

Michigan's crown jewel of parks — Isle Royale

OUTDOOR INSIGHTS



BILL PARHER

The crackle of tiny feet moving swiftly over dry leaves and grass gave my wandering attention to focal point. Perched for better than an hour on a fallen Tamarack overlooking a fox den, patience was finally paying off.

A flash of orange and the tip of a bushy tail crossed my peripheral vision, then a vixen was suddenly upon me. But I was more startled than she.

Undaunted by my presence, she proceeded to the den-mouth and offered a subtle feeding purr. In an instant, the opening was alive with bouncy young cubs — six in all — fighting for a nipple to suckle.

Heart pounding... pulse racing... a broad smile crossed my face as my parental instincts intervened.

Having hiked or hunted hundreds of miles of Michigan's prized forests and woodlands, never once had I witnessed such a heartwarming display in nature.

The mother fox was in the process of relocating her cubs to a new den, a defensive play she will carry out two or three times before the cubs are old enough to fend for themselves. After a few minutes of nursing, she rubbed one of the cubs by the fur on the back of its neck and trotted off to the new den. The vixen returned every couple of hours and repeated the process until the entire litter had been moved.

The cubs remained outside for a few minutes following their mother's departure, frolicking and exploring the immediate surroundings of their new world beneath the golden warmth of the mid-morning sunshine. Then, one by one, they retreated to the safety of the den.

This was Isle Royale National Park at its finest.

A crown jewel

The state's only national park and certainly the jewel of Michigan's crown, Isle Royale is 551,000 acres, including water. Unspoiled pristine wilderness. There are no roads on the island, but hikers and backpackers can explore over 164 miles of foot trails.

Located 56 miles off the northern tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula in the northwest corner of Lake

Superior, Isle Royale is accessible by boat or sea plane only. The island is roughly 50 miles long and nine miles wide. Travel on or around the island is by foot or boat with camping, hiking, backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, fishing and sightseeing adventures at a premium.

Leaving the fox den behind, I trudged anxiously along the narrow trail winding through a birch and fir forest above the rugged, grey bedrock cliffs on the north side of the island.

Twenty minutes down the path and the faint sound of crunching leaves once again stirred my attention.

Another fox? A beaver? A wolf? A moose?

The uncertainty didn't last long.

A cow moose and her calf emerged from the nearby underbrush. Browsing on grasses and budding fir trees the duo approached with minimal caution, glancing my way only when they raised their heads to chew the entire.

With camera clicking, I studied their movements from close range. Not until they wandered to within 15 yards did I decide they were a little too close for my comfort and high-tailed it back to the trail.

A wilderness paradise

If backpacking or canoeing is your forte, you'll be right at home on Isle Royale. Group and individual campsites are scattered throughout the island on a first-come, first-served basis. The backcountry area of the island is rough and rugged. Hikers and backpackers should be well prepared for rough terrain and inclement weather.

If you prefer the more pampered accommodations National Park Concessions Inc. offer rooms at Rock Harbor Lodge as well as housekeeping, cabins, a restaurant, a marina and a store. Park rangers conduct nature hikes and slide shows as well as guided sightseeing boat trips. Many of the trails are self-guiding with nature interpretive signs posted along the way. Fishing charters head out into Lake Superior daily in pursuit of some of the lake trout that provide a world-class fishery around the island.

Anglers are urged to report their success. Questions and comments are also welcomed. Send information to Outdoors, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham MI 48009. Fax information to (810) 644-1314 or call Bill Parher evenings at 901-2573.

Golfers-Save time and money.



Join Now-

A limited number of memberships have opened up at The Heathers Club in Bloomfield Hills. You can take advantage of this opportunity and join the private club that's the talk of the town. Play a championship nine hole golf course patterned after Scottish links. Enjoy a Club House with dining room/bar/grille and pro-shop. Other facilities include pool with enormous sun deck and tennis courts. Planned social activities offer a chance to meet some great friends. Best of all, they'll tailor a payment plan just

for you or you'll receive a big reward for cash memberships. Get in a full season of golfing by calling now.

- Tee times readily available
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Call Ronda Jemison for a tour (810) 334-9770

Located off Square Lake Rd. between Opdyke and Adams in The Heathers Community in Bloomfield Hills.



OUTDOORS CALENDAR

ARCHERY

BOWHUNTER 3D
Detroit Archers will hold a bowhunter 3D shoot beginning at 9 a.m. Sunday on its walk-through range in West Bloomfield, (810) 661-9610.

FISHING CLUBS

MICHIGAN FLY FISHING
The Michigan Fly Fishing Club meets at 7 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Livonia Clarenceville Junior High School, (810) 478-1494.

FOUR SEASONS
The Four Seasons Fishing Club meets 7:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Maplewood Center in Garden City, 477-3816.

METRO-WEST STEELHEADERS
Metro-West Steelheaders meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at Garden City High School, 420-2965.

FISHING TOURNAMENTS

BASS MASTERS
The Oakland Bass Masters will hold an open tournament on Lake St. Clair beginning at 6 a.m. Sunday. Entry deadline is 10 p.m. Friday, (810) 542-5254.

IMPORTANT DATES

BEAR
June 30 is the deadline to apply for a fall bear hunting license.

STURGEON
Lake sturgeon season opens July 1 on the Great Lakes and connecting waters.

SHOOTING SPORTS

SPORTING CLAYS
Hunter's Ridge Hunt Club in Oxford will host the Deep/Field & Stream Claybird Classic sporting clays regional and national tournaments on Saturday and Sunday, respectively. Saturday's regional competition is an open event. Preregister by phone at (810) 628-4868. Sunday's national finals are open to public viewing and there will be no admission fee. Hunter's Ridge is also hosting a charity shoot for Children's Hospital on Friday.

MUZZLELOADER SHOOT
Area muzzleloader enthusiasts can sharpen their shooting skills when the Linden Sportsmen's Club hosts its 14th annual fun shoot beginning at 9 a.m. Sunday, (810) 676-6671.

METROPARKS

METROPARK REQUIREMENTS
Most Metropark programs are free, while some require a nominal fee. Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are required for all programs. Call the respective parks, toll free: Stony Creek, 1-800-477-7756; Indian Springs, 1-800-477-3192; Kensington, 1-800-477-3178.

TOT LOT NATURE PROGRAM
A half-hour nature program for children will be held at 1 p.m.

each Sunday during June, July and August in the Tot Lot at Indian Springs

NATURE STORYTIME
Preschoolers can learn about animals and nature through stories, songs and games during this 45-minute program, which begins at 10:30 a.m. Friday at Kensington.

WEATHER OR NOT
Learn how to identify different cloud formations and how changes in barometric pressure, wind direction temperature and humidity can all be used to forecast weather during this program, which begins at 10 a.m. Saturday at Kensington.

INVESTIGATING INSECTS
A short indoor discussion on how to identify different types of insects followed by a trip into the field to catch and observe insects begins at 1 p.m. Saturday at Indian Springs.

DOUNTIFUL BUTTERFLIES
An indoor discussion followed by an outdoor hike to learn all about butterflies begins at 2 p.m. Sunday at Kensington.

FUNGUS AMONG US
Learn to identify some of our more common fungi, learn their life stories and then learn the folklore surrounding them in this program, which begins at 2 p.m. Sunday at Kensington.

OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS

COUNTY PARK REQUIREMENTS
Advanced registration is required for all nature programs at Oakland County Parks. Call (810)

625-6473 to register or for more information.

SUPER NATURAL SATURDAY
Learn some of the "star" mysteries in this astronomical program, which begins at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Independence Oaks.

EARTHLY CELEBRATION
Join Patty Clark in celebrating appreciation for the natural world through stories and songs in this program, which begins at 3:30 p.m. Sunday at Independence Oaks.

GYPSY MOTH PRIMER
Join Carol Lenchek, coordinator of the Oakland County Gypsy Moth Suppression program, in an informative program about the Gypsy Moth beginning at 7 p.m. Thursday, June 28, at Independence Oaks.

STATE PARKS

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING CLINICS
Weekday fishing clinics run through Aug. 18 at various state parks in southeastern Michigan. Weekday sessions begin at 6:30 p.m. each day. Weekday clinics will be held Mondays at Maybury State Park in Northville, (810) 349-8390; Tuesdays at Pontiac Lake Recreation Area in Waterford, (810) 660-1020; Wednesdays at Island Lake Recreation Area in Brighton, (810) 229-7067; Thursdays at Seven Lakes State Park in Fenton, (810) 634-7271; and Fridays at Proud Lake Recreation Area in Milford, (810) 685-2433.

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P185SR-13	P185SR-14
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P185SR-15	P185SR-16
P205SR-15	P205SR-16
P205SR-16	P205SR-17
P225SR-16	P225SR-17
P225SR-17	P225SR-18
P245SR-18	P245SR-19
P265SR-19	P265SR-20
P285SR-20	P285SR-21
P305SR-21	P305SR-22
P325SR-22	P325SR-23
P345SR-23	P345SR-24
P365SR-24	P365SR-25
P385SR-25	P385SR-26
P405SR-26	P405SR-27
P425SR-27	P425SR-28
P445SR-28	P445SR-29
P465SR-29	P465SR-30
P485SR-30	P485SR-31
P505SR-31	P505SR-32
P525SR-32	P525SR-33
P545SR-33	P545SR-34
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P1765SR-94	P1765SR-95
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