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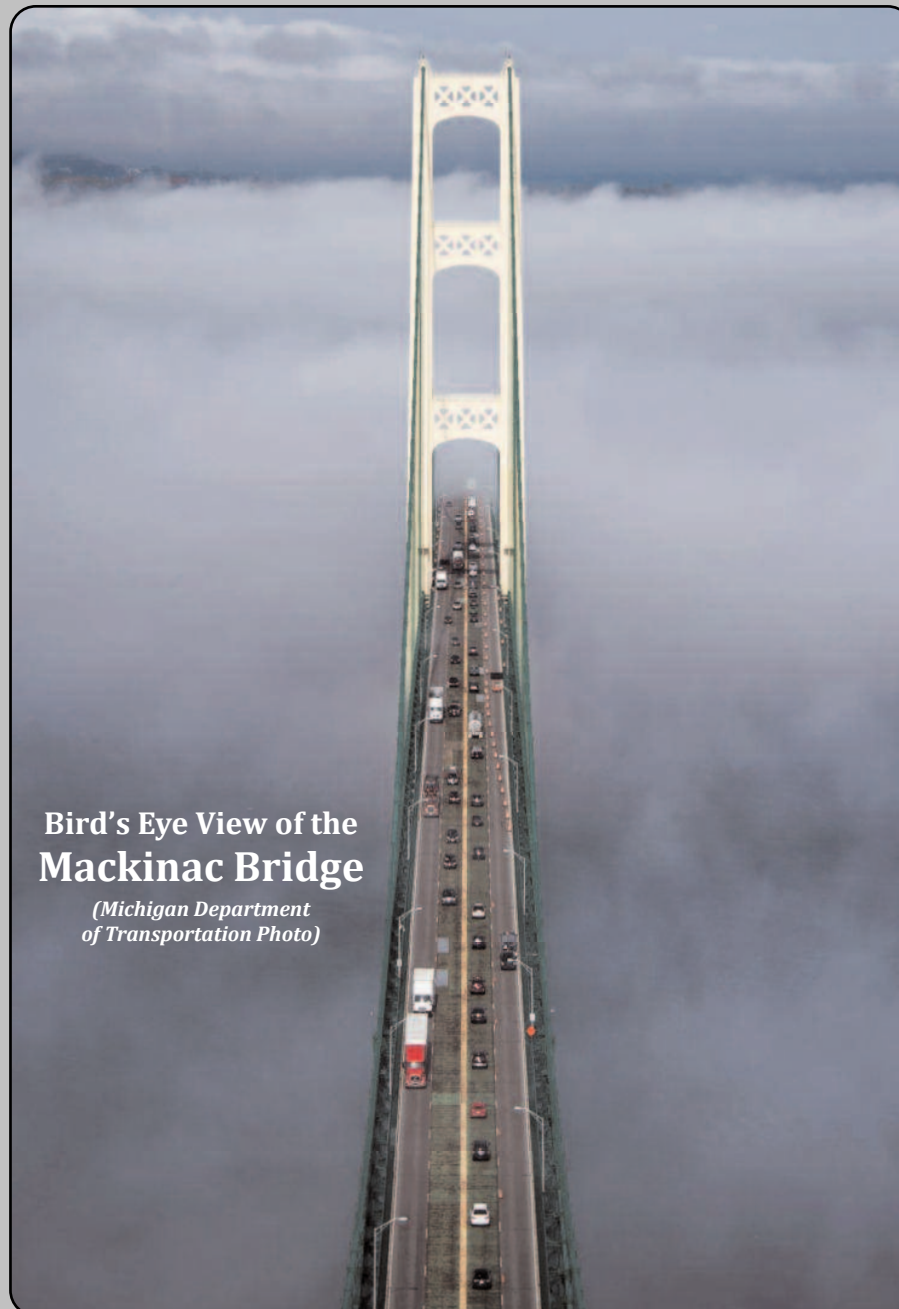


Early December 2013
\$2.50

Vol. 61, No. 3
Digital Delivery



Michigan's Conservation Sentinel Since 1953



**Bird's Eye View of the
Mackinac Bridge**
*(Michigan Department
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An aerial view of Belle Isle in the Detroit River.

Belle Isle becomes Michigan's 102nd state park

Detroit's historic Belle Isle Park has begun a transition to becoming Michigan's 102nd state park, following action by the Local Emergency Financial Assistance Loan Board.

The board accepted a lease approved by Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Director Keith Creagh, Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Director Kirk Steudle, Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr and Gov. Rick Snyder.

The lease will guide state management of the park.

Under the lease terms, the city maintains ownership of Belle Isle while the DNR assumes responsibility for managing the park according to the high standards of its award-winning state park system. The Michi-

gan Department of Transportation will assume responsibility for roads and bridges on Belle Isle.

"This is a city-state partnership that makes good sense for the future of Belle Isle and the people of Detroit," said Gov. Rick Snyder. "Everyone wants this Detroit gem to offer a clean, safe and welcoming park environment, while lessening the financial burden on the city. Those are the driving principles behind this agreement."

State management of the island will save Detroit an estimated \$4 million a year. In addition, the state will invest in the island through a variety of sources, including grants, bonds and donations from private

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North Woods Notes

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER: The Gaylord-based Huron Pines organization is seeking \$10,000 in donations to continue habitat management efforts aimed at moving the bird off the endangered species list. The goal is to raise the funds by January 9 via the Crowdrise Holiday Challenge. All funds will go toward providing a foundation for Kirtland's warbler conservation in the future. Donations may be made through the Crowdrise website (www.crowdrise.com/Huron/Pines), or by sending a check to Huron Pines for the organization's Kirtland's Warbler Initiative. The Crowdrise cause that raises the most dollars will win an extra \$100,000.

AMERICORPS ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Huron Pines AmeriCorps members accomplished much this past season. Among other things, they improved more than 130 acres of public land through invasive species removal, trail building and maintenance, and public access management. They also have restored more than 60 miles of stream banks in northern Michigan with stabilization projects, and educated more than 3,000 youth and 3,000 adults in environmental conservation. Huron Pines is still taking applications for upcoming AmeriCorps work.

NO SPILLS CONFERENCE: A gathering aimed at reducing the risk of hazardous material spills in the Great Lakes and its tributaries will be held Jan. 6-8, 2014, in Traverse City, Michigan. The conference at the Great Wolf Lodge will feature keynote speaker Jon Allen of the Department of Environmental Quality's Office of the Great Lakes. Allen will talk about Michigan's water strategy. Several other related presentations are also on tap. For registration and other information, visit http://no-spills.org/Home_Page.html.

BLUE ECONOMY: The Michigan Economic Center's new report on "water, Michigan and the blue economy" examines the state's water assets, as well as related water education, research and technological innovation that creates jobs and contributes to economic growth. The report estimates nearly one million jobs and \$60 billion in annual economic impact are linked to Michigan's water assets. For more information, visit www.mieconomiccenter.org, or contact John Austin, director of the Michigan Economic Center, at (734) 474-3110, or at jcaustin@umich.edu.

LOONS: Writer Don Gardner of *The Voice* says migrating waterfowl in the Great Lakes basin—especially common loons—have experienced massive die-offs during recent fall migrations. If unchecked, such anomalies can have dangerous repercussions for the survival of Michigan loons into the next decade, Gardner said in a Nov. 25 *Voice* article. He blames an array of environmental and climatological conditions for the problem and says preventive measures must be found to deal with those conditions if we are to preserve a species already threatened in the state.

ALGAE BLOOM: A new study reportedly says that last summer's Lake Erie algae bloom was worse than predicted. The bloom covered part of the lake and forced the shutdown of a municipal water system in Ohio's Carroll Township in the state's Ottawa County. According to *The Toledo Blade*, the event could lead to major changes in water pollution regulations. The Ohio Phosphorus Task Force is expected to call for a 40 percent reduction in all forms of phosphorus entering northwest Ohio waterways, the newspaper said, which could impact farms, cities, golf courses and homeowners.

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Destructive or Historic?

Mining in Michigan's Upper Peninsula has been going on for many years in one form or another. Some say it is destructive to the natural environment, while others celebrate its historic significance and economic impact. Remnants of iron mining in the Marquette Range can still be found in the community of Ishpeming, as illustrated in the photo above. Meanwhile, the tensions between those who want to exploit Michigan's natural resources and those who want to preserve them continues to rage.

Graymont discusses mine at public meeting

About 100 people reportedly attended a Nov. 12 meeting in Naubinway to discuss a proposed strip mining operation in the Upper Peninsula's Mackinac County near the village of Rexton.

There were no dissenting opinions expressed during the gathering, one observer reported to *The North Woods Call*.

The Graymont Corporation—a Canadian firm that is one of North America's leading lime producers—hosted the meeting at the Hudson Township Hall to discuss its proposed project, which includes approximately 7,820 acres for an underground mine, 1,780 acres for two separate surface mines (1,620 acres in the Hendricks mine area and 160 acres in the Wilwin area) and an option to purchase 840 acres for the potential development of a limestone processing plant.

As of this writing, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was still reviewing Graymont's formal proposal.

If approved, the project would

probably start by 2015.

"This is a proposal," said Brad Wurfel, director of communications for the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. "If it comes to pass, we will be involved in permitting and will play a regulatory role. ... For now, we've been in contact with our counterparts in the DNR, but the cake isn't baked yet."

"The clock [has] started ticking...," said Steven Sutton, manager of real estate services for the DNR. The state's analysis will take at least six months, he said, and involve several DNR divisions in considering mineral, forestry and legal matters.

If the project receives preliminary approval, the DNR will determine the overall property value, how much land to sell (or lease) and areas to avoid. The process will include another public meeting, they said, but a date for that meeting has not yet been set.

During the November 12 gathering, Dean Reid, a retired DNR forester and current chairman of

the Mackinac County Planning Commission, reportedly spoke in favor of the mine and said the operation could be "a value-added product" to the area.

"How can someone whose job it was to manage our forest land be so willing to let a mining company come in and destroy it?" said David Gorenflo of Traverse City, a sportsman who hunts and fishes in the Rexton area, and has been a vocal opponent of the plan. "These folks have it in their heads that this is going to be some kind of economic boom. 'I don't now how it all works, but the townships must get some sort of tax revenue from this project. Graymont only intends to hire four or five people on a seasonal basis, so that certainly isn't going to change the economy at all.'"

While acknowledging the limited number of full-time jobs, Bob Robison, Graymont's director of geology and mining, said the project would also create business for local contractors, suppliers and

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Graymont discusses mine at public meeting

(Continued from Page 1)
merchants.

If the limestone processing plant is ultimately built, more jobs would be generated, Robison said, but the feasibility of such a plant will depend on market conditions.

Questions for Graymont officials about such things as local roads, truck traffic and potential water contamination were not particularly challenging, according to at least one attendee, and company officials frequently answered with phrases such as "We won't do that," or "We won't let that happen."

Gorenflo said his main concern about the project has evolved from

the potential loss of hunting ground traditionally used by his family to a wider concern about loss of public land through DNR land sales in general.

"This is a big issue in Michigan right now," he told *The St. Ignace News*. "In this case, it's destruction of state land."

The area near the former Henricks and Fiborn quarries has wildlife diversity and a network of sensitive water sources, Gorenflo said, referring to a 2011 report by ASTI Environmental. He also questions whether mining could exacerbate the potential for sinkholes reported in areas with limestone deposits as elsewhere in the

United States. With homes nearby, he wants to know what the company would do about the problem if it comes to pass.

When asked whether the mine would provide tax revenue for the area, Graymont's Robison reportedly said it would be taxed in the same way as any typical land sale. He added that royalties for the stone removed will amount to more than the land sale, but it's early in the process and didn't have figures regarding what the royalty amounts would be.

— For more information related to this story, see Page 5



North Woods Notes

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NRC MEETING: The last Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) meeting of 2013 will be held Dec. 12 at the Michigan State University Diagnostic Center, 4125 Beaumont Road, Lansing. For more information about starting times and agendas, visit the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website at michigan.gov/dnr.

OWLS: Supplement Richard Schinkel's recent columns about owls (see Page 6) by learning all about the birds at several Michigan state parks. "Owl Prowls" are scheduled throughout the state and feature various activities from park to park. Some programs feature an educational presentation, a chance to see owl pellets and real stuffed owls up close, a fun walk in the woods with like-minded night owls, nature stories and s'mores around the bonfire. The events will be held at Brighton State Recreation Area (5 p.m. Dec. 7), Maybury State Park (6 p.m. Dec. 7), Bald Mountain State Recreation Area (5 p.m. Dec. 8), Sleepy Hollow State Park (5 p.m. Dec. 8), Lake Hudson State Recreation Area (5 p.m. Dec. 13), Waterloo State Recreation Area (7 p.m. Dec. 13) and Bay City State Recreation Area (2:30 p.m. Feb. 15)

CAMPING FEES: The price for camping in Michigan State Parks may go up in 2015, if a proposed adjustment of pricing is approved by the Natural Resources Commission. The Department of Natural Resources has proposed raising fees in relation to an occupancy rate of 82 percent. In other words, those parks with greater than 82 percent occupancy in the month of July would go up by \$4 per camp night. Those at slightly less than 82 percent occupancy would increase by \$2 per camp night and those with significantly less occupancy, or rustic sites, would increase by \$1 per camp night. There would also be an eight percent increase in the cost for cabins and lodges. Total park operation needs for the 2015 fiscal year are estimated at \$4.5 million and the higher camping rates would bring in approximately \$1.8 million of the operational costs, officials said.

BEAR BAGGERS: All three Pure Michigan Hunt winners successfully harvested bears this year, according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

SNOWSHOE LACING: A workshop on snowshoe lacing will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Michigan Iron Industry Museum in Negaunee. It will teach the technique for lacing the Green Mountain Bearpaw, or Ojibwa style of snowshoe. Cost is \$175 per person and includes all materials (frames, lacings and bindings). A reservation fee is due at the time of registration and will be applied to the overall cost. Space is limited.

DEFEND THE HUNT: The Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) and the Michigan Trappers and Predator Callers Association are reminding hunters to save their deer hides this year. Donation drop boxes have been set up across the state and proceeds from the sale of hides will be used to defend hunting rights in Michigan as part of the "Defend the Hunt" program. For more information, contact the MUCC.

HB 4993: A bill in the Michigan Legislature that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) says could positively impact public opinion on hunting, fishing and trapping was half-way to being completed at this writing and the MUCC was encouraging sportsmen and women to help get it across the finish line. The bill would allow the \$1 surcharge on hunting and fishing licenses to be spent on educating the general non-hunting, non-fishing public on the importance of Michigan's outdoor heritage for the future of wildlife. Call Senate Majority Leader Randy Richardville (517-373-3543) and ask him to bring up HB 4993 (the so-called Colorado model for a "wildlife council") for a vote.

WATER TESTING: In advance of natural gas drilling in northern Michigan, Freshwater Future—a Petoskey based nonprofit conservation group—unveiled a program to allow homeowners to test their well water. Encana Inc., which has expressed interest in drilling gas wells in the region using hydraulic fracturing, also offers testing to homeowners who live near areas where wells might be drilled, company officials said. The Freshwater Future program will offer certified samples of domestic water before any drilling occurs.

Oil & Water: Tar sands meet the Great Lakes

The Great Lakes region faces a critical choice about whether the Great Lakes should become a thoroughfare for tar sands crude shipping, warns a recent report by the Alliance for the Great Lakes.

The report finds that neither the Great Lakes shipping fleet nor its ports were designed to ship tar sands crude over the Great Lakes, and cites serious gaps in the region's oil-spill prevention and response policies.

Already, plans are in the works to dramatically increase the flow of tar sands crude to the Midwest as early as next year. Permitting is being sought for a \$25 million loading dock on Lake Superior to ship the crude in 2015 and a tar sands shipping route has been mapped across the waters of the Great Lakes.

Western Michigan residents learned first hand the risk of mixing tar sands oil with water in 2010 after a cataclysmic pipeline spill in the Kalamazoo River. Three years and \$1 billion-plus worth of cleanup later, more than 20 percent of the oil spill remains at the bottom of the river—a heavy, viscous muck synonymous with this form of crude oil.

The report questions the rush to
(Continued on Page 5)

Our 61st Year: Looking Back to Dec. 8, 1954

Julius Caesar was a lady

By Marguerite Gahagan

Julius Caesar came by the name rightfully, even though she turned out to be a lady.

The young college boy looked at the porcupine he'd shot on the farm northwest of Atlanta and then looked again. He'd taken enough biology to know a thing or two about dissecting and, suspicious, he began a Caesarean. His suspicions were right but, said he, "I didn't think the [baby] porky was alive. I just laid it on the ground and went on hunting."

Later, he came back and heard a tiny squeal. He touched the little creature and the five inches reacted properly. It slapped its tail.

Jack Currie, the 21-year-old Mt. Pleasant college student, wrapped Julius Caesar in a handkerchief and put it in his pocket, he recalled, telling of the moment a year ago last spring.

It weighed about six ounces, he remembered, and was covered with a soft fur and no quills.

"Its eyes were open, though," he said. "We fed it for several weeks with an eye dropper, but Caesar grew fast. He was walking in about five days. Then we found out he was she."

Currie's mother, Mrs. Lena Currie, became foster mother and the notes she kept on Caesar's growth tell the pleasure the north woods family got from their wild pet.

"I fed her milk and syrup," she said, "and her bed was a little Easter basket lined with cloths."

* * *

Caesar came when called and followed her hostess around constantly, getting under foot, but refusing to get out of the way. She felt she was a member of the family.

Most of the day she slept, but come evening she became frisky and wanted to play. She would try to climb the legs of Old Sport, the huge white and gold collie, and Old Sport had to gather all his 12 years of dignity and patience to put up with such goings on.

Then she'd decide to dine with the chickens and the cats, and wonder why she couldn't scare them by switching her tail. But they were on to her. Never once had she quilled them and so they tolerated her friskiness with understanding.

In the house, she had a marvelous time. She'd get on the treadle of the old sewing machine and make it wiggle. She'd get under the beds and frighten the wits out of folks by making the metal springs twang.

* * *

"She was affectionate, sassy and smart," Mrs. Currie said. "She'd crawl up on your shoulder. She'd nibble at your ear. She'd keep her quills down and she loved to be petted and stroked."

* * *

As she grew older, the big wide world widened and she learned to climb the house. ... She was curious about automobiles and liked to investigate their undersides to see what made them go.

One day, when she was about six months old, two visiting cars were parked in the farm yard. After the guests departed, no sign of Caesar could be found.

"I think she crawled under one of those cars and got herself lost," said Jack.

They never saw the little porcupine again, but pictures and notes are a part of the family memories that keep alive the story of Julius Caesar—the little lady porcupine who liked people.



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Black River dam gone

The Black River in Otsego County is now flowing freely, thanks to the removal of Saunders Dam September 13.

The removal, shepherded by the Huron Pines organization, was carried out by community conservation partners.



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www.mynorthwoodscall.com

Conservation battler**Remembering Ben East: Michigan's crusader journalist**

EDITOR'S NOTE: We recently ran across this brief memoir on the Outdoor Writers Association of America web site and thought it would be of interest to North Woods Call readers. The Call's former and current editors are past recipients of the Ben East Prize for Excellence in Conservation Journalism, presented by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs.



Ben East (1898-1990)

By Dave Richey

Ben East, at 64 inches tall and 82 years of age and still a man to be reckoned with, best summed up his longtime outdoor writing career over 20 years ago when he said, "I've always been a crusading journalist."

"If I felt an issue needed my editorial efforts, I fought by putting my teeth in it like a bulldog. I would ride herd on a problem until it was brought to a satisfactory conclusion."

"Satisfactory conclusion" to what was then the dean of outdoor writers meant the unwavering protection and wise use of our natural resources.

East, who was born in 1898 and died in 1990 after lingering for 10 years in a nursing home following a catastrophic stroke, was a man among men in outdoor writing circles. He was also a member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America (OWAA) during the mid-20th century.

A massive stroke stilled his old Royal typewriter in December 1979, but the drumbeat of conservation writing and the many battles that followed began when he started writing outdoor magazine copy in the mid-1920s. He spent 20 years as the outdoor writer for the *Grand Rapids Press* before taking a staff position with *Outdoor Life* magazine in 1946, a record only exceeded by the late Charlie Elliott.

"I leaned heavily toward the protection of all natural resources for the past 30-plus years," East said in 1980. "If someone or an organization had greedy motives, or wouldn't consider the environment or its impact on sportsmen, I'd let them have it with both barrels."

East served as my mentor after my first *Outdoor Life* story was

and other game from the air.

He took on a Michigan club that dammed a stream flowing through their land, and it nearly became an all-out war. The club intimidated canoers and fishermen because they felt they owned the river. East's battles over riparian rights took years to settle in court, but now the free-flowing water belongs to the state and its citizens.

By his own admission, though, not everyone thought he was worth the many writing awards and honors he received. He was like a little banty rooster that dominated a barnyard; he didn't care whose toes he stomped because he cared only for the wise use of our natural resources and would fight anyone who disagreed.

"The people I fought against never had a kind word for me," he said. "By the time we were finished with a battle, everyone was bloodied and beat. Simply put, I lived down most of the animosity I created by outliving most of my opponents."

East was a prolific writer and photographer, and other than his beloved conservation articles, his stock-in-trade was ghostwriting magazine articles for anglers and hunters. He learned how to put himself inside the skin of a person with a great story to tell, and he would write it for them in an exciting way.

"I always considered it a challenge to take another man's story, tell it in his words in a spellbinding way, and make it informative and interesting to the reader," he said. "Many of those I dealt with could hardly spell their name, let alone write about it."

These ghostwritten articles led to the publication of three books: "Danger," "Narrow Escapes & Wilderness Adventures" and "Survival."

Although his true tales of sportsmen who overcame extreme outdoor problems and lived to tell their stories was part of his *Outdoor Life* duties, he also was in love with bears.

He researched bear attacks, studied the animals at close range and used his 50 years of experience to write his last book, "Bears." Those experiences included watching a polar bear

charge him on Hudson Bay's Belcher Islands.

"I had to kill the animal or endure a savage attack—one which few men have lived through," East said. "I was down to my last cartridge when the animal died just a few feet from my boots."

East was an editor's editor. He could finesse written words magically, and his articles, books and newspaper columns sparkled like diamonds. He felt that each word was very important, but he used words sparingly with great effect. For him, padding a story with useless drivel was a writer's sorriest mistake.

Ben East was an elderly man when we first met, and he was sharp-tongued about my early writing efforts, but soon the words would meld into a perfectly readable piece. His passion for writing perfectly constructed sentences and paragraphs, his commitment to watching over our natural resources, his loving dedication to his wife Helen, and our mutual friendship were the cornerstones of his life.

He was an OWAA member for a number of years, but never considered compromising his principles, and that led to a fiery argument with longtime OWAA Executive Director J. Hammond Brown. That argument over freebies, he told me, caused him to resign from our organization.

"I miss OWAA, and feel my membership had been good for me and for OWAA, but I refused to compromise my stand and felt it best to leave," he told me. "I understand OWAA is a far different critter now than then, and I'll always miss it."

And I will always miss Ben East. There was no middle ground with this esteemed writer, and his uncompromising ways are the legacies he left behind to every outdoor writer in North America.

The late Dave Richey was a retired outdoor writer for The Detroit News, a photographer and the author of 21 books. Prior to his death June 20, he credited much of his success to the several years he mentored under Ben East. Story used by permission of Dave's wife, Kay Richey.

U.P. wolf hunt now under way

As of this writing, Nov. 29, at least 13 wolves had been killed in the controversial wolf hunt in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

The season is slated to run from Nov. 15 through December, unless the collective limit of 43 are killed before the end of the year.

It is the first such hunt in the state since the wolf was placed on the endangered species list nearly 40 years ago.

A total of 1,200 people are licensed to participate in the hunt with firearms, crossbows, or bows and arrows.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) officials say hunting is being used to help manage wolf-related conflicts with human interests—such as livestock and pet depredations. The state's Wolf Management Plan indicates that 67 percent of Michigan residents support the use of hunting to resolve these conflicts, they said.

The DNR identified three areas that have seen persistent conflicts, despite the use of non-lethal and targeted lethal techniques, according to Adam Bump, the agency's bear and furbearer specialist. Those three units cover only 12 percent of the land area in the Upper Peninsula, he said.

"The harvest recommendation of 43 wolves will not impact the overall Michigan wolf population over time," Bump said. "The goals and intended outcomes from the hunt are based on sound science and input from citizens."

Many studies have shown that hunting can result in behavioral changes in wildlife, according to Bump.

"The hunt could have the benefit of maintaining in wolves a respect or fear of humans," he said. "The use of new and innovative programs—especially those that limit the overall impact to wolf populations—represents the sound application of science and the best balance among the diverse views of Michigan residents."

Conservation officers seek Manistee County bear poacher

Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conservation officers are seeking information regarding a bear poaching incident that occurred during the evening of Nov. 16 in northeast Manistee County.

Officers were called to investigate the shooting of a female black bear, found dead of a shotgun wound near a hunting blind on public land in Cleon Township. Witnesses said that the bear was killed on Nov. 16 at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Three bear cubs are believed to have been orphaned as a result of the bear being killed, although the cubs were not located.

Conservation officers are seeking to interview a white male who was spotted at the scene on Nov.

16. The male is believed to be involved in the killing and is described as having a thin build, standing approximately five feet, eight inches to five feet, 10 inches

tall.

The male had facial hair and left the scene driving a dark-colored pickup truck. The DNR Law Enforcement Division is request-



A trail camera photo provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources shows a bear sow and three cubs seen in the vicinity of the poaching incident. The sow is believed to be the one poached.

ing any information to aid in the investigation of this poaching incident.

Anyone with information may call the DNR's Report All Poaching (RAP) Line at 1-800-292-7800. Information can be left anonymously.

Tips can also be provided online at www.michigan.gov/conservationofficers.

Information leading to an arrest and conviction is eligible for a cash reward funded by the Game and Fish Protection Fund.

Poaching bear in Michigan carries a restitution payment of \$1,500 per bear, a minimum \$200 fine and jail time of up to 90 days.

In addition, a violator's hunting privileges may be suspended for up to three years.

Anti-hunt petition drive continues

Opponents of Michigan's wolf hunt are continuing a petition drive to get the question on the general election ballot in 2014.

Keep Michigan Wolves Protected aims to collect at least 225,000 signatures in support of the referendum.

The organization's members argue that a trophy hunt for wolves is cruel, wasteful and unsportsmanlike. Nobody eats wolves, they say, and wolves are not a danger to humans.

Furthermore, the animals are an invaluable part of Michigan's ecosystem, they said, reducing densities of deer, beaver and other species. And millions of tax dollars were previously spent bringing wolves back from extinction.

Opinion

Quote Box

"If you know the wilderness in the way that you know love, you would be unwilling to let it go ... This is the story of our past and it will be the story of our future."

—Terry Tempest Williams

Isle Royale wolves and moose

There's a classic struggle for survival on Isle Royale.

As previously reported in *The North Woods Call*, the wolves and moose living on the remote Lake Superior wilderness island are dependent on each other and both are threatened by a variety of factors.

The wolf population has been in decline and may eventually die-out—due largely to reproductive challenges, disease, and a lack of genetic diversity caused by decades of inbreeding. Moose, meanwhile, may be faced with a similar fate—not only on Isle Royale, but across North America. There have been preferential food shortages and a warmer climate in recent years has produced more parasites—especially ticks, which consume the flesh of animals and make them more susceptible to anemia and infections. Ticks also bite off the hair of moose, exposing them to hypothermia in cold weather.

On Isle Royale, wolves and moose have a unique predator-prey relationship. Wolves are the only predator of the moose and the moose are almost exclusively the only prey for wolves. It is essential to keep their respective populations in balance for a healthy ecosystem.

Consequently, a debate currently rages over whether humans should intervene in this natural cycle and, if so, what the results might be.

As one of our readers recently pointed out, the conundrum is this: If you artificially boost the wolf population and their main diet—moose—are dying out, the wolves will starve to death. If, however, the wolves die out, moose will—for a short time, at least—grow in numbers. Then they will overeat the fauna, devastate the island ecosystem and either die out by starvation, or succumb to the tick infestation.

What's the National Park Service to do? Though we prefer to let nature govern itself, the agency will probably have to err on the side of intervention.

Population biologist John Vucetich and wildlife ecologist Rolf Peterson, who have studied Isle Royale's wolves and moose, say a healthy ecosystem depends on the presence of top predators like wolves when large herbivores such as moose are present.

Without this balance, prey tend to become overabundant and decimate plants and trees that many species of birds, mammals and insects depend upon. Top predators also maintain the diversity of rare plants and insects that depend on those plants.

In addition, the loss of top predators may disturb the nutrient cycling of entire ecosystems, according to Vucetich and Peterson. And wolves are a boon to foxes, eagles, ravens and other species that scavenge from carcasses that wolves provide, they said.

Although wilderness is typically viewed as a place where nature should be allowed to take its course free from human interference, we lean toward the experts who say the ecology of Isle Royale would best be served if the National Park Service initiates a genetic rescue by introducing new wolves to the island.

After all, Vucetich and Peterson said in a New York Times op-ed piece, "there's no place on the planet that is untouched by humans. We have already altered nature's course everywhere. Our future relationship with nature will be more complicated. Stepping in will sometimes be wise, but not always. ... Navigating that complexity without hubris will be a great challenge."

Healthy truth in advertising

Now we all know. The nation's controversial "Affordable Health Care Act" is apparently not so affordable.

Not only are individual and family insurance policies going to be much more expensive to purchase, but millions of Americans are already losing the coverage that they wanted to keep.

This, despite assurances by proponents of the legislation that coverage would be less expensive and "if you like your current plan, you can keep it."

Turns out these assurances were bald-faced lies, told repeatedly to deceive the voting public.

That's the problem with unchecked bureaucratic socialism and power-hungry demagogues who insist on having their way despite the heavy costs to society and freedom.

At least two things now need to happen.

We should insist that this poorly conceived law be repealed and demand that those who perpetrated this wanton fraud on the American people be held accountable.

Only then can we hope to find workable solutions to society's problems—whether in health care or natural resources conservation—and foster the truth in advertising that we deserve from those in public office.

If this kind of thing happened in the private sector, criminal charges would already have been filed.

Belle Isle 1947: Days of youth and romance

I've been thinking lately about Detroit's historic Belle Isle Park—and not for the reason many others are.

Management of the 982-acre island in the Detroit River between the United States and Canada was officially transferred to the State of Michigan on November 12, after nearly 120 years as the largest city-owned island park in the United States.

At 1,534 square miles, Belle Isle is bigger than New York City's Central Park, and includes a nature center, inland lakes, lagoons, canal system, wooded areas and a half-mile of swimming beach. With the management transfer, it becomes Michigan's 102nd state park.

Yet that's not really why it has my attention today.

In May of 1947—six years before I was born—my parents visited Belle Isle on their honeymoon and captured the occasion in several black-and-white photographs that have been displayed in family photo albums ever since.

I have looked at those pictures my entire life, and marveled at the youthfulness of this young couple that I have always known simply as "Mom and Dad."

Those were happy days for them—filled with promises and dreams—a time of life that in the minds of young people will surely last forever.

But it never does.

Sixty-six years after those photographs were taken, following many decades of robust health and independence, my mother has been stricken with a debilitating illness that—for now, at least—has stolen her ability to walk, bathe, feed herself and participate in all but the simplest of conversations.

Along with her personal suffering, the lives of her husband and family members have been thrown into raging turmoil—each immersed in his or her own not-so-private nightmare—as we struggle to cope with the ravages of memory loss and physical incapacitation.

Those who have been through such difficulties and found themselves in the unexpected role of

North Woods Journal

By Mike VanBuren



The newlyweds on Belle Isle during a windswept day in May of 1947.

sudden care-givers know that none of this is easy to handle. It's as if some sort of awful latter-day penalty awaits those who live too long and too well.

When I was a boy of about five-years-old, my parents revisited Belle Isle with some relatives, and took my sister and me along. On the way to the park, we stopped at a local service station where a big, ugly gorilla—or some guy dressed like one—greeted us as part of some attention-grabbing business promotion.

The adults in our party laughed and posed for pictures with the hairy beast, but to a youngster un-schooled in the ways of the marketing world, the creature looked mean and life threatening. So I did what any self-respecting kid would do. I freaked out and ran for Mama.

I was quickly sheltered from the clear and present danger and, as I recall, the entire family escaped without injury that day. But I still remember the encounter whenever I see a real or costumed gorilla. Where's legendary zoologist Dian Fossey when you need her, anyway?

Nowadays—as my parents face gorillas in the mist of advanced age, with me following closely behind—there doesn't seem to be anyone to whom we can run and hide. Nor can the family and I effectively shelter them—or ourselves—from the horrors of declining health.

Frankly, that's something about nature that I hate and can't fully understand.

Be that as it may, there are many decisions that will need to be made in the coming days and many responsibilities that must be carried out in the face of daunting challenges. And, no matter how much we know about the frailty of the human condition, we're never quite prepared for what it all means.

Tough questions abound. Why did this happen? What can we do? How much will it cost? How much time will it take? And—not insignificantly—what impact will all this have on a mom-and-pop operation like *The North Woods Call* when the sole proprietor is regularly called away to meet other pressing obligations?

I don't yet know the answers to those questions, but I'll have to find them soon, whether I like it or not.

Still, I'd much rather retreat to a sunny spring day in 1947 when colorful flowers were in bloom, and a freshly minted couple was walking hand-in-hand around the Belle Isle Conservatory and creating Kodak memories at the nearby James Scott Memorial Fountain.

If that were only possible.

For now, I can only hope and pray that better days lie ahead—in this world and beyond—when youthful loves and memories can be rekindled in a land that knows no sickness and sorrow.

Reader comment

The antithesis of stand hunting

By John Gunnell
Rockford, Michigan

Deer hunting from a stationary location was not considered a preferred method of hunting back when we were first introduced to the sport.

My father theorized that stand hunting was not an alternative for a real hunter. He believed that stand hunting was only about a deer finding the hunter, as if to invite the hunter to shoot at it. He taught my brothers and me to appreciate "hunting to find deer" long before comfort tents and bait piles compromised hunters into thinking that was all there was to deer hunting.

In making such a statement, I realize that it flies in the face of most of today's hunters and hundreds of small businesses that profit from selling deer bait.

Please understand that I have no argument with hunters who choose to hunt using such methods. Furthermore, by taking issue with stand hunting, I seek not to anger the reader, but only to take them down a path less traveled for discovering deer hunting satisfaction.

The first lesson imparted to me by my father after I received a compass for Christmas, was the "Hunters Golden Rule." Never sec-

(Continued on Page 5)

The North Woods Call

Michigan's Conservation Sentinel
Since 1953

Published regularly by:
Newshound Productions LLC
5411 East DE Avenue
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49004.

Telephone: (269) 342-8724

E-mail: editor@mynorthwoodscall.com

Website: mynorthwoodscall.com

Online subscription: \$35 per year
and \$60 for two years.

Print subscription: \$55 per year
and \$95 for two years

Address changes: Please send \$2 to
cover costs.

Editor & Publisher: Mike VanBuren

Publishers Emeritus:
Marguerite Gahagan
Glen and Mary Lou Sheppard

Advertising rates upon request.

A Newshound Publication

Reader comment**U.P. mine will result in permanent destruction**

As you may know, Graymont conducted its first public meeting in Rexton [November 12]. I was unable to attend; however, one of our members was in attendance and has filled me in on the details.

Their presentation was basically the same as the meeting we had with them a few weeks ago.

There were approximately 100 people in attendance, including representatives from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). When the Graymont [officials] completed their presentation, the DNR described the review process that they will go through before they make their final decision.

When the DNR completed their statements, the meeting was then open for public comment. There were no real challenging questions for the company. In fact, by all appearances, the public was in favor of this project.

One gentleman expressed concern for the roads and what damage the heavy truck traffic would cause, and another was concerned about the wells and the aquifer in the underground mine area. Graymont officials answered these and other questions with the often used statement of, "We won't let that happen." Other than that, they offered no real assurances that there won't be any issues with either of these concerns.

During the question and answer period, one gentleman introduced himself, announced that he was 87-years-old, and said, "I'm probably the oldest person in this room." He also said that he could remember when the last load of limestone left the old Hendricks quarry, and how at that time there was a store and a hotel in that area. I believe he feels that this project will mean the return of these types of businesses.

Graymont was fairly honest and forthcoming with everyone about their plans. However, they did fail to mention that the four or five jobs that will be created are only "seasonal," so the mining operation will be shutting down in the winter. Also, they were not very clear on the conditions required before they would open the underground mine and the processing plant. So, to help clarify this, the

plant will be built and operational only if the underground mine commences, and the underground mine is contingent upon the limestone market. Should all of this take place, it will provide about 20 jobs. There is much uncertainty here.

Graymont has indicated that they can mine 10 acres a year. They have also stated that they intend to be in the area for 50 to 100 years. If this is an accurate statement, then why do they need 13,000 acres? At 10 acres per year that would mean they have a Limestone supply of 1,300 years. Something isn't adding up.

Steve Sutton, who represented the DNR's real estate division, made a very telling comment. He stated that this was the largest land sale that he has ever been a part of during his time at the DNR. So, again, why 13,000 acres?

Also in attendance was Dean Reid, DNR forester (retired). He is now chairman of the Mackinaw County Planning Commission. He spoke briefly and is in favor of this project. I find his position on this mine confusing and a little hypocritical. As a DNR forester, his duty was to protect and manage our forests. However, now as a county commissioner, he is perfectly willing to destroy the very thing he once vowed to protect.

I may have mentioned this before, but just in case I haven't, There is a loophole in this contract that will allow Graymont to change the underground mine to a surface strip mine with nothing more than a signature from the acting DNR director. I have no doubt that the director would give the go ahead for this change, especially when considering the eagerness and secrecy with which the DNR has conducted this current plan.

Graymont seems to be zeroing in on the Wilwin site. When asked how long before this project commences, the DNR stated that, "normally a project of this size would take two years to review, but we hope to have it ready in about six months." All this means is that the DNR has been working on this for quite some time before they decided to release this information.

I believe that Graymont has con-

ducted a very successful campaign. Starting with the brochure they handed out at the meeting—with pictures of forests in full color, a man in a boat fishing on a lake, and what appears to be a picture of the Appalachian Mountains. [I'm] not sure what that has to do with this project. Everyone needs to understand that, aside from the Appalachian Mountains, everything else in that colorful brochure will be gone! The Graymont representatives are very good at presenting this image that everything will be as it is. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In conclusion, I believe that everyone needs to fully understand the magnitude of the permanent destruction that will take place here. The continuing loss of OUR open public lands is, or at least should be, of great concern to everyone—our public lands are disappearing at an alarming rate!

Once these lands are gone, they are gone forever. Once Graymont owns this land, they will be able to do whatever they please with it.

As far as the meeting in Rexton is concerned, this was nothing more than a formality. Regardless of the opinions in the room, this meeting will change nothing. The DNR has their plan and unless the public outcry is on a mass scale, this will move forward.

The DNR continues to say that public opinion is very important to them and an important part of the review process. Don't believe it. They have been working on this and have formed their opinions long before this meeting took place. The input from DNR wildlife biologists and foresters will have little or no effect on the final decision.

So with that in mind, I have no expectations of actually stopping this project, but perhaps the size and scope of this destructive process can be reduced to something a little more realistic. The destruction of 13,000 acres is completely unacceptable!

David Gorenflo
Coalition Against Strip Mining
Traverse City, Michigan

The antithesis of stand hunting*(Continued from Page 4)*

ond-guess your compass while navigating in the woods. We learned to carefully use our compass and to record in our minds landmarks—such as section lines, streams, topography, etc. for later reference.

My father took us to remote expansive areas and taught us by his example. He often quipped that "real hunters are lost all day until dark." They then must rely on their compass and their savvy for recalling landmarks to find their way out of the woods.

Hunting with Dad was not for the faint of heart. He imparted his workman-like knowledge and curiosity for discovering nature's mysteries that gave us confidence to accept any challenge in the woods.

The type of hunter who walks to hunt is a keen observer of the surrounding terrain. Walking must be deliberate, punctuated by regular pauses to scan terrain for the detection of movement. Dad used to sagely say, "Walk one, look two."

If tracking snow is present, stalking will take the hunter in unforeseen directions when tracks are detected. Being skilled in distinguishing a promising deer track and separating a buck track out can lead to the right deer.

When stalking a deer, the likelihood that it will follow a route less challenging is a distinct advantage for the stalker. Deer are no strangers to their habitat and, like humans, are prone to follow a path of least resistance. This habit allows the tracker to often out-manuever the deer and position himself for a shot.

Another dimension of stalking deer is the internal sense of accomplishment for the hunter in beating the deer on his own turf at his own game.

For the past several years running, my neighbor in the camp near mine in the Upper Peninsula has taken a buck as a walking hunter. Typically, he hunts later in the season when snow is present. He usually takes a walk of two or more miles to a predetermined destination. He hunts to and from that location, mostly on selective deer tracks.

When he intersects a promising track, he begins his cat-and-mouse pursuit of the deer that made the tracks. Knowing the terrain he is hunting, he often uses a circular technique for positioning himself where his past experience tells him the deer may travel. Without having spooked the yet-unseen deer, he often will catch a glimpse of it and gain a shot, should the deer be harvestable.

Granted, this description of the walking hunter is an over-simplification of the process. But the hunter who is seeking a different challenge from hunting should give it a try.

I realize that age, health, hunting location, etc. may make a hunter unable to consider the type of hunting heretofore described. But regardless of an individual's preference, I—like most hunters—remain hooked on discovering what nature's surprises have in store.

Letter to the Editor**Enjoying the North Woods Call**

Editor:	Renew again for two years, instead of one.
Really enjoying the paper.	Thanks.
I've been a subscriber for many years	Sure is great to get both sides of a story, with facts that back it up.
	Phillip Willman Sterling Heights, Michigan

Tar sands threaten the Great Lakes*(Continued from Page 2)*

capitalize on the growing flow of tar sands oil, destined for 19 U.S. and Canadian refineries on or near the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway.

"The movement of oil across water increases the risks of oil in water, a clash in which the environment is the loser," says the report, which urges much caution in this matter going forward.

Belle Isle: Management transition begins for Michigan's 102nd state park*(Continued from Page 1)*

organizations willing to partner in the park's revitalization.

The Emergency Loan Board's action begins a 90-day transition period that is outlined in the lease.

The DNR's initial short-term action items include:

- * Meeting with Detroit's recently elected city council members and mayor to establish an open and productive line of communication;

- * Meeting with a soon-to-be-established advisory committee, the Belle Isle Conservancy and other key stakeholder groups;

- * Evaluating all current contracts, leases and concession agreements;

- * Updating previous infrastructure assessment information to prioritize critical needs;

- * Establishing a visible staffing and visitor services presence throughout Belle Isle; and

- * Coordinating with local, regional and state law enforcement agencies on a security plan.

The lease provides for an initial 30-year term with two 15-year renewals. A seven-member committee established in the lease will advise the state on improvements and master planning for the park. A minimum of three members of the committee will be residents of the city of Detroit. The state will work cooperatively with the Belle Isle Conser-

vancy and other partners, in collaboration with the advisory committee, to develop and improve the park.

The Recreation Passport, which offers access to all Michigan state parks and recreation areas across the state, will be required for entry to Belle Isle immediately following the 90-day transition period. The Passport does not apply to individuals. Pedestrians, bicyclists and those using public transportation can enter the park for free and will not need the Passport.

Park revenue from permit fees, rental fees, special events, grants, endowments and other sources that derive from Belle Isle—excluding Recreation Passport revenue—will be placed in a special sub-account in the Department of Natural Resources State Park Improvement Fund to administer, maintain and improve the park.

In a letter to the Emergency Loan Board dated Oct. 21, 2013, DNR Director Creagh clarified concerns raised by members of the Detroit City Council in a communication to the Loan Board on Oct. 14. Creagh's letter:

- * Explained the need for an initial 30-year term in the lease. Creagh said that the 30-year term is crucial to securing grants and other funding streams for improvements on the island. Most state and federal grants require the applicant to have control of the property for a minimum of 20 to 30 years.

- * Emphasized that the DNR, which has considerable expertise in managing historic sites—the state historian is housed within the DNR—will apply its expertise to Belle Isle, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

- * Underscored the DNR's commitment to families and youth. The DNR will maintain Belle Isle as a gathering place for families, including family reunions. In addition, the DNR operates programs that employ young people in state parks and recreation areas. The department intends to continue and expand those programs on Belle Isle.

- * Promised to undertake outreach efforts to Detroit-based businesses to help those businesses navigate the state's bidding process.

- * Promised to work with Detroit agencies named by the council to make sure Detroit residents are given every opportunity to apply for jobs at the state-managed park.

- * Committed to undertaking improvements on the island as outlined in the lease.

"We are excited to partner with the city, mayor and city council to help revitalize this important community gathering place," said Creagh. "The Detroit region is important to Michigan's long-term economic stability and tourism appeal. A revitalized Belle Isle will be a major player in that comeback.

—Michigan DNR report

Rivers of thought: Pre-sleep reflections on the simple pleasures of life

In the fall of one's life, it is a time of pause and reflection—the fullness of a mostly used up allowance of time here on this rock and a lot less looking ahead.

In the case of a life spent in the outdoors, it is like a constant flow of old movies playing out in that ever expanding theater of the mind.

When we get older, we can selectively recall pleasant experiences that make us feel good—even cause us to smile—and possibly alter our mood for a brief moment. The older we get, the more movies we store in that place in our brain that allows us to recall them when we make time to be quiet and still.

Lying in bed at night and struggling with sleep is the time I find myself searching through the archives in my brain—trying to recall a peacefully soothing event from the past that relaxes me, eventually leading to sleep. These happy thoughts usually involve moving water—specifically rivers and streams and trout.

I think of places I have been and fished, and occasionally about fish I have caught or lost. But mostly I think of the places them-

Guest Cabin

By Mark Karaba

selves. Beautiful places. Quiet places.

Most of these places are in northern Michigan, but there are many choices of places with flowing water and pleasant sights, sounds, and smells for me to reflect on.

I have been fortunate to have been in more than my share of beautiful places in forty years of fishing. The barren landscape of the sub-arctic in northern Quebec and the brilliant spawning colors of the large brook trout.

The endless wild and remoteness of Labrador. The mountain streams and rivers of West Virginia and Tennessee in the springtime. The Two-Hearted and so many other rivers of the Upper Peninsula that offer an uncrowded and semi-wilderness experience.

I think of the yellow warblers along the banks of Augusta Creek close to my home and the downstream swing of a wet fly on water too skinny for a back cast. The red buds, dogwoods and Laurel in the

mountains of the South, and the most wonderful and perfect fly fishing water of the famed Au Sable here in Michigan. If I am able to totally lose myself in these pleasant recollections, I can smell the sweet ferns and cedar along the banks of a northern Michigan river.

I can recall the close, interactive feeling of wet wading on a warm summer afternoon when one can actually FEEL the water.

Watching a delicate, dainty mayfly drift by on the surface, and the cedar waxwings perched above, waiting—like me—for the anticipated flight of these life sustaining insects in the coolness of the northern evening.

The total joy of a stretch of wild water all to yourself, and realizing you can stop, sit on a log and just be there. Alone. And no one is coming behind you or above you on the river today. Just you and the joyous sounds of the yellow warblers flitting along the bank, the deep blue sky above—

with all the time in the world to stop and just watch the river. To think about all that matters and push away from thought all that does not matter. To think about the river and how alive it is—as alive as any bird, or tree, or plant, or myself.

I think these thoughts when sleep won't come to me and they are the most pleasant thoughts to have in the last waking moments

before slumber.

And one can only hope that our dreams are filled with such clean, free-flowing rivers of thought as sleep finally overtakes our anxious—sometimes worrisome—waking life.

Mark Karaba of Marshall, Michigan, is an outdoorsman, writer, videographer and self-proclaimed naturalist.

Outdoor Rhythms

By Doug Freeman



A necessary balance of wolves

If historical narratives carry any weight, we should probably be afraid of large, wild predators.

Old stories and paintings abound—a pack of wolves chasing the Russian family troika; a great eagle carrying off a hapless toddler to an aerie in the mountains.

It's true that many animals can be dangerous. Invading the territory of a full-grown bear or cougar has risks. Wolves have, on rare occasions, injured and even killed people, though we're definitely not considered a preferred food item. Larger predators also attack and kill livestock, particularly when natural prey becomes scarce. Rabid animals can be ferocious at any time.

Some folks think we deserve every possible protection from these formidable wild creatures, that we may more safely enjoy our outdoor experiences.

In doing research for this column, the word most commonly used in regard to our relationship with *Canis lupus* was "extirpation." The complete and deliberate elimination of a species from a given area. In the case of wolves, done by relentless hunting, trapping, clubbing, and poisoning. How sad.

In the old "Lassie" TV series of the 1960s, every forest animal weighing more than twenty pounds was portrayed as a sinister beast seeking to make a meal of Timmy, Lassie's child owner. Wolves, bears, bobcats, wild boars, and even an escaped circus tiger all had it in for the kid. And if Mom had a flat tire on the way to town, heaven help her. Invariably, there was a salivating mountain lion ready to pounce. One very smart collie was all that—repeatedly—stood between the Martin family and a grisly fate.

This more modern misrepresentation of human/wildlife relations—while exciting and dramatic—served to bolster centuries of myth.

Certain individuals have recently latched onto similar false characterizations to promote our state's current wolf hunt. There have been a few whoppers: The day care facility menaced by wolves lurking at the edge of a nearby woods. The huge alpha wolf trying to enter an isolated home by pushing on a sliding glass door. The Upper Peninsula farmer (with a record of questionable livestock management), claiming some dead cows were due to wolf predation, and seeking state compensation.

Surprise. We're doing it again. Vilifying wild species to suit our own ends.

Despite our legislature ignoring the will of the voters, as expressed in a state referendum which prohibited wolf hunting, the Department of Natural Resources does have sensible reasons for holding a limited annual hunt. I only wish they would have allowed the state's wolf population to grow a bit larger before instituting a hunt of the very species that was reintroduced because of their value to the ecosystem.

My personal wolf encounter happened many years ago when I was a young soldier stationed in Germany. It occurred while retrieving communications wire late one night from a field site deep in the lightly populated and heavily wooded mountains of Bavaria, adjacent to Czechoslovakia's famed Bohemian Forest.

I was working with my buddy Dan, an Iowa guy. We'd nearly finished spooling wire when we were stopped in our tracks by a loud growl coming from the darkness. In the probing beam of Dan's flashlight, there stood what we first thought to be a large grey-brown German shepherd dog—its eyes glowing an eerie yellow-green. Two other sets of brightly reflective eyes appeared a little further off.

We were roused from our state of shock by another low growl, followed by a rather serious-sounding bark/snarl. Operating purely on instinct, we both backed away slowly, not at all concerned about leaving the last fifty yards of commo line uncollected. Eventually, we stumbled into the safety of our truck.

A local boar hunter told us later that a small pack of wolves was in the area, crossing back and forth over the border. Officially, however, the German government wouldn't at that time acknowledge the presence of such fearsome predators on their turf (Sort of like Michigan's cougar situation several years ago).

My belief is that we can and should, with proper respect and care, co-exist with wolves. Being the planet's dominant species doesn't mean we have any right to destroy another, even if it evokes a fear response. I think we now realize how important wild predators are, and how feelings have long been conditioned by misinformation.

The tide may slowly be turning in favor of the wolves.

Michigan Owls Part II:

Saw-whet, plus short- and long-eared birds

Our smallest owl in Michigan is the northern saw-whet owl. It is about eight inches tall, a bit smaller than the Eastern screech owl at eight-and-a-half inches.

Breeding occurs in the northern Lower Peninsula and the Upper Peninsula. A good number migrate through and into Michigan during the winter and can often be found statewide.

Banding at Whitefish Point in the Upper Peninsula has shown that more than a thousand will migrate into Michigan at the point.

When we find these little guys in the winter, they typically are located in conifers and often quite low and visible. To seek them out, look for the telltale "owl pellets" regurgitated on the ground around a tree, along with the fecal whitewash. They don't scare easily and often can be watched for weeks, returning to the same roost.

They think that if their eyes are closed and they can't see you, you can't see them. At a local nature center, we would feed these owls live mice, taking mice out and placing them on the snow at dusk before the owls leave to hunt. They will even take mice from our hands, although we don't recommend that, because great horned owls also like mice and, if they landed on our hand, could be harmful.

One of the things we learned when feeding them was that they will kill the mouse and store it in a tree fork, then come back for more.

Preferred habitat is mixed forests of conifers and hardwoods. Nesting occurs in abandoned pileated woodpecker and flicker holes. Some success has occurred in nest cavity boxes.

The name comes from the mating call, which some liken to a wet stone drawn across a saw blade when sharpening—a single

The Natural World

By Richard Schinkel



whistle note repeated.

Two other Michigan owls are the long-eared owl and short-eared owl.

The long-eared owl has tall ear tufts that he stretches even further up when found at a roost. He also makes his body appear very tall and slim, apparently to resemble a branch stub. Being reluctant to leave the roost, he believes he isn't seen, much like the saw-whet owl.

Rare in Michigan, the long-eared owl breeds primarily in the northern Lower Peninsula, but has been spotted a few times in the Upper Peninsula. Again, most often we find them during the winter when they migrate south from Canada.

Once a good roost is found, as many as a half-dozen, or more can use the tree at the same time. As with the saw-whet owl, look for pellets and whitewash beneath conifers.

The long-eared owl's breeding habitat is most frequently in mixed coniferous forests adjacent to uplands and wetland openings. The call is a typical "whoop," but drawn out and softer than the barred or great horned owls.

Nests are normally in trees, but on occasion on the ground. Nesting can occur as early as March, or as late as May. It appears that this owl's population is declining. In most areas of the United States, the long-eared owl is listed as a species of special concern, or threatened. This is primarily due to habitat loss and large-scale agriculture practices, especially as conservation reserve program lands are reverted back to crops.

The short-eared owl has very short tufts or "ears." Most of us wouldn't recognize these tufts if seen. This owl nests across the state with the proper habitat, but is not very prevalent. During the breeding atlas survey, only 15 counties have documented breeding.

The short-eared owl is endangered in Michigan. This owl frequents open habitats, fallow fields, grassy wetlands and the tundra to the north. Because of the loss of open land habitat, the short-eared owl is primarily seen in migration and during the winter.

As with saw-whet and long-eared owls, the short-eared owl can be found in coniferous trees during the winter and when migrating. It is easy to distinguish in flight, as it has a unique flight pattern. Its flight is wavering, with erratic wingbeats, as it swoops low over grassy areas looking for prey. The wings in flight show a black patch at the bend or knuckle.

I liken it to a large moth moving about over a field of flowers. If you are familiar with the flight of a marsh hawk, they are similar because the prey habitat is similar. It isn't unusual to see them in the morning or evening flying over fields.

The short-eared owl nests on the ground and even will roost there. The call is a raspy barking.

Both the long- and short-eared owl is about 15 inches tall. While hunting, hiking or cross-country skiing this fall and winter, keep your eyes open.

Conservation Officer Logs (9/30/13 through 10/14/13)

Salmon snaggers, a lost toddler, wild backhoe and throat-cutting religion

DISTRICT 1 (Marquette)

CO Doug Hermanson located a pile of trash on public land and located a shipping label mixed in with the garbage. He tracked the subject down, who turned out to be living in a camper. The subject was unemployed with no source of income. He was given the option of returning to the area and cleaning up the entire site instead of a ticket. He agreed and cleaned up the site.

COs Trey Luce and Jason Wicklund checked a well-used bear bait on state land. They located a non-resident hunter sitting over the bait while not wearing hunter orange. The hunter tried to hide the rifle in the brush but left the end of the rifle sticking out where the COs could see it. A check revealed that the subject did not have a bear hunting license and was ticketed for both violations. The subject needed to post bond and did not have the money on him. All three went back to the hunting camp where another hunter was arrested on a felony warrant. The subject was lodged in the Marquette County jail.

CO Grant Emery investigated a complaint of a beaver trapper getting a jump on the trapping season, with several traps out along a creek in Marenisco Township. Upon contacting the trapper at his residence, CO Emery located several beavers, a raccoon and an illegal bobcat. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 2 (Newberry)

CO Robert Crisp was off duty duck hunting when he observed three ORVs cruising around with the operators not wearing helmets, one with a pistol in a shoulder holster and carrying sacks of corn bait. He returned later that day while working and located all their hunting blinds with illegal baits, ORV trails to the blinds, and illegal tree cuttings. The following day he contacted the three hunters in their blinds. All had numerous violations and were issued tickets and educated about the violations.

While on patrol, **CO Robert Crisp** observed tracks in the road where a truck had been spinning its tires and doing donuts. He followed the tracks and located the vehicle. The driver was intoxicated, his license was suspended, he had a warrant, was on probation and the truck he was driving had no plates or insurance. He was arrested and lodged at the Alger County Jail.

While on patrol, **CO Jeff Panich** checked a small stream and observed a subject snagging salmon. A short while later, the angler was contacted as he was hauling four salmon up the bank. When CO Panich asked the man how the fish were caught, he stated "all in the mouth." CO Panich then showed the man the tear marks in the sides of the fish. Upon seeing this, the angler stated that the marks were made when the hook fell off in the net each time he caught a fish. The CO then advised that he was watching while the angler snagged the fish. When the angler heard this, he

told the CO that he snagged the salmon. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 3 (Gaylord)

CO Andrea Albert observed three anglers snagging salmon on the Jordan River during the closed season. One subject was teaching his mother how to snag the salmon at which she was successful. The same subject waded the river and attempted to net salmon with a large landing net. The subjects were ticketed for their illegal actions.

CO Mark DePew was working on the Boyne River watching a group of four anglers snagging fish. When he contacted the anglers, they became verbally abusive which later turned into crying. One of the subjects pleaded not to get a ticket since she was just arrested the night before for drunk driving. All subjects were ticketed for their violations.

CO Bill Webster was checking duck hunters on the opener when he heard an odd-sounding gunshot. He was able to locate it and observe the hunters for a while. When he contacted the group, one was hunting with lead shot. When the hunter was asked about possessing the lead shot, he said he received a warning last year for the same violation and asked to receive the same treatment this year. The CO advised he obviously had not learned from the warning and issued him a ticket.

CO Bill Webster was flagged down by a motorist who told him her father was drunk and needed to be arrested. She stated they took all of the car keys and hid them so he got on his tractor and drove to the store to get more beer. CO Webster contacted the individual driving the tractor along the county road with a case of beer on the floor of the tractor and had him perform sobriety evaluations. Upon completing the evaluations the operator was arrested and lodged in the county jail.

DISTRICT 4 (Cadillac)

Two weekend group patrols were conducted at Tippy Dam on the Big Manistee River to address numerous complaints of the illegal snagging of salmon. Numerous officers participated along with a team of Michigan State Police (MSP) troopers the first weekend. The first weekend resulted in 83 arrests with 1,224 pounds of illegal salmon seized and the second weekend resulted in 42 arrests with 395 pounds of illegal salmon seized. All officers reported numerous illegal activities and were kept busy making good cases.

COs Steve Converse and Joel Lundberg observed four subjects snagging salmon on the south side of Tippy Dam on the Big Manistee River. Two of the subjects were using lead torpedoes. The subjects were landing the salmon and then kicking them up on the shoreline. Upon contact, the COs discovered close to 30 salmon on shore. Additional COs assisted



and more salmon taken by this group were discovered at their vehicles in the parking lot. In total, 41 illegal salmon were seized with numerous tickets issued.

COs Steve Converse and Sam Koscinski worked Pine Creek in Manistee County on the night of the trout stream closure. At approximately 10:00 p.m. the COs observed a male subject exit his vehicle and run to the creek with a landing net. The subject netted four salmon and then ran them back up to his vehicle where the COs were waiting. The subject was arrested for the illegal take of salmon with 61 pounds of salmon charged for restitution to the Game and Fish Protection Fund.

CO Jeff Ginn was able to locate a lost two-and-a-half-year-old girl in a heavily forested area after she had been missing nearly 24 hours wearing only a tank top and a diaper. The search grid was conducted by Conservation Officers on ORVs, and along with CO Ginn included **Sgt. Mike Bomay, Angela Greenway, Brian Lebel and Mike Wells**. The two day search also involved the Newaygo County Sheriff Department, Michigan State Police, U.S. Forest Service officers, local fire departments and hundreds of volunteers. A warrant will be sought from the prosecutor.

DISTRICT 5 (Roscommon)

COs Mike Hearn and Matt Liestenfeltz were on patrol at the Tippy Dam, conducting surveillance on a group of three anglers. The non-residents were snagging, keeping foul hooked fish and possessing over-limits of salmon. The COs seized 215 pounds of illegal fish and tickets were issued.

CO Matt Liestenfeltz received a complaint at home from an off-duty MSP lieutenant and off-duty DNR employee regarding an individual shooting a swan on Reedsburg Dam. CO Liestenfeltz responded to the scene, where his investigation revealed a father and son shot multiple times at a swan, fatally wounding it. The father was issued a ticket for taking a non-game species and both firearms were seized.

DISTRICT 6 (Bay City)

CO Joel Lundberg was on patrol and came across a vehicle driving recklessly on a two-track on state land. The CO activated his emergency lights to pull the vehicle over. The vehicle then accelerated and passed the CO and collided with the CO's truck. The CO pursued the vehicle and it stopped a short distance later. The occupants were intoxicated and had open intoxicants in the vehi-

cle, along with a beer bottle that the CO saw thrown from the vehicle during the pursuit. Local deputies responded and assisted with the incident. Subsequently the driver and passenger were arrested and lodged for multiple violations. During the interview with the driver, information was obtained that he and a friend each shot a deer earlier in the week that sounded suspicious. After further investigation, the two COs made a trip to the driver's home and contacted his father at 2:00 a.m. The father advised the deer were hanging in the basement. He went on to say that he told them to tag those deer. COs Lundberg and **Steve Lockwood** found the two improperly tagged deer and added three additional charges for the deer.

DISTRICT 7 (Plainwell)

CO Chris Holmes and Sgt. Jeff Rabbers conducted surveillance along a private lake in Kalamazoo County in response to a complaint of potential illegal waterfowl hunting activity. Contact was made with three surprised hunters at the end of their hunt. One claimed he had left his license at home and needed to go to the bathroom real bad. CO Holmes asked him if he was allowed to go to his residence to use the bathroom, would he come back out to show them his license. He responded that he would not, and that his wife would probably not be happy when they tried to contact him at his residence. CO Holmes then asked again if he had a license and he finally admitted to taking two ducks without any state or federal licenses. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Steve Mooney and Jeff Robinette observed a group of juveniles in a closed trout stream chasing salmon with nets and sticks. The COs identified themselves and two of the subjects ran. After a short foot chase, the two were apprehended. Local police officers arrived and advised that one of the juveniles was wanted on an assault charge. The two subjects who ran from the COs will be petitioned into juvenile court for the fishing violations.

DISTRICT 8 (Rose Lake)

CO Brian Fish was called to a complaint of a landowner using a backhoe to create a new road, nearly one-half mile long, along a designated trout stream. Upon reaching the site, he found there was sand and material going downstream. The landowner had removed all the growth, rocks,

downed trees and branches along the south side of the stream in his effort to open the stream up to fishing. The material that was removed was then used to fill regulated wetlands and floodplain areas. The complaint was turned over to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for follow-up.

CO Shane Webster contacted two waterfowl hunters and offered to collect a few of their wood ducks that were floating in front of their blind. In all, eight wood ducks were easily retrieved, an over-limit. The hunters stated they didn't realize they had shot that many. CO Webster noted that it seemed unlikely that every duck they had shot had fallen perfectly in front of their blind. They admitted maybe at least one more had gone over behind them into the marsh area where they couldn't recover it. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 9 (Southfield)

COs Mike Drexler and Dan Walzak were checking waterfowl hunters at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area on opening day of waterfowl season. One subject had a loaded firearm on the dike and an unplugged shotgun. The hunter had a small spot of blood on the latex gloves he was wearing and stated that it came from a duck he shot, but when he grabbed the duck it flew away. The COs were not impressed with the story and continued investigating. When checking the hunter's shot shells, CO Drexler asked to see a few pocket knives in the hunter's pockets. Inspecting the knives revealed fresh feathers and blood. The hunter then stated that his religion requires him to cut the throats of the bird he shot, but after doing so the bird flew away. An inspection of the grocery bag in the hunters pocket revealed six protected non-game songbirds. The hunter received a ticket for the unplugged shotgun and taking non-game protected species.

COs Mike Drexler and Dan Walzak checked four waterfowl hunters on the opening day of waterfowl season. Three of the hunters failed to sign their Federal waterfowl stamps, one hunter did not have any of his hunting licenses on him so a Federal stamp could not be confirmed, and they were in possession of loaded firearms on the dike. The hunters protested a few tickets and several warnings and couldn't understand why the COs didn't just "give them all a break."

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Final Shot



North Woods Theater

The majestic old opera house that anchors the downtown area of Calumet, Michigan—a once-bustling Upper Peninsula mining community that is now part of the Keweenaw National Historic Park—testifies to the economic and cultural impact the mineral industry had in the days when copper was king. Visitors are sure to enjoy the ornate theatrical venue that opened in 1900 and still operates today. Over the years, it has hosted numerous stars of the American stage, including Edwin Booth, Lillian Russell, Douglas Fairbanks Sr., James O'Neill, William S. Hart, Lon Chaney Sr., Sarah Bernhardt, Wallace Beery and Madame Helena Modjeska (who is said to haunt the venue). Musical greats that have performed there range from John Philip Sousa and Irish tenor Chauncey Olcott to 1960s rock-and-rollers The Turtles, and folk singers Judy Collins and Peter Yarrow.

Guidelines for importing deer, elk and moose meat into state

As successful deer, elk and moose hunters return from trips in Michigan and beyond, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds hunters that there are regulations regarding the importation of carcasses from certain other states and provinces.

For free-ranging deer, elk or moose taken in Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, North and South Dakota, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Alberta and Saskatchewan, restrictions exist on parts of these animals that may be brought into Michigan.

The above states and provinces have detected chronic wasting disease (CWD) in free-ranging animals. Only the following parts of a deer, elk, or moose carcass may be brought into Michigan: deboned meat, antlers, antlers attached to a skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides, upper canine teeth, or a finished taxidermy mount.

If you are notified by another

state or province that a deer, elk or moose you brought into Michigan tested positive for CWD, you must contact the DNR Wildlife Disease Lab within two business days (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at 517-336-5030 and provide details.

"The DNR appreciates the full cooperation of Michigan residents returning from out-of-state hunting trips in complying with these rules," said Steve Schmitt, DNR wildlife veterinarian. "We want these hunters to be able to enjoy their success while helping us to protect the health of the deer, elk and moose of our state."

This list of states and provinces with CWD in free-ranging deer, elk and moose herds changes frequently. Any changes to importation regulations will be posted at www.michigan.gov/cwd.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) may have regulations on importation from Canada. Hunters may contact the USDA at 301-734-3277.

OK hunters, let's be ethical in the woods

As *The North Woods Call* reports in each issue (See Page 7), Michigan conservation officers regularly encounter individuals engaged in unethical hunting practices.

They tackle many cases of individuals buying a hunting license after harvesting a deer, or loaning kill tags to a friend or relative.

"You must buy your license before you go out to hunt," said Capt. Daniel Hopkins of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' Law Enforcement Division, "and have it in your possession when afield. Buying a license is not only the ethical and responsible thing to do, it is the law. Harvesting a deer without a license is poaching."

Deer poaching in Michigan carries a restitution payment of \$1,000 per deer, a minimum \$200 fine and jail time of up to 90 days. In addition, a violator's hunting privileges may be suspended for up to three years.

Another unethical practice encountered frequently each hunting season is loaning kill tags to an unlicensed individual who has harvested a deer.

For more information about these and other deer hunting infractions, take a look at www.michigan.gov/deer.

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