a small maternity colony likely exists on Isle Royale and some bats are reproducing there. Due to extremes in weather and the lack of deep caves or mines with stable winter temperatures, it is unlikely that bats are over-wintering on Isle Royale, but rather that all bats present in the summer are summer migrants.

Increasing our knowledge of Isle Royale's resident species will assist future resource management decisions as well as further our understanding of the ecology of the park.

Isle Royale Institute Summer 2003 Programs

During the summer of 2003 the Isle Royale Institute will be offering a number of presentations, as well as day-long and multi-day educational experiences for every interested Park visitor. Many of these programs will be new, but the Institute will also repeat a number of the successful activities from 2002.

Park visitors can attend presentations by researchers or other regional experts on board the Ranger III or on the island. The Institute will once again also offer multi-day educational experiences on Isle Royale. These Institute-led tours are designed to provide participants with a more in-depth experience than they might be able to have on their own.

Opportunities include Elderhostel, Audubon, University, Outdoor Skills and many other class offerings next summer at Isle Royale or in the Upper Peninsula. For a course list or Institute information visit the Isle Royale Institute website at <http://www.forestry.mtu.edu/iri/> or email gleason@mtu.edu.

IRNHA is considering offering a special IRNHA Members Only trip to the island. Look for more information in the next issue of "Wolf's Eye" and in our member listserve updates.

Giving Options for the IRNHA Endowment at the Keweenaw Community Foundation

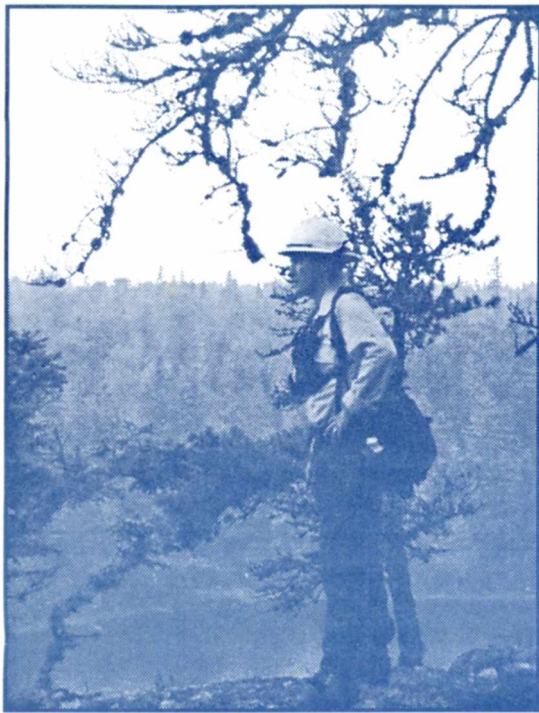
Last year IRNHA established a designated endowment fund with the Keweenaw Community Foundation in our home community of Houghton, Michigan. Like community foundations nationwide, the Keweenaw Community Foundation is committed to developing permanent endowment funds, income from which will provide stable, long-term funding for local programs and agencies.

A number of flexible giving options are available to supporters of the IRNHA endowment at the Keweenaw Community Foundation:

Flexible Giving Options

Outright Gift	Cash and pledges, publicly traded securities, trusts, or appreciated stock. In addition to the federal tax deduction, annual gifts from Michigan taxpayers receive a 50% tax credit (up to \$100 for individuals and \$200 for joint filers).
Other Forms of Gifts	Under certain circumstances, closely held stock, real estate, tangible personal property, life insurance policies, partnership interests, annuities, 401(k) or IRA proceeds.
Bequests	A testamentary gift or a portion of an estate, established by will or trust. (This is the most common form of planned giving.)
Charitable Gift Annuity	A contract with the foundation whereby a donor transfers cash or property in return for immediate tax benefits and fixed payments for life or a period of years. Income is partly tax exempt and may be deferred to a later date, depending upon the donor's situation and desires. The residual value of the annuity will then pass to the IRNHA endowment upon the death of the beneficiary(s) or termination of a prescribed period of years.
Charitable Remainder Trust	Cash or property placed in a trust, which pays an annual income for life or a period years. Tax benefits occur the year the trust is established, but may apply to subsequent gifts to the trust, depending on the form of trust elected. Following the donor's death or prescribed number of years, assets held by the trust are transferred to the Keweenaw Community Foundation and credited to the IRNHA endowment.

Please feel free to contact IRNHA (800-678-6925) or the Community Foundation (906-482-9673) if you would like more information on how you can help guarantee the future of the Isle Royale Natural History Association.



Branch Chief of Natural Resources Oelfke Moves On

Isle Royale's Branch Chief of Natural Resources, Jack Oelfke will leave Isle Royale next month after eleven years of service. It has been Jack's job to oversee the natural resource group—a mix of full time and seasonal employees, including biologists and wilderness managers. He contributed to the park's general management plan. In January Jack will leave his post at Isle Royale to become Chief for Resource Management at North Cascades National Park Complex in Washington.

In a recent interview published in the Minnesota Sea Grant newsletter "The Seiche," Jack shared some of his observations about the natural resources of Isle Royale—both the successes he has seen and areas of concern.

Some of the positive changes he has seen include recovery of specific species like the bald eagle and wolf. Isle Royale also served as fledgling ground for 50 hand-reared peregrine falcons, although none have returned to nest. "The Canadian biologists chuckle that the peregrines fly to Isle Royale and then they look across and see the cliffs at Thunder Bay and hop across," mused Oelfke. "That's probably true, but that's okay. If we've done some minor part to help, that's good enough."

One area of concern for Oelfke is contaminants. Mercury and PCBs have been found on the island, brought there by winds from industrialized areas. PCB levels are getting lower, but mercury remains a concern.

One issue that most concerns him hasn't reached the island yet: non-native species such as the zebra mussel and Eurasian ruffe. "Because we have contact with the mainland, both with our own park service operations or research vessels and with private boats, the opportunities are there for some of these non-native species to make it out here. Some of them, such as the zebra mussel, could have devastating effects."

Oelfke urges visitors to the island, especially boaters, canoeists, and backpackers, to check their watercraft and equipment for non-native plants, plant seeds, or animals before departing for the island.

WATER LEVELS UP

Lake Superior water levels are up as we head into the winter of 2002/2003. The official water level recorded in October was 601.8 feet, which is 3 inches below average, but 8 inches over last year's October recording. Data from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and U.S. Corps of Engineers show an all-time October high of 603.2 and an all-time low of 600.8.

Memories of Bylo Farmer

It is with regret and sadness that the family of Bylo Farmer (nee' Murray) announce her death on October 23, 2002, at the age of 97 years. Bylo was preceded in death by her husband, Westy and a son, David.

Bylo was known to many as a strong lady who spent her summers at Isle Royale raising what one of her sons called "four little hooligans." She often took her brood to Isle Royale at the end of April and stayed until late September or early October.

After Isle Royale was given over to the National Park Service, Bylo and Westy retained a life lease on their residence. Bylo was known and loved by many and made the Farmer cabin--Coffee Pot Landing--a haven for hospitality, stories of the old days on Isle Royale, wonderful desserts and a never-ending pot of coffee, for friends, family and strangers alike. She made her last trip to Isle Royale and Coffee Pot Landing at the age of ninety.

An interview with Bylo and Westy Farmer can be read in the Isle Royale Natural History Association publication, *Island Folk*. An excerpt from their interview with Peter Oikarinen follows:

"Somewhere during our talk, dinner arrived. Again, as in other homes, the offerings were delicious and varied--the hosts' conversation making it taste even better. 'Don't you get bored?' I asked Bylo as we ate. It's a common question, asked by those who have no eyes, who don't understand the pace of island life. Bylo looked directly at me. 'The wind changes, the seasons change; sometimes there's fog, waves, animals. It's new, different every day.' She said it intensely, wanting me to feel it too."

The family suggests memorials in Bylo's name to the Isle Royale Natural History Association. Bylo was a life member of the Association and served as IRNHA President in 1971 and 1972.



Bylo Farmer, celebrating her 88th birthday at Coffee Pot Landing with two of her great-grandsons, Matt and Jesse Bryan.

www.irnha.org ←

Isle Royale Natural History Association
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Houghton, MI 49931-1895

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Houghton, Michigan
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New Products by Susan Robinson!

Houghton artist Susan Robinson, is the author/illustrator of one of the best selling books in Isle Royale Visitor Centers, *Is This An Agate?* Her knowledge of local geology combined with her artistic talents make her paintings beautiful, unique, and educational.

We are happy to announce that she has produced a new poster for IRNHA, "Lake Superior Beach Stones: Isle Royale and Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula." This beautiful 16" x 20" poster comes with a key which enables you to identify the stones pictured. It is available now for \$14.45 with mailing tube.

Susan has also recently produced a 500-piece Superior Beach Stone puzzle, which is available for \$15.95.

10% Discount for all members. 6% sales tax for MI residents.

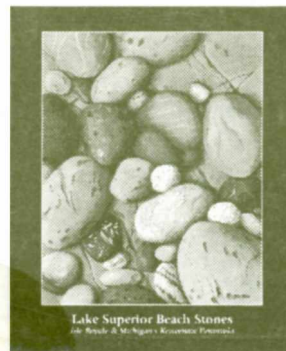
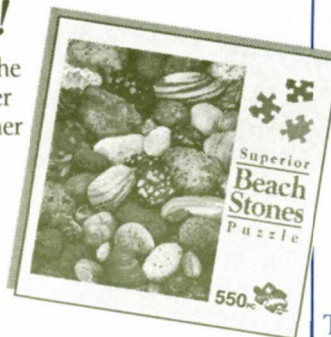
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Order now from IRNHA, 800 E. Lakeshore Dr.,
Houghton, MI 49931. Make checks payable to "IRNHA".
Or, call (800) 678-6925 or order on our website:

www.irnha.org



Isle Royale Natural History Association

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

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

Membership Categories

Individual	\$20
Household	\$25
Supporting	\$50
Sustaining	\$100
Patron	\$250
Benefactor	\$500
Life Membership	\$1,000*

*Life memberships may be paid
in 5 annual installments.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, January 23, 7:00pm

"A Look Back at Commercial Fishing on Isle Royale,"

a program by Isle Royale Branch Chief of Cultural Resources, Liz Valencia.
Refreshments following. Free and open to the public.

Hesterberg Hall Auditorium, Michigan Tech University, Houghton, MI.

Co-sponsored by Keweenaw National Historical Park and Michigan Tech Archives.

Saturday, March 22, 12:00 noon

IRNHA Board Meeting

Keweenaw National Historical Park Administrative Office Building