

# Wolf's Eye



ISLE ROYALE NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

2004 No. 3

## Island Coaster Brook Trout Populations Low

The fishing season for brook trout has closed for this year at Isle Royale and anglers are being asked to comment on a proposal for next season to ensure the viability of one of the last self-sustaining Coaster brook trout

(Coasters) populations south of the Canadian border. Isle Royale National Park is home to two genetic variants of Coasters, in Tobin Harbor and in Siskiwit Bay. Both of these strains have been critical to restocking efforts on the south shore of Lake Superior.



Preliminary information from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service enabled the Michigan Department of Natural Resource Fisheries Division to take a proactive step to propose catch and release regulations for the Lake Superior waters within Isle Royale National Park boundaries. Park Superintendent, Phyllis Green, is evaluating establishing parallel emergency regulations for the park's Lake Superior tributaries and Hidden Lake to protect Coasters and would add a barbless hook requirement to decrease mortality. Superintendent Green said "People fish for many species in the Lake Superior waters around Isle Royale. We support the Michigan Department of Natural Resource proposed regulations. By allowing "catch and release" for this species it will still allow anglers the unique opportunity to catch the species but in a way that returns any fish caught to the wild. The additional emergency regulations requiring barbless hooks and a catch and release policy on all streams will protect the species during the stream dwelling stage of its lifecycle."



In August the results of coaster assessment and population status work at Isle Royale by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service described drastically low population levels.

Even restocking efforts in Siskiwit Bay with Siskiwit Bay coaster stock has had limited success. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service will be reviewing the population trend data this winter to determine if additional studies are needed to identify factors critical to ensure long term viability of coaster populations at Isle Royale. Information on the population dynamics and habitat needs of coasters at Isle Royale is extremely valuable to rehabilitation success of this rare symbol of the lake's history in other streams on Superior's south shore. Currently, fishery agencies are working to rehabilitate or re-establish coasters through restoration of tributary habitat, regulatory protection, and in nine select tributaries, to stock Isle Royale strain Coaster brook trout.



## Isle Royale Institute's New Underwater Robot Begins Its Explorations of Lake Superior and Isle Royale

The Isle Royale Institute, a partnership between the National Park Service, Michigan Technological University and University of Minnesota Duluth, is using a small robot to conduct underwater research on Isle Royale. The small robot, referred to as a Remotely Operated Vehicle or ROV, was obtained through a grant and is able to explore to the depth of 500 feet underwater. It has two TV cameras, lights, and a small arm, and weighs about 12 pounds. It can be operated with a cable connection from a boat or shore. The ROV is being used by researchers and educators to gain a stronger understanding of our underwater

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## 2004 Membership Meeting



Rolf Peterson, speaker at this year's meeting.

The 2004 IRNHA Membership Meeting was held in Rock Harbor on Sunday, July 25.

IRNHA President Christine Manninen welcomed everyone and introduced IRNHA Board and staff. She thanked the Snells, Gales, and Merritts for opening their homes for the tour on Saturday. Almost 40 IRNHA members participated in the tour of three of the island's historic homes. At each site, we were given a tour of the cabins and out buildings which remain virtually unchanged since the turn of the century.

A summary of IRNHA committee reports from the meetings follows:

**Elections Committee Report:** Christine Manninen, Sara Basso, and Mark Gleason were re-appointed to the board this year. Sara Basso is the new president of IRNHA.

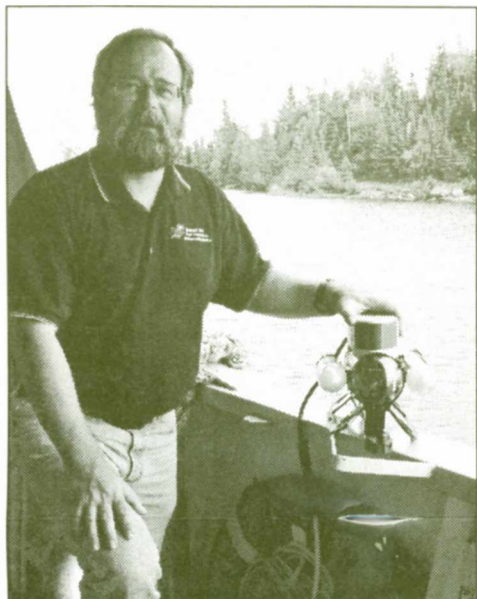
**Membership Report:** Membership numbers are up. As of July 15, we had 965 total members, 240 of them are life members. Dues income to date is \$24,530, which is up 10% over last year.

**Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2003:** IRNHA ended the year in the red, but measures have been taken to reduce expenses, and it is anticipated that we will end 2004 in the black.

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## Underwater Robot

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Mark Gleason, IRI Director, with ROV

resources at Isle Royale National Park and to share that knowledge with the public.

Wolf/moose researchers Rolf and Candy Peterson and IRI staff member Brian Rajdl used the ROV this summer to observe moose feeding underwater. This effort resulted in very interesting, and sometimes humorous, video which Rolf shared with IRNHA members at this summer's annual meeting. The ROV was also used by NPS staff to check the bottoms of two park boats for invasive species, and the public was able to view the bottom of Rock Harbor during an evening program onboard the *Ranger III*. IRI staff have been involved in studying shipwrecks, exotics and aquatic vegetation in Lake Superior and Lake Michigan as well as an archeology site in New York utilizing this new ROV.

## Greenstone Wins National Award

The 2004 Isle Royale newspaper, *The Greenstone*, was awarded an Honorable Mention in this year's Association of Partners for Public Lands Media and Partnership Awards in the category Complimentary Visitor Guides. *The Greenstone* is funded by IRNHA and edited by Smitty Parratt and Greg Blust from NPS and Jill Burkland, executive director of IRNHA.

Look for your 2005 edition of the *Greenstone* in March.

## 2004 Membership Meeting

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**Publications Report:** New products include two new Isle Royale pins, an Isle Royale wildflowers screensaver, and Keweenaw Park postcards. The children's book *Wolf Tracks and Moose Scat* is due out fall 2004. Free copies will be sent to interested elementary schools in the Upper Peninsula. *Diary of an Isle Royale School Teacher* has been reprinted with funding from a personal donation from Joyce & John Van Westenburg. Plans are underway to reprint *Isle Royale: A Photographic History*. Work is underway on a comprehensive field guide.

**Fundraising Committee Report.** Two grants were received this year. A grant of \$10,500 was made by Mead Westvaco Corporation for printing and distribution of *Wolf Tracks and Moose Scat*. A grant for \$2500 was received from the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund to produce and distribute a brochure on Isle Royale Aquatic Invasive Species.

Following committee reports Isle Royale Supt. Phyllis Green summarized some of the recent events at Isle Royale.

- She introduced Marshall Plummer, who is the new East District Ranger at IRNP. Other new NPS staff this year include Jean Battle, Branch Chief for Natural Resources and Keith Butler, Chief of Maintenance. Larry Kangas has assumed the role of Chief Ranger for Isle Royale. The Chief of Interpretation job, left vacant by Smitty Parratt, is being handled by Greg Blust and Liz Valencia.
- There are several planning processes underway, including a Wilderness Plan, which is expected out this fall, a Historic Properties plan, a Fisheries Plan, and an Aquatics Plan.
- A Fire Plan has been completed. Every fire will be assessed and appropriate action determined, but general guidelines recommend that naturally caused fires be allowed to burn unless they threaten developed areas. Fires on the island have been infrequent.
- In response to potential maritime terrorism threats, the Coast Guard has initiated tight security regulations on large passenger vessels. These regulations which include screening and surveillance, will apply to the *Ranger III* unless the park can get an exemption.
- The Coaster Brook Trout stocking program which has been done by the DNR, Fish & Wildlife, and NPS in Siskiwit Bay, has not been as successful as anticipated. Isle Royale's breeding stock is the only one left in the U.S. and discussions are underway as to how the program can be better managed. (See related article on page one.)

Following the meeting, Isle Royale wolf moose research scientist Rolf Peterson gave a program on the present state of the island's wolf and moose populations. The program included new videotaped aerial footage of wolves, footage of a cow moose teaching her newborn calf to swim, and some underwater video of moose feeding taken with the Isle Royale Institute's new remote underwater camera. (See related article on this page.)

Following Rolf's program members were invited to a trout picnic on the waterfront hosted by the IRNHA Board of Directors.

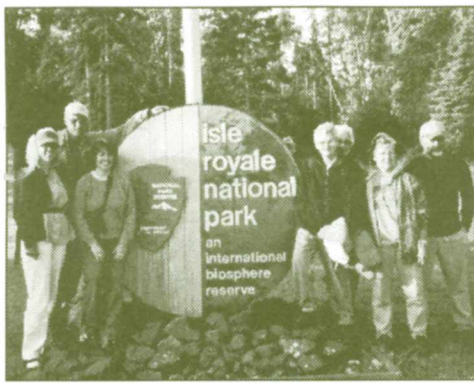
## SUPERIOR WATER LEVELS UP

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is predicting water levels near average on Lake Superior for October 2004 into January 2005. Most of the Great Lakes have been suffering from lower than average water levels for several years, but higher than average rainfall and lower than average temperatures helped to raise Superior levels this summer. Erie's level is also up from last summer. Ontario is above normal. Huron and Michigan are up a foot from last year, but still about a foot below normal levels.

## In Memory

One of Isle Royale's Artists in Residence, Dan Urbanski, passed away in August. Dan took the photograph of northern lights over Tobin Harbor that has been our best selling poster for many years. This photograph is also featured in our book *The Island Within Us*. He presented a program of his Isle Royale photographs at our annual membership meeting in 2002. Dan operated the Silver Image Studio in Silver City, Michigan for many years. He is survived by his wife, Patty.

John Clark of Hancock, Michigan died in September. John was a retired professor from Michigan Technological University. He and his wife Barbara have been members of IRNHA for many years.



Service trip participants from left to right: Jill Burkland, Alan West, Marilyn Cooper, Nelda Liebig, Sara Basso, Maryann Majerus, John Dunn.

## Sunshine, Mosquitos, Good Humor, Great Food, New Friends, and—Oh Yes, Burdock

The first IRNHA members' service trip was all of the above and more.

Seven of us -- some new members, some long-time members, some board members --spent seven wonderful days together camping on Isle Royale, learning new things about the island, about IRNHA, about each other, and maybe even about ourselves. We spent the first few days in the Rock Harbor area, where we participated in the events associated with the annual IRNHA Member Meeting. On Monday we headed out to Daisy Farm via NPS boat with all our gear and food (and there was lots of both). There we spent the next couple of days helping get rid of one of the park's nastiest invasive species -- burdock. We surveyed the entire Daisy Farm area for the species and dug over 350 plants, getting fairly competitive at times. Plants that had gone to seed were bagged and returned to Mott Island and the remaining plants were discarded on site. After the work was done, we had time for hiking and swimming and still had a trip across the way to visit Rolf and Candy Peterson at their wolf/moose research center.

Plans for a second members' service trip are underway. Tentative dates are July 26 - Aug. 3. Maximum number of participants is nine, so call Jill Burkland at 800-678-6925 to reserve your place. Cost for the week is \$500.

## Wilderness Act Celebrates 40 Yrs

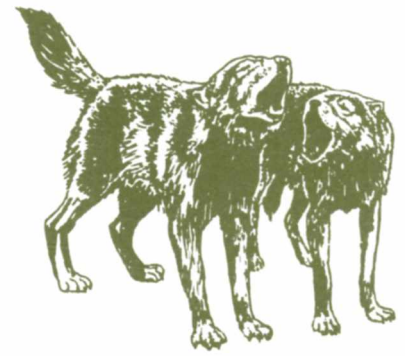
When Congress passed the Wilderness Act in 1964, it designated 9.1 million acres across the United States permanently off limits to development. Since then, lawmakers have added an additional 96.5 million acres--including more than 50 million acres in Alaska alone--for a total of 105.6 million acres, spread over some 662 different areas and constituting roughly five percent of total U.S. land mass. Isle Royale was designated a Wilderness Area in 1976. 132,000 acres, or 98%, of Isle Royale is designated wilderness.

It was a group of influential policy-makers, scientists and outdoorsmen that banded together in the mid-1930s whose advocacy work ultimately led to the passage of the Wilderness Act 30 years later. Calling themselves the Wilderness Society, they included: Benton Mackaye, known as "father of the Appalachian Trail"; Robert Sterling Yard, at the time a National Park Service publicist; visionary ecologist and author Aldo Leopold; and Robert Marshall, then chief of recreation and lands for the Forest Service.

This year, numerous government agencies and non-profit organizations are celebrating the 40th anniversary of the passage of the Wilderness Act and assessing how to best work together to protect wilderness lands in perpetuity. Conferences are exploring the important role wilderness plays in the American psyche, and "walks for wilderness" are scheduled on weekends this fall from coast-to-coast to raise public awareness about the role wilderness plays in the quality of life and the health of our environment.

Large full color maps depicting the wilderness preservation system are available free of charge to IRNHA Members. Please request a map by phoning us at 800-678-6925. Pins celebrating the event are available through IRNHA for \$5.00 plus shipping. (See photo and ordering information on back page.)

For more information on the Wilderness Act see their website at [www.wilderness.net](http://www.wilderness.net)



## DAYBREAK

Early as shapes emerge gray after black.  
The lake is flat as a floor, and your paddle  
batters water as you push your canoe  
from a muddy shore with your pack, your boots,  
and your hone for a loon or a moose.  
The bow turns clear glass smeary. The try  
in your bicep is an ache that makes you grateful,  
and you glance back for what you know is coming,  
the first orange smolder of day, a promise  
that's still surprise. On Tobin Harbor's north  
shore, far in the fence of pine mining the ridge  
root-deep and thick, a quick wolf-cry.  
You pause the wood blade high. An echo  
and an answer, and you picture the paws  
prowling pack-wise, a pant of animal, fur-white  
and tired. You glide in a listen. Silence  
again. Back in your cabin, on a rock at the desk,  
a cling of float copper sheathed in greens  
and blacks but gleaming in the shiny wrinkle  
where the plier's eye crimped through corrosion.  
Greenstones in a pile. All best things are accidental  
finds. Three spiders and their webs, insects  
you think of as friends because they sit and wait  
as you do over thin paper, pale and blank,  
strung out in lines, dreaming food.  
You will root all day for clumsy flies.  
You push your blade against the lake and gaze  
again to see the first light shy and bare.  
Shapes define as shadows stretch and blacken.  
Suddenly color runs from everything on shore.  
The whole day is coming to you, fresh and lit:  
greens, blues and reds as beautiful and wet  
as meadows fat with bent goldenrod, clover,  
and streams of seeded grass freckled and dewy  
with white water dropped and heating like speckled  
beads of yellow light waiting to burst and shine.

Andrew C. Gottlieb

Isle Royale Artist-in-Residence, 2003

(Copies of this poem, signed and suitable for framing are available for purchase. See page 4.)

## Isle Royale Natural History Association

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Permit No. 45 Wolf's Eye

## Thanks, IRNHA Volunteers!

Several IRNHA members spent part of their summers working as volunteers in the Isle Royale visitor centers in Rock Harbor and Windigo. By using volunteers early and late in the season, we were able to keep visitor centers open during off-peak seasons and to lower our payroll expenses. Thanks so much to Chuck Boyle, Joanne Broady, Sylvia Engel, Bob Oswald, Sandy Wilhoit, Vaughn Snook, and Susan, Emma and Carrie Dlutkowski who volunteered for us in Rock Harbor. And thanks to Bob and Libby Iversen, Nelda Liebig, and Dave Duchamp who worked for us in Windigo.

## NEW PRODUCTS FOR FALL & THE HOLIDAYS

### Isle Royale Wildflowers Screensaver by David Newland • \$5.95

75 high-resolution photographs taken on Isle Royale. Includes both screensaver and JPEG files of each gorgeous color wildflower photo. An option displays scientific name, common name and Isle Royale location for each flower. Compatible with Windows XP, ME, 2000, NT, 98, 95 and Mac OS-X.



### Broadside by Andrew Gottlieb • \$14.95

Isle Royale Artist in Residence Andrew Gottlieb's poem "Daybreak" red and black print on heavy cream paper. Signed and numbered. Suitable for framing. 10" x 17" (See poem on Page 3)

### Wright Island Journal 2005 Calendar by Betsy Bowen • \$14.95

An artist's journal with 12 woodblock prints made into a monthly calendar for 2005. The prints and text were done by Betsy Bowen over two summers that she spent on Isle Royale's Wright Island.



### Wilderness Act Pins • \$5.00

This colorful pin celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. A true collector's item. Proceeds support wilderness education efforts.



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

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or call (800) 678-6925,  
or order on our website:

[www.irnha.org](http://www.irnha.org)

Dear Isle Royale History Association,

Last summer myself, my grandmother, my mother and my sister went to Isle Royale. Then I had just come out of 6th grade.

We came and we stayed for a week, attending programs, going on hikes, and canoeing/kayaking. We saw a lot of different wildlife, enjoying the opportunity of all. We saw 4 moose, one a calf, about 10 loons, a family of foxes, and lots and lots of assorted other birds and squirrels. When we hiked, we saw the water and it was truly beautiful. We also went on a guided hike to Cool Louise. It's an amazing view! I came expecting a cold week of woodland and instant soup dinners. I left thinking much, much more of the beautiful island. It's my favorite place in the whole world now.

People may think kids are all about TV and fast food now, but there are a rare case or so that really acknowledge the beauty of a place like Isle Royale.

Sincerely,  
Alayna Rierce



## 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.

### Board of Directors

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