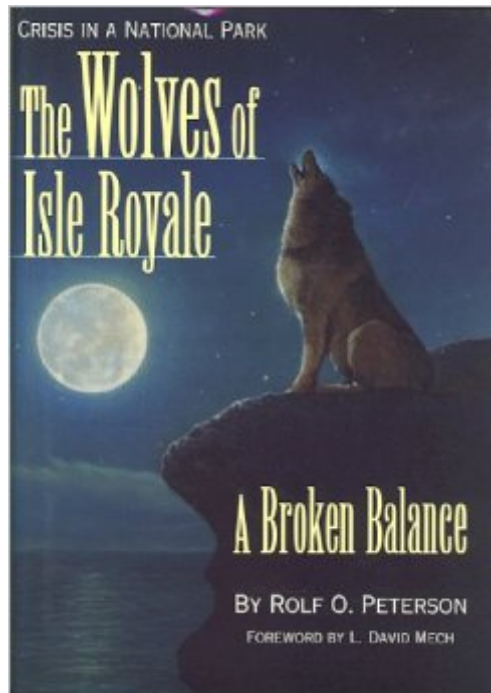


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The Wolves Of Isle Royale: A Broken Balance



Synopsis

Few can rival what Rolf Peterson has accomplished on Isle Royale. His study, a true classic, offers lessons and examples to us all who hope to do the same. This book reveals some of the secrets and details of this one-of-a-kind wolf study. •Douglas W. Smith, Leader, Yellowstone Wolf Project

Isle Royale National Park; with its lush northern landscape, wolves, and moose; is an ideal laboratory for wildlife biologists. For nearly half a century it has been the site of a comprehensive study on wolves (2008 marks the fiftieth anniversary); the world's longest-running study on any wild animal. The Wolves of Isle Royale is author and wildlife biologist Rolf Peterson's fascinating first-hand account of the relationship that exists between the wolf and the moose on the island. Illustrated with over 100 photographs, this book reveals the true nature of this mysterious and little-understood animal, and it offers novel solutions to the conservation crises as the wolf population falters to its lowest recorded level. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've been interested in the moose and wolves of Isle Royale since visiting the island in the early 1990s. While I spotted plenty of moose (swimming in the lakes, jumping out of the bushes in front of us on the trail, etc.), the wolves remained hidden--a mystery. Fortunately, Rolf Peterson writes brilliantly of the side of Isle Royale that many of us will never glimpse. Peterson's work switches easily between the science and the 'experience' of studying wolves in a remote setting. The book is

chock full of interesting anecdotes collected from Peterson's many seasons studying the island's flora and fauna. From landing a bush plane in a white-out to dragging moose carcasses through the woods, Peterson gives us an interesting look at the what being a field scientist might be like. It's important to note that this book is not just about wolves. Indeed, so many environmental factors shape life on Isle Royale outside of its 'headlining' mammals (moose and wolves): from beaver to fox, from spruce to elder. Peterson does a great job of explaining how the changing environment (some human-induced, some not) has impacted the island's populations. The book also has some excellent photographs, which illustrate not only the science, but also the beauty that is Isle Royale! Highly recommended.

This book provides an introduction to the wolves of Isle Royale. Peterson certainly knows the material, since he has led the island's wolf-moose study for decades. The book presents a mix of scientific findings, stories from the wolf-moose study, and Peterson's personal experiences and the island. It's well-written, though the mixture of these materials sometimes seems a bit random. If your primary interest lies in the science of wolves, I'd read Durward Allen's *Wolves of Minong* instead. But for everyone else, this should be your first book on Isle Royale and the wolves. The greatest strength of this book is its photographs. These include wildlife shots, pictures of study staff dissecting carcasses, landscapes of Isle Royale, and a few shots of Peterson and his family. The photographs, the color, and the paper the book is printed on are all top-notch. Peterson argues that the wolf population may be in crisis. Fortunately, wolf numbers have turned around since he wrote this book. His concluding chapter, about whether we should reintroduce "non-native" wolves to Isle Royale if they died out naturally, is very thoughtful and thought-provoking.

If you've been to Isle Royale and want to know more about the wolves, then I highly recommend this book. Most visitors to Isle Royale hope to see a wolf, and most visitors leave the island disappointed. Isle Royale is the closest thing to a closed system to study a predator-prey relationship, and is the site of one of the longest running field studies. The book has some good stories about conducting research on Isle Royale, including the winter study when the research team are the only people in the park. It also provides some insight into how theories about the wolf-moose relationship are still evolving after years of research. It also discusses the challenges the researchers faced when the wolf population took a nosedive in the late 1980's, and ponders the question of what should be done if the wolves die out on IR. This book is several years old now, so if you're interested in more recent data, contact the IR Natural History Association [URL] to get the

latest report.

For wolf lovers/admirers, agriculturalists and environmentalists. This is a definitive study on wolves over a period of forty-four years. Some of the results show that the main diet of wolves are small rodents (easy to catch and don't present any chance of having a pack member harmed) and shows how the pack culls a herd of sick and weak animals. This is an important study because it shows how wolves provide a balance in the food chain. It also shows that when times are hard, wolves can and do control their reproduction to match the population of their prey. They are vital in that they control the size of the herbivore population so that large forest and agricultural areas can survive and are not overgrazed. Strongly recommended if you want to know about the wonderful way Nature has planned for our earth.

Yes, this is the best work from Rolf Peterson, a noted Wolf Biologist who has been working with L. David Mech, another "monster of our Wild literature" ... I strongly recommended ... No regret ...

I really loved this book about the Wolf and Moose Winter Study on Isle Royale in Lake Superior. Peterson is extremely knowledgeable, passionate and articulate about this scientific study, and makes the book personal enough to fascinate me. I would recommend this to anyone.

This book is very good lots of great images and information. It is good for anyone interested in wolves or Isle Royale lots of very interesting information on the wildlife and what is driving the ever changing Isle Royale system.

Dr. Peterson is one of the greats when it comes to wolf biology. I wish that he would consider writing another book! The story continues to evolve ...

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