

Wolf's Eye



ISLE ROYALE NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

2008 No. 2

Fifty Years of Wolf Moose Research on Isle Royale

2008 marks the 50th anniversary of the wolf/moose study on Isle Royale and, interestingly, results from this year's count show conditions very similar to those observed 50 years ago. Wolves this year numbered 23, compared to 20 in 1959. Moose numbers are estimated at 650 this year, which is just slightly over the estimate for 1959.

Comparisons with last year show an increase in the wolf population from 21 in 2007. The moose population also appears to be up from 2007, partly due to an increase in the number of moose, but also due to better observation conditions this year.

Wolves are continuing to show signs of food shortage, with individuals traveling into other pack territories in search of moose and moose bones. West Nile virus and canine parvovirus were both detected in recent blood samples from island wolves. However, for the first time in many years, there is a new pack on the island. The Paduka Pack is made up of 2 adults and two pups. The only other two pups recorded this year are in the Middle Pack.

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Isle Royale Visitation Down in 2007

Fewer people visited Isle Royale last year than any year since 1984. 16,000 people made the trip to the island in 2007, compared to just over 17,000 in 2006 and 21,000 in 2000. Numbers in the late 80s were as high as 31,000.

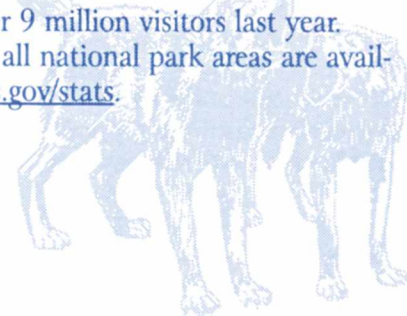
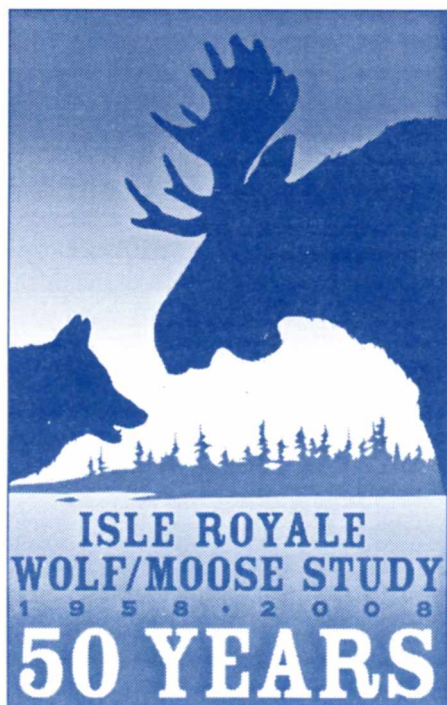
Low Lake Superior water levels played a major role in the decline. The *Wenonah*, which travels to Isle Royale from Grand Portage, MN, was out of commission for the whole summer, which cut down substantially on the number of people making day trips to Windigo.

The average length of stays for Isle Royale visitors was about 3 1/2 days. Approximately 14% of those overnight stays were in concessions lodging in Rock Harbor; most of the remainder were campers, with a small number of visitors staying on their boats. July was the busiest month on the island, with 5,377 visitors, and August came in a close second with 5,249 visitors.

At 16,000 visitors, Isle Royale came in as number 325 of 360 national parks in the ranking of visitor numbers for 2007.

More than 275 million visits were recorded in all of America's national park system in 2007, an increase of three million visits from the previous year. After a record 287 million visits in 1999, and a one-year bump attributed to the 2004 opening of the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC, the number of visits to our nation's parks has been in decline.

Great Smoky Mountains was the most visited National Park with over 9 million visitors last year. Visitation statistics for all national park areas are available at www.nature.nps.gov/stats.



The number of wolves recorded in each pack this winter is:

East Pack	5
Chippewa Harbor Pack	5
Middle Pack	8
Paduka Pack	4
Loners	1

Although the island's moose population seems to be holding steady, the percentage of the population made up of calves has been very low for the last two years. Fewer calves have been born, and mortality rates among calves have been high, at least in part due to intense wolf predation. Island moose have plenty of food available to them, but unusually hot weather has reduced their foraging rate. Moose ticks continue to cause hair and blood loss and weaken the island's moose population.

The complete 2007-2008 Wolf/Moose Report is available in park visitor centers and on our website, www.ironhwa.org, for \$4.95.

The Other Side of the Isle Royale Wolf/Moose Story

Carolyn (Candy) Peterson, is known to many of our members as wife of Isle Royale wolf-moose researcher Rolf Peterson, program-presenter at Daisy Farm, Earthwatch volunteer, field assistant, and welcoming tour guide at Bangsund cabin. This summer we will publish her memoir, *View from the Wolf's Eye*, relating her life on the island over the last 39 years. Excerpts below include her introduction to the island and her new home, the Bangsund cabin.



I was an experienced camper (my parents had taken me on canoe trips in Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area since I was four, and long canoe trips at camp had sharpened my skills), yet I found life in an old fisherman's cabin to be difficult. This was not the log cabin on the cover of an L.L. Bean catalog, with varnished pine logs and a stone hearth. The ambience of Bangsund Cabin in 1971 was (and is!) "dated utilitarian." The logs had long since been painted light green on the inside, and to keep out the wind, tarpaper had been nailed to the outside. The rocking chair "upholstery" was oily and dingy, the curtains faded and dusty, and the floor badly a tilt. The roof leaked, and spiders, deer mice, bats, and garter snakes passed at will through the gaps between the log walls and the warped floor. Imagined horrors lurked behind cabinets, and it took years for me to muster courage to probe the darkest corners. To make matters worse, I was often alone. While Rolf and Jim were out on adventures, I was lonesome and bored, even frightened, at the cabin. Once again, that Peace Corps alternative tempted me.

It took some effort for me to love all nature's parts as thoroughly and effortlessly as Rolf did. I accepted critters outside where they belonged but was frustrated not to be able to pick my cabin mates.

The pitter-patter/thump of mice in the ceiling above our bed kept me awake at night, and in early morning light I couldn't take my eyes off spiders, some real, some imagined,

on our chipboard ceiling. One bad day, as I walked out the front door, something fell on my head and encircled my neck. Instinctively, I grabbed the thing and flung it out into the lake with all the strength of my adrenaline-pumped body, and then learned that garter snakes are accomplished swimmers. I knew the snake was harmless and was merely enjoying the warm sun on the doorjamb, but fear is often irrational, and it took some time for my jitters to subside.

Another new experience was operating powerboats. My first solo adventure in the old wooden "Wolf" with twin 20-hp motors nearly ended in disaster when I forgot which motor was permanently stuck in forward gear. Having turned off the wrong one and heading straight for shore at a fast clip, I had to hop over the windshield and jump into the shallow water to keep the hull from crunching on our rocky beach.

Neighbors were a Godsend. Pete and Laura Edisen operated a fishery a quarter-mile away, and I used the trail Pete had made years before, when he and his brother shared a shack near the Bangsund Cabin and courted Laura, who lived with her parents, also fishermen, near the Rock Harbor Lighthouse. Pete and Laura were the most generous, hospitable, friendly folks I had ever known, and how I needed those cups of coffee in their cozy kitchen! Pete had been born in Norway and recalled "the old country" fondly, yet he spoke with equal reverence about Isle Royale. He showed no favoritism with respect to humans and other animals; in fact, he had a wonderfully positive attitude toward just about everything. It felt good to be near Pete.

Emergency Bait Use and Boat Cleaning Restrictions Enacted at Isle Royale

Park Superintendent Phyllis Green has announced emergency restrictions on the possession and use of organic fish bait for fishing within the Lake Superior waters of the park and on decontamination of boats transported to the park via *Ranger III*. "These restrictions are necessary to help prevent the spread of viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) to Lake Superior and the waters around Isle Royale. This deadly fish virus has the potential to devastate island fish populations if it gets into the Lake," Green said.

The restrictions took effect on April 22. Under these new restrictions, the possession and use of fish and/or fish parts as bait for fishing in Isle Royale's Lake Superior waters will be restricted to only those fish or fish parts obtained from fish caught within Isle Royale National Park. All transportation of fish or fish parts to the island for use as bait is prohibited. The new restrictions also require all boats transported to Isle Royale on *Ranger III* to be washed or disinfected prior to departure.

VHS is a deadly fish virus that has recently been detected in all of the lower Great Lakes and several inland lakes. It is spreading rapidly and has caused large scale fish kills in the lower Great Lakes. The virus affects at least 32 species of freshwater fish, 28 of which occur in the Lake Superior Basin. The virus has not yet been detected in Lake Superior, but has significant potential to impact the ecological integrity of fish populations and recreational fishing opportunities throughout the basin. The virus, which is known to emerge and spread rapidly in the early spring, does not impact humans.

The full text of the emergency restrictions can be found at www.nps.gov/isro.

Isle Royale Natural History Association

2008 Board of Directors Election

Vote for not more than 2 candidates for IRNHA Board

(Ballots must be postmarked by July 1, 2008)

Jean Borseth, Manitowoc, WI

As a summer resident of Eagle Harbor, Michigan for the past 29 years, I have a strong interest in preserving the history and environment of the Upper Peninsula and Isle Royale. My family has enjoyed multiple trips to Isle Royale, both hiking and kayaking around the island. The family of my husband, John, lived in the Keweenaw area for four generations, with his great-grandfather working as a miner in Red Jacket Shaft. I believe that it is our responsibility to ensure that the beauty and heritage of the Upper Peninsula and Isle Royale is maintained and shared with future generations.

As Director of Development and Communications at Kingston Hill, an organization that offers independent housing for older adults, I am responsible for the annual giving program, as well as major gifts, special campaigns, special events and marketing. We successfully completed the first public fundraising campaign in 105 years with a \$450,000 capital campaign to renovate the Victorian wing.

In addition to my duties at Kingston Hill, I serve as a board member of a grassroots organization that is working to construct a new community center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. I have recently completed a three-year term as elder of First Presbyterian Church, Cedar Rapids. During the three years that I served, the church undertook a \$4.2 million capital campaign for a major renovation. I currently serve as board member and Vice President of Programs for the Eastern Iowa Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Lynn Priddy, Chicago, IL

Lynn is currently one of four Directors and Senior Leaders of The Higher Learning Commission of NCA, the largest institutional accrediting organization of colleges and universities in the United States, assuring and advancing the quality of more than 1000 diverse institutions, ranging from the University of Michigan and University of Chicago to small rural tribal colleges, community colleges, and all state and land grant universities in a nineteen state region. In her current position, Lynn is directly responsible for the Education and Training of member institutions, as well as the 1300 volunteer peer reviewers. In addition, her work takes her to developing countries to assist their efforts in developing higher education systems and processes for assuring and advancing the quality of these systems. Most recently, Lynn has worked with Vietnam, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina, and Mongolia. As part of her role, Lynn partners in the ongoing strategic planning of the Commission, in consulting and partnering with institutions in this planning.

Candidate statements continued on the back

Vote for not more than 2 candidates for IRNHA Board

Please detach and mail to IRNHA 800 E. Lakeshore Dr, Houghton, MI 49931

(Ballots must be postmarked by July 1)

_____ Jean Bjorseth _____ Lynn Priddy _____ Michael Thomas

Lynn Priddy (Cont. from front)

Prior to joining the Commission, Lynn served in institutions as a Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Evaluation, and Planning; Director of Research, Assessment, and Development; and English/Composition Faculty. Lynn is an summa cum laude alumni of Calvin College and is a summa cum laude graduate of the State University of New York, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and Capella University, where she received her Ph.D. in Higher Education, focusing on organizational evaluation, research, and self-assessment. She has published numerous articles and is a frequent presenter at national conferences. Her service on boards has included Wisconsin Make a Wish Foundation, Young Journalists Association, International Quality Assurance in Higher Education, Workforce and Community Development of the Midwest, and Rhinelander Methodist Church.

An avid backpacker, perennial gardener, and advocate of "green" systems for higher education, my love of Isle Royale began in the early '90's when I backpacked from Rock Harbor to Todd Harbor and back. Since 1993, I have returned almost every year to backpack or camp part of the Lake Superior Hiking Trail and Isle Royale. After several years of exploring the eastern side of Isle Royale, I discovered Windigo--and my favorite place on the island to date--Hugginin Cove. My goal is still to hike the full length of the island, including the Minong Trail.

Michael Thomas, Dearborn Heights, MI

I am interested in serving on the Board of IRNHA. I have been employed by the Ford Motor Company for the past 27 years and provide security to the top management of the Company. I attended the University of Detroit where I earned a B.S. in Criminal Justice. This helped me during my brief 5 year career as a Deputy Sheriff with the Wayne County Sheriff's Department before joining Ford Motor Company.

Through the Earthwatch Institute, I have volunteered with the Moose/Wolf project on Isle Royale for 17 years and truly love the island. I am offering my services as a way of paying back what I've experienced over the years. I do realize the importance the IRNHA plays with supporting this National Park. I have discussed many topics with current and past park employees and have some understanding about how the park is managed and run.

While I do not have any formal experience with fund-raising, I have been exposed to many different organizations that my Company sponsors. I have direct contact with the Ford Motor Company Fund and could have the opportunity to learn from them. I have attended many functions around the world where the Ford Motor Company has donated funds or provided equipment to non-profit organizations. This has allowed me to gain some insight on how hard non-profit organizations must work to generate interest in their organization.

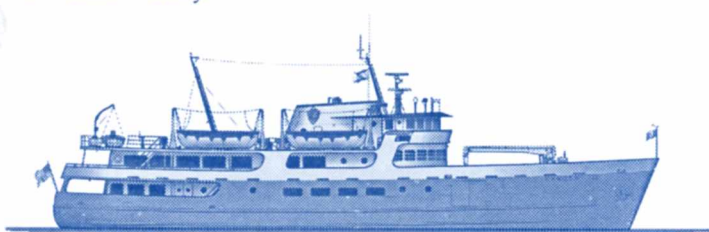
Keweenaw National Historical Park Some Background

Many members of IRNHA, now also known as Isle Royale and Keweenaw Parks Association, know a lot about Isle Royale but very little about Keweenaw National Historical Park. By this time you have received the 2008 "Keweenaw Guide" which includes current information on the park's Heritage Sites and interpretive programs. We thought some background history of this "new" park might also be of interest.

The concept of a national historical park commemorating the significance of copper mining on the Keweenaw Peninsula surfaced in 1974. In 1989, the Calumet and Quincy Mining Company properties were designated as national historic landmarks. KNHP was officially established as a national park in October 1992.

The original vision statement for the park begins as follows: Keweenaw National Historical Park is both a physical place and a concept that challenges our traditional notions of national parks. Some 30 years after the end of significant copper mining activity, a mission is being undertaken to represent the memories of the working days on the Keweenaw Peninsula through the preservation and interpretation of cultural landscapes, sites, structures, and artifacts.

The neighborhoods, towns, and rural areas of the Keweenaw Peninsula occupy a unique region that began providing copper for human use at least 5,000 years ago. These sites contain the physical evidence of our history: mine shafts and joist houses, the remains of numerous other industrial structures; functioning schools, theaters, churches, and commercial buildings; and a wide range of housing types from mansions to company houses and log farm buildings. In and around these sites, KNHP will weave many themes—industry, labor, immigration, social change, architecture, archeology, geology, and the natural environment – into the complex tapestry of the Keweenaw story.

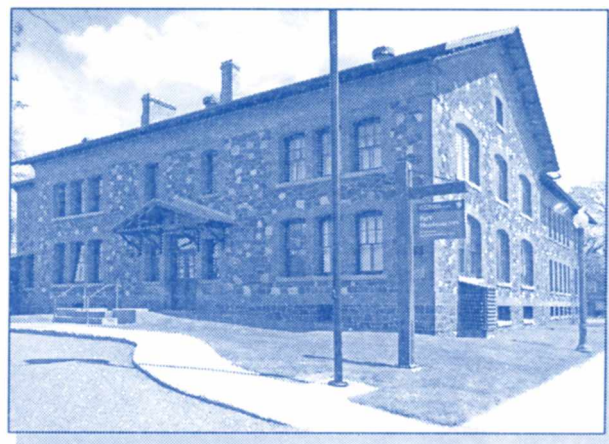


Happy Birthday, *Ranger III*

Isle Royale's Wolf/Moose study is not the only 50th celebration taking place at Isle Royale this summer. The NPS vessel *Ranger III* is marking 50 years of service this year. *Ranger III* was custom designed specifically for Isle Royale by marine architects from R.A. Stern Inc of Sturgeon Bay, WI, and built by Christy Corporation, also of Sturgeon Bay.

The maiden voyage to Isle Royale was made on October 0, 1958. The ship ran into a notorious Lake Superior gale, forcing it to seek shelter in Thunder Bay, Ontario. It arrived safely at the park the following day and has made over 4,400 safe crossings since. If you haven't traveled to Isle Royale on the *Ranger III* yet, we suggest you celebrate her anniversary with a trip this summer!

RESTORATION FINISHED!



Keweenaw National Historical Park staff moved back to their newly restored headquarters building on Red Jacket Road in Calumet in May. This beautiful historic structure, originally the Calumet and Hecla Mining Co. office building, also houses our sales area where park visitors can find books on local history, architecture, genealogy, and publications from KNHP's many Heritage Sites. An open house will be held on Friday, June 27 in conjunction with Calumet's annual Pasty Fest.

USS Isle Royale

William Howe, an IRNHA member from Texas, sent us this note of interest:

There is a tradition in the US Navy to name ships after various people, places and things, depending upon the class of ship. There is one class, the destroyer tender, that is named after geographical areas of the United States. A destroyer tender is a type of repair ship designed to repair and support naval destroyers. On September 14, 1945, the USS Isle Royale, AD29, was launched. It had a rather unusual history as a US Naval vessel, not being commissioned until June 9, 1962. It served in the Pacific fleet with a short tour in Vietnam, earning one battle star.

For more information and photos of the USS Isle Royale, go to the web site www.ussisleroyale.com.

Lake Superior Water Levels Up

The report from the US Army Corps of Engineers for the week of May 9, 2008, showed Lake Superior water levels up twelve inches compared to one year ago and up seven inches compared to April levels. Significant precipitation and below-level temperatures have combined to bring the lake level up to 601 feet. Expectations are for another five-inch increase by June, with Superior water levels above last year's through October.

As of May 9, Lakes Michigan, Huron, and Erie are one to two inches lower than last year and Lake Ontario is eleven inches higher.

For weekly updates on Great Lakes water levels check the Army Corps of Engineers website:
www.lre.usace.army.mil/greatlakes/hh/greatlakeswaterlevels.

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2008 Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association Annual Meeting, Rock Harbor

This summer, we combine our annual membership meeting with special events for the 50th Anniversary of the Isle Royale Wolf/Moose Study.

FRIDAY, JULY 27

5:00p.m. Rock Harbor Visitor Center:
Book Signing with Rolf and Candy Peterson.

7:00 p.m. Rock Harbor Auditorium:
Film Festival--Three films including the premiere of George Desort's documentary, "Fortunate Wilderness," David Mech's historical wolf-moose study film, and interviews with wolf study participants.

SATURDAY, JULY 28

9:30 – 11:00 Rock Harbor Auditorium:
Q&A with wolf/moose researchers
Rolf Peterson, John Vucetich, Dave Mech, and
Doug Smith. Limited seating.

1:00 – 2:30 Rock Harbor Marina:
Wolf/Moose 50th Anniversary ceremony.

7:00p.m. Rock Harbor Auditorium:
Evening program with art and music related to
the wolf/moose study, Gendron Jensen and
Michael Nelson.

8:00 Rock Harbor Auditorium:
Book and poster signing with Rolf and
Candy Peterson and Gendron Jensen.

SUNDAY, JULY 29

*10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Board meeting.

*2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Rock Harbor Auditorium:
Annual Membership Meeting.

3:30 - 4:45 p.m. Rock Harbor Auditorium:
Membership Program: "Earthwatch Memories,"
Ron Eckoff.

5:00 p.m. Whitefish and brats picnic on the
Rock Harbor Waterfront. \$12 adults, \$6 children.

7:00 – Film Festival (See Friday night listing).

** These events for IRNHA members only.*

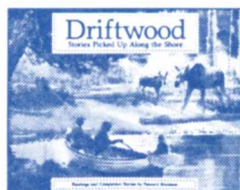
New Titles & Anniversary Products

Driftwood, by Howard Sivertson
Paintings and stories bring to life the history,
adventure, and family life of Isle Royale and
Lake Superior. **\$24.95**

Island Life by Peter Oikarinen
This new edition of a long-time favorite adds 4
new oral histories to this collection of Isle
Royale's fishing and resort families. **\$16.95**

**Wolf/Moose Study 50th Anniversary Poster
& Pin.** (See image on Page 1.) **\$12.95 & \$5.00**

Ranger III Print
Drawing by John Belliveau, 12" X 24", printed
on glossy photo stock. Rolled in plastic and sold
in a heavy tube. (See image on Page 3.) **\$49.00**



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 \$25	Household \$35
Supporting \$50	Sustaining \$100
Patron \$250	

Life Membership \$1,000*

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

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