



2018 Issue 3

Wolf's Eye

Newsletter for the Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association

Behind-the-Scenes Research

The wolf and moose predator/prey research project has been well documented over the years, but there's a lot of other research that has been happening behind the scenes at Isle Royale.

Current monitoring projects include amphibians, bats, songbirds, as well as mercury contamination and water quality. For more details, check out:

www.nps.gov/isro/learn/science-and-research

Night Sky Photography

A dozen night sky enthusiasts came from far and wide to take part in IRKPA's 2nd annual Night Sky Photography Workshop on Isle Royale, from September 4-8. The course was led by Shawn Malone, of LakeSuperiorPhoto in Marquette.

If you'd like to learn how to photograph the aurora borealis and other night sky images, keep this workshop in mind for next year! IRKPA members save \$25!



Photo: Shawn Malone

6 Wolves on Isle Royale!

By Susanna Ausema

One of the most common questions on Isle Royale this summer was "So—what's happening with the wolves?" Seemingly everyone has an opinion about the idea of reintroducing wolves to Isle Royale. Those opinions are oftentimes strong, and range from "let nature take its course" to "wolves should have been reintroduced years ago."

Well, the decision has been made, based on the fact that an increasing population of moose on the island may threaten the forest ecosystems. Over the next three years, the National Park Service (NPS), along with partner agencies, will reintroduce 20-30 gray wolves to Isle Royale.

So where will these wolves come from? Where on the island will they be released? Will they be radio-collared? What will happen to the two remaining wolves?



Photo: USFWS/Courtney Celley

In September, the NPS began trapping wolves. To date, four wolves have been released at different parts of the island. Each is radio-collared, so their travels across the island as they explore and work toward developing territories will be documented.

The relocated wolves in 2018 came from northeastern Minnesota. The plan for 2019 includes acquiring wolves next year in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Ontario, Canada, to increase the genetic diversity in the new population.

Not just any wolf that happens to step into the foot-hold traps will be a candidate for transport to Isle Royale. After being anesthetized, each wolf is carefully examined.

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My Neighborhood, My Heritage

By KNHP Ranger Nick Clark

During July and August, more than 70 local youth participated in "My Neighborhood, My Heritage," an immersive photography workshop developed to engage youth in their own communities, while getting outside and being active. Six local towns were visited and photographed by the youth.

My Neighborhood, My Heritage was hosted by Keweenaw National Historical Park (KNHP) and the Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association (IRKPA). The program, developed initially in Detroit, actively engages youth in learning about their local communities and expressing their perspectives through photography. Park Ranger Nick Clark led the participants on historical walking tours, gave them tips on taking photographs, and helped them capture the essence of a place through photography.



Participants explore and photograph local sites. Photo: NPS

Each student was provided a camera and used it to take 27 photos. KNHP staff chose six of the best from each student to be on exhibit at the Calumet Visitor Center. All participants were entered into a prize drawing, funded by IRKPA.

The exhibit opened on September 7th, with more than 100 students and parents in attendance. In addition to receiving all of their own developed photographs, 11 lucky students also went home with a new digital camera.

Kathleen Harter, the park's chief of interpretation and education, reflected on the exhibit: "I'm excited to see what caught their attention in each community. Their photographs will help us see familiar things in a new light and perspective, and highlight places that don't get as much notice."

For more information, contact park headquarters at 906-337-3168, or check the park webpage at www.nps.gov/kewe.

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The NPS is aiming for an equal number of males and females, preferably 1-5 years old, with strong teeth and healthy eyes. These will be most likely to reproduce and grow into a sustainable population.

After being vaccinated and treated for potential worms, fleas, and ticks, the crated wolves are transported to the island aboard a floatplane or by boat. They're radio-collared and released in various parts of the island, away from the two remaining wolves.



Photo: NPS / Jim Peaco

Several other wolves have been trapped so far but did not meet selection criteria. Unfortunately, one of those wolves did not survive the sedation process. Protocols regarding sedation and transport procedures have been reviewed and revised by the NPS and its partners.

Several moose carcasses have been distributed near the release sites, to aid the wolves in the transition. All the translocated wolves have used the carcasses.

For more information, visit:

www.nps.gov/isro/learn/news/presskit.htm

Shop IRKPA.org!

Holiday season will soon be upon us! IRKPA offers great gifts, ranging from stickers to water bottles, hats to shirts, maps to books. You'll find plenty of inspiration to plan next summer's adventure. Renew your membership while you're online to make sure you get 10% off your purchase.



Giving Online? Use PayPal Giving Fund!

The Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association is able to fund great programs for our parks through **YOUR** donations! In an effort to make giving easier for you, we've signed up for the PayPal Giving Fund. It's a great way to give, because it allows you to make your donation online (convenient!) while eliminating the 3.5% fee that IRKPA would otherwise pay for online donations. Check it out at:

www.paypal.com/fundraiser/hub

Thanks to those who have already used this method!

Cheep, Chirp, Trill...Learning Bird Songs

By Susanna Ausema

I've lived on Isle Royale for 19 summers, and I continue to learn more about the cultural and natural history all the time. This winter, one of my goals is to learn the calls of at least twenty songbirds. I've talked to several folks who participate in the breeding bird surveys, and they've recommended the following species (among others) be included on my list: Nashville Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, Winter Wren, and Hermit Thrush. I've got to admit that at this point, I only recognize one of those songs.



Photo: S. Ausema

However, I've discovered an amazing free resource that I'd recommend to anyone with an interest in birds. This app, the **Cornell Lab's Merlin Bird ID**, has both audio and visual resources to assist with regional bird identification. I'm absolutely amazed by it, and did I mention it's FREE!? When you see me at the Rock Harbor visitor center next summer, feel free to quiz me!

Are there specific subjects that **YOU** would like to learn about, relating to either Isle Royale or Keweenaw NHP? If so, send me an email and I'll see if I can answer your question in a future edition of the *Wolf's Eye*.

Pulling Plants for a Good Cause

By Sandy Wilhoit

Five IRKPA members participated in our first invasive species eradication service trip on Isle Royale this summer. Free round-trip transportation to the island was provided on the *Ranger III*. After a short orientation regarding the plants we'd be looking for and the distribution of tools, we were transported to Daisy Farm campground—our home for 3 nights.



IRKPA members with bags of invasive plants (Alan West)

We enjoyed evening programs on two of the nights. The first program was offered by teachers participating in the Isle Royale Institute's "Moose Watch for Educators" trip. The second night we enjoyed a presentation about wolves and moose by Candy Peterson.

It rained on our first full day, but we didn't let that deter us from our mission. We were able to locate and pull several patches of the invasive curly dock. We awoke to sunshine the next morning and split into two groups—one hiked up to the Greenstone Ridge and eradicated common mullein, while the other group hiked from Daisy Farm to Three Mile campground removing other invasive species. Both groups had a productive day.

On Friday morning we returned by boat to Rock Harbor, where we set up camp before looking for invasive species in the area. We concentrated on removing the beautiful, but invasive, mountain bluet.

Saturday morning, we boarded the *Ranger III* to return to the mainland. We eradicated over 300 invasive plants during this short but fun service trip. We're planning at least one invasive species eradication trip in 2019. If you're interested, contact me, Sandy Wilhoit, IRKPA Membership & Fundraising Co-Chair, at upnorthigo@aol.com or 269-462-3982.

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IRKPA is the membership-based nonprofit partner of Isle Royale National Park and Keweenaw National Historical Park. Gifts, bequests, memorials, and membership are U.S. tax deductible.

Membership Categories

Individual \$25	Household \$35	Supporting \$50
Sustaining \$100	Patron \$250	Life \$1,200

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Please send me a quick email at susanna@irkpa.org to receive the *Wolf's Eye* newsletter online as well as (or instead of) the paper copy. We will not sell or share your email address.



Halloween's on its way, and all the little trick-or-treaters participating in Houghton's Portage Lake District Library annual Halloween event on October 19 will get a

special treat this year. IRKPA will be handing out candy and information while on the *Ranger III*! This will be a neat opportunity for local families, many of whom have not been aboard the boat. It will also be a great way to educate local community members about the important work that IRKPA does for our parks.



Memberships are **expiring soon**! IRKPA memberships run through the calendar year, expiring December 31. Be on the lookout for a paper renewal form in your mailbox. Thank you for your continued support!

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