

Do plants have some secret way of fighting off the moose of Isle Royale?

Will the wolf population (now at a fighting trim of 23, in three packs), remain more or less the same for the next several years?

An information-packed feature story on the Michigan natural science study of wolves and moose on Isle Royale graced the front page of the *Wall Street Journal* on Sept. 16, 1983. Written by Robert L. Simison, the article describes the history of wolf/moose relationships since the first wolves trotted across the ice to the island (15 miles) from Canada in 1949. The studies, begun by Dr. Durward Allen, are now being carried on by Rolf Peterson — "wolf man of Isle Royale National Park."

Instead of an arrived at "delicate natural balance," a "seesaw of survival" seems to be the order of nature. Wildly fluctuating populations of both species have been recorded, with factors never known or considered now entering the equation.

Presently, Peterson is "trying to sort out how the seesaw is affected by snowfall patterns, a nasty little tapeworm, the mysterious intricacies of wolf society, and the eating habits of moose," according to Simison. At least three more years of research are needed to test the current theories.