Discoveries

News and Views from Discovery Southeast Spring 2002

# Secret Places

Richard Carstensen

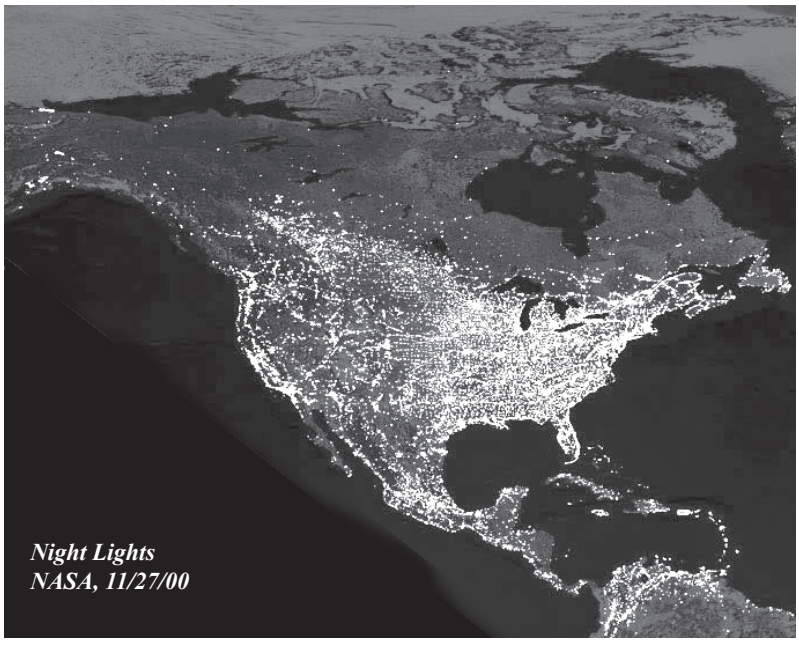
Three friends once walked for ten days through a land so rich that small bears detoured in fear of their propertied elders. Let's call it the Land of Large Bears.

That country burned permanently into the friends' hearts. Except to their closest acquaintances, others who understood the fragility of wildness, they never spoke of the long walk. They knew those ten wild days were unrepeatable. Backcountry is shrinking. The press of humanity on Manhattan and its satellites can't be quarantined.

A few years later one of the three friends caught wind of a book project. A writer and photographer planned a trek into the Land of Large Bears! Shocked, he asked to join the expedition, hoping to convince the journalists that to such a place their art was costly.

The lobbying effort was half successful. The book's best photos showed the Land of Large Bears, but bore few captions. Little was written of the long walk. Meantime, boats and floatplanes dropped a few more parties each year into the bears' bedroom.

The book's author was moved by the country, but could not agree that secrecy was a viable strategy for the protection of charismatic places. He wrote a follow-up essay about his experience, naming his companions, and the peaks, streams and bays. He asked his readers to settle for just the story, leaving the Land of Large Bears to its furry denizens. It was almost a fair trade; the essay was a masterpiece.



*Night Lights*
*NASA, 11/27/00*

The three friends reviewed the draft and begged the author to purge all place names and directions. To their surprise, he accepted. I hope his decision is noted not only by other nature writers, but by earth stewards everywhere. Those who advertise wild land for whatever reason — to fill a kayak trip or cruiseship, to hold chainsaws at bay, to prop up sagging timber or fishing economies, to instruct us from the ecology of untrammeled places, or simply in purest praise — all need to ask how deeply we can dip from the well of wildness before it goes dry.

There's a conundrum in sharing wildness. When a place teaches me something, I try to take people there with words and images. But the wildest places with the richest lessons are least inured to social calls. I crumple drafts and cross out place names, feeling like a conflicted evangelist who fears to identify the home of God.

Such feelings are less unusual than we might guess. Richard Nelson says that the Koyukon teach children not to point at mountains. Pointing shows disrespect. If we considered it as rude to point at mountains as toward the person across the street, imagine how that would change our relationship to nature!

Such circumspections may open more doors than they close. Like knocking on wood or

*continued on page 4*

## In this issue

# From the board

Mike Stanley

In most of the Discovery Southeast newsletters, this space is reserved for comments by the executive director. In the last newsletter, it was the President's Corner and was written by **Barb Sheinberg**, who has been working tirelessly on behalf of Discovery since the departure of Jono McKinney in mid-December. This time, I'll take the pen in hand – more accurately, put the keyboard under my fingers – and bring you up to date on some of what is happening with the organization.

We are still searching for an executive director to lead Discovery into the future. We completed one round of interviews in March – including bringing two applicants to Juneau for interviews in person – but didn't find the right "fit" between them and us. We've undertaken a second round of searching, and several intriguing candidates have surfaced. We'll be interviewing them shortly and hope to fill the vacancy soon. The board understands the importance of an executive director for Discovery, and is committed to finding the best person for the job. Much thanks to those board members and staff who are on the hiring committee for all the time they have put in on this effort.

In the meantime, we are moving forward. Administrative Assistant **Jan Carlile** has stepped in as interim director, and is doing a wonderful job managing the organization day-to-day. **Tracey Miller** is keeping the books up-to-date and preparing the necessary financial reports for the board. **Kathy Hocker** has been working on program issues and coordinating among the naturalists. And board member **Kristen Romanoff** is giving a lot of her time helping in the office wherever she can. We extend a hearty "thank you" to each of them for helping keep the ship afloat.

I also want to note the efforts of my fellow board members. In particular, the board stepped up to the plate for this year's auction, which was a success. Board members spent many hours planning for and putting on the auction, and were gratified that it went as smoothly as it did, even without an executive director around to tell us what to do.

I guess the point I'm getting at here, is that Discovery is fortunate to have a dedicated board and staff who are truly committed to this organization. As difficult as it is to function without an executive director, we've been up to the challenge. Of course, we'll all be relieved when we have a new leader, but until then, Discovery is operating just fine. Please forgive me for "tooting our own horn," but I just wanted to share with you, our valuable members and newsletter readers, what I have seen with the organization in these last few months.




Discoveries is published by *Discovery Southeast*, Southeast Alaska's leading source for natural history and conservation education. A non–profit education organization founded in Juneau, Alaska, in 1989, Discovery Southeast promotes direct, hands-on learning from nature. Discovery Southeast presents natural science and outdoor education programs for youth, adults, and teachers in communities throughout Southeast Alaska. By engaging youth and adults in the study of nature, Discovery Southeast naturalists deepen and enrich the connections between the people of Southeast Alaska and nature.

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## 2002 Auction Thank-yous

Discovery Southeast would like to thank the many contributors and volunteers who made this year's auction a great success. This fundraising event helps to bring our Nature Studies Program to Juneau's elementary school children**.**

Hearthside Books, Rainy Day Books, Lady Jane Mulready, Ricky D., Joe Geifer, Pavia Wald, Larry Holland, Mary Pat Schilly, Scott Miller, Keith Bunny, John Day, David Sturdevant, Brenna Heinz, Tracey Miller, Susan Phillips, Kathy Hocker, Diane Antaya, Nonna Shtipelman, Walt Chapman, Tiffany Wells, Michaela Fowler, Elena Ruddy, Nathan Goodwin, Heidi Geist, Kjersten Criss, Matt Greeley, Eddie Jacobson, Sara Cohen, Eve Schroeder, Rachelle Sloss, Laurie Heagy, Deb Rudis, Debbie Tillinghast, Brita Bishop, Nicki Germain, Clancy DeSmet, Alice Hadsel, Claire Pavia, Marinke Van Gelder, Karin Wigen, Andy Romanoff, Scott Miller, Taku Graphics, Taku Smokeries, Marcy and Jeoff Larson, Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Juneau, Costco Wholesale, Alaska and Proud Foodland Supermarket, Super Bear, Alaska Natural History Association, Carr's, Melvin and Bernice, KJ & Peggy Metcalf, Friends of Admiralty, Bob Armstrong, Laughlin and Dunlap, Fish 'n' Fly Charters, Alex Wertheimer, Dave Haas & Fred Hiltner, Peter Wright, Auke Bay Landing Craft and Excavation, Wings of Alaska, White Pass Yukon Route, White Pass and Yukon Route, Wings of Alaska, Scott & Betsy Fisher, Foggy Mountain Shop, Rob and Koren Bosworth, Beth Potter & Brita Bishop, Marie Olson, Colleen & Lindy Jones, Dalton Street Cottages, Dan & JoAnna Egolf, Alaska Nature Tours, Lisa Blacher Pottery, Kim Titus, Faulkner-Banfield, PC, Bob & Elaine Schroeder, Frank & Sally Rue, Bill Platte and Mary Bardone, Kurt Iverson, Air Excursions and Gustavus Inn, Air Excursions, Gustavus Inn, William Wildes, Sam's Auto Body, Diane Anderson, Douglas Island Pink & Chum, Ann Fuller & Michael Sakarias, Odin Brudie, Acupressure Institute of Alaska, Driftwood Lodge, Wendy Wolf, David Gelotte, Perseverance Theatre, The Shellfish Market, Friendly Planet Trading Co, Thunder Mountain Sports Camps, Elsa Demeksa, Bear Creek Outfitters, A Stitch in Time, JoAnn George, Marion Kinter, Debbie Tillinghast, Lisa Blacher Pottery, Mountain Gears, Steve Merli, Jane Roodenburg, Judy Hall, Shayla Roddy Walker, David Thomas, Sara Cohen & Barb Sheinberg, Hanger on the Wharf, Dawn Pisel, Princess Tours, Paititi Woolens-Invisible World, David Thomas, Michelle Kaelka, Leslie Bennett, Richard Carstensen, Capital Copy, Glacier Pediatrics, Streveler and Brakel, Super Bear Super Market, Mary Ellen Arvold, Alaska Natural History Association, Peggy Wertheimer, Fred Meyer Stores, Jeff Sloss, Marie Larsen, Our Back Yard, Nicki Germain, Luann McVey, Rob and Koren Bosworth, Esmail Peirroi, Foreign Auto, Pat Harris, Dave Haas and Mary Ellen Arvold, Alaska Natural History Association, David Thomas, Juneau Racquet Club, SAGA, Shane Robinson, Poseidon Board Sports, Mark Kelley, Rainbow Foods, JoAnn George, Dick Wood, Alaska Heritage Bookshop, Scott Foster, Barbara Johns, Seventh Heaven, City Center Chiropractic, Nicki Germain, Jim & Jean Ann Alter, Fiddlehead Restaurant, Hassan Bani-Saaid, Eliza Stevens, Eric Kueffner, Julie DeLong, Jan Caulfield, Jan Carlile, Martha Murray, Martha Murray, Maureen Riley, Kathy Coghill, Marie Larsen, Bonita Nelson, Paula Johnson, Rebecca Braun.

## Bear Education

Nonna Shtipelman

Juneau is definitely bear country! And although many of us have seen bears walking through our yards, or along trails, streams and roads, few of us understand their behavior or biology. Unfortunately, not understanding bears often leads to problems with them. Discovery SE has obtained a small grant from the City & Borough of Juneau to present 30-minute bear awareness programs to every 6th, 7th ad 8th grade classroom in Juneau's two middle schools. Naturalists will work with students to understand basic bear behavior, promote safety in bear-human interactions, and encourage students to treat bears with respect. Programs will also focus on the importance of proper garbage storage and disposal.

In other bear education program news, we submitted a funding proposal to the Alaska Conservation Foundation to support this year's Bears of Admiralty Teachers' Expedition, and plan to apply for additional bear education funding through Alaska Department of Fish & Game's Wildlife Conservation, Education and Viewing Expansion Programs.

## Discovery Days

Alison Kromm

What leaves tracks ten times the size of a Snowshoe Hare and giggles uncontrollably? A kid on a Discovery Day trip! On February 19 and March 11, Discovery Southeast hosted Discovery Days, nature day camps for 3rd and 4th graders. The camps were held during in-service school days and offered kids two full days of fun and adventure lead by Discovery Southeast naturalists. The Discovery Day on February 19 was based near the Eaglecrest lodge and was a day of fun in the snow. Thanks to donations made by Nugget Alaskan Outfitter and the Foggy Mountain Shop everyone had a great time snowshoeing and tracking animals through the deep snow. With the guidance of naturalists Walt Chapman and Alison Kromm children also had the opportunity to explore winter survival techniques through the construction of snow shelters. The Discovery Day camp on March 11 was located at the SAGA Lodge where the kids searched for signs of spring while exploring meadows, forests and beaches. Nonna Shtipelman and Alison Kromm introduced the use of compasses and challenged the kids to complete a mystery nature hike (a Discovery Southeast version of a scavenger hunt) using only their wits and the use of a compass. The next Discovery Day will be in the fall, and promises to be another adventurous exploration of Juneau's wild side.

## Secret places *continued from page 1*

saying grace, they dim the ego and brighten gratefulness. I sometimes decline to speak the name of Bear, a taboo common to many cultures. Dabbling in this deference for a decade has expanded my regard for Bear. Evangelism is often inattentive. This older brand of reverence is weighted with reticence.

**Growing up wild** Most kids build secret hideouts, first at home, then, if they're lucky, ever farther into nearby woods and fields. Venturing from and retreating to these cozy shelters kids test their autonomy, tasting the first delicious fruits of a lifetime love of special places. "Toddlers" says Gary Nabhan in The Geography of Childhood, "take refuge in natural and simply constructed, concealed settings. Such refuges extend the sphere of safety that children sensed earlier while still within constant parental care."

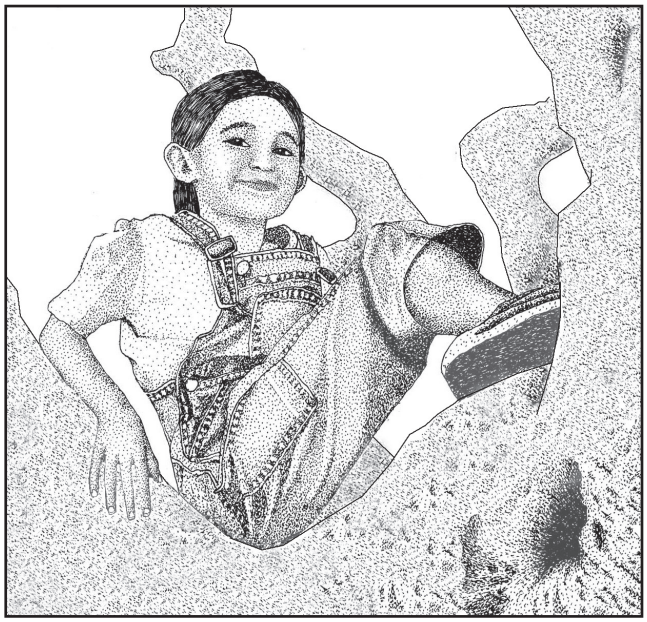
The childhood delight in secrecy, explored through peekaboo and hide and seek, is adaptive. Like wolf pups at the den entry, little humans are potential prey. But the primal hiding game builds skills and proclivities relevant even to 21st-century adults. When we learn what Steve Merli calls the core lesson of Nature Studies - that we come from the earth ("Off trail" Discoveries, Fall 2001) - secrecy begins to mature beyond self protection into a reciprocal nurturing of the places that feed us. These places can't be paraded too casually.

**Conservation** Secrecy and publicity become ironically intertwined in the effort to save special places. The Landmark Trees Project has been documenting one-acre patches of the most majestic remaining stands of giant Sitka spruces in Southeast Alaska. Only a fraction of them survived early handlogging and subsequent clearcutting. By one way of thinking, the survivors need desperately to be known. Those of us who started the project in 1996 once envisioned an atlas of Southeast's 100 greatest Landmark Forests. We imagined plump Sitka spruces joining the glaciers, bears and whales currently dominating the advertisements and travel essays that lure tourists to our region, thereby building a constituency for trees.

There's a problem or two, however, with these scenarios. The last great trees grow primarily on stream and river deposits. Because the coastal fringe was thoroughly culled of giants a century ago, today's "landmarkers" often have to bushwack a mile or more up salmon streams before locating truly awesome big tree stands. So a map of the finest Landmark forests is a map of . . . you guessed it: the Land of Large Bears. Inexperienced or habituated bears may chase spawning pinks through exposed estuarine channels in frequent view of people. But dominant unhabituated adults prefer quiet, thicket-rimmed riffles far upstream. The last thing they want to smell there is a Landmark Trees tourist. Even a few parties per summer visiting these fishing reaches could alter bear behavior.

It keeps coming back to Old Step-Widener, Alaska's quarter-ton canary in the mine. As guardians of Furry Thing, our 200-foot-tall coniferous "landmarks" may best be left unmapped.

We presented this dilemma in an opinionaire mailed to the network of Landmark Tree collaborators throughout the Tongass. On many subjects, replies varied widely. But not a single respondent wanted us to reveal



the locations of remote Landmark Forests. One anonymous reply contained the pithy formula: "eco/tourist = oxymoron." The letter concluded; "Don't take this personal, but aren't all the biggest stands we know of gone? Wasn't that because someone knew they were there?"

I have no good answer. Should I torch the Landmark Trees data book, and decline to pronounce the name of Sitka spruce? Instead, I write evasive captions, and offer detailed descriptions only for "Community Landmark Forests" on well-used, preexisting trails. You could call this the sacrifice forest strategy.

**Wilderness experience** Aside from its protective function, withholding information about wild places could also be seen as a kind of backhanded gift to the overorganized traveler. Wilderness guide Nathan Borson of Gustavus-based Spirit Walker Expeditions once got a letter from a couple planning a 2-month paddle adventure through the Alexander Archipelago. They didn't require Nate's personal guiding services. What they wanted instead was a list of his favorite "must-see" places, as well as "those that can be put off." They offered to pay.

Nate's long reply was totally devoid of place names. Instead he offered anecdotes and musings from an Alaskan who's been taught by wild land that destinations come with blinders. Nate is well acquainted with the must-see mindset. His summer guests usually arrive with a mental checklist of Southeast icons - tidewater glaciers, breaching whales, and burly brown bears. In the lower 48 states, says Nate, even "wilderness areas" are crisscrossed with signed trails. Every mountaineering route, whitewater river and birding

hotspot is detailed in several competing guidebooks. Weekend adventurers learn to value predictability and efficiency. Birders calculating trip budgets even speak of "dollars per life bird."

Nate complimented the couple on their decision to spend two months paddling, but encouraged them to find their own way. "Following someone else's path," wrote Nate, "we see what we expect and miss what we don't expect to see. . . I now believe that exploring without prior knowledge or expectations is the essence of a true wilderness experience."

**Recreation** Obviously, Nate Borson takes the name "Spirit Walker" seriously. But many who profit from wilderness can't resist the easy sell. Examples: "The 30 Most Remote Places on Earth" (Outside Magazine); "Keeping Secrets -Arizona's Red Rock Secret Mountain Wilderness is so incredible, you'll want to tell the whole world." (Backpacker ); "Hunting's Best Kept Secret - The Namibia" (Field & Stream); "The Hidden Coast" (Joel Rodgers, Westwind Press).

These writings may betray the places they proclaim. Annette McGivney, Southwest editor for Backpacker, reviewed the impacts and controversies generated by Michael Kelsey's self-published guidebooks to hundreds of off-trail peaks and canyons throughout her water-starved region. "Kelsey-haters have reportedly hidden his books in Salt Lake City outdoor stores and removed highway milepost signs so people can't find the trailheads to hikes he's profiled." McGivney interviewed a BLM wilderness ranger in Kanab, Utah who lamented places "exposed to the masses by the infamous guidebooks, delicate desert ecosystems. . . trashed as a result."

Even in such extreme cases, opinions are split on the ultimate impacts of publicity. Kelsey described his detractors to McGivney as "environmental wackos who want to keep places a secret. . . Sure, my books have brought more people into this country, and that's a negative. But the books have also made more people aware of the land and more likely to fight to protect it."

Southeast Alaska differs from Utah canyon country, where any explorer with SUV and sneakers can penetrate to the last once-secret corners. Our dangerous water crossings, lack of through-roads, and soggy, tangled gauntlets of devil's club and alder serve as "bouncers" for wilderness. On the other hand, Utah needn't worry about 100-passenger vessels anchoring in remote bays and lowering 20 double kayaks off the top deck. The Land of Large Bears is suddenly on itineraries for small ship cruises, for hunters air-dropped into mountain lakes, and for resident kayakers fleeing crowds at the big-name destinations. The ad for one cruise company shows a close-up view of "our bear" compared to the competitor's "their bear" — a distant dot on the beach.

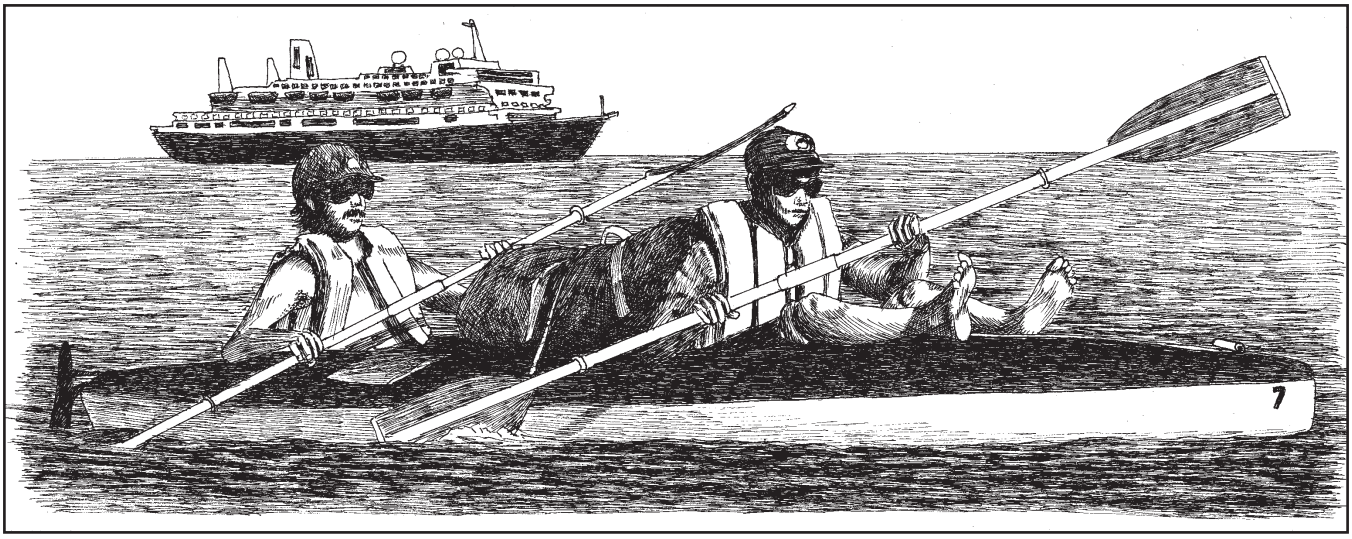
From May to September, Icy Strait swarms with humans at play. Within the past decade we've overwhelmed Point Adophus, spreading west into Mud Bay, then on to Idaho Inlet. The entire recreational spectrum has participated in this coup, from ocean liners to solo kayakers, from "leave-no-trace" toilet paper burners with camo tent flies to helicopters hazing bears off the flats before depositing their clients.

At least the chopper pilots understood their impact. A small private party camping on an estuary in August might snort at the 70 daytime visitors shepherded ashore in zodiacs who sleep on the mother ship. But the campers themselves are probably more disruptive to nocturnally active creatures.

Professor Donald B. Lawrence, one of my natural history mentors, was proud that in 40 years of succession research in Glacier Bay he'd never spent a night on shore. He proposed anchored barges for kayak campers, to protect bears from the temptations of human foods. I once asked 50 participants at a kayak symposium how many would be willing to sleep on such barges. About 5 raised their hands.

Why do we visit wild places? Whose needs are we protecting in Glacier Bay? Few of us could even give personal answers to these questions, let alone speak for the masses that threaten the future of wildness.

What will Southeast's recreational traffic look like 50 years from



now? I've recently taken several 2- to 4-week paddle trips on the central and southern Tongass without encountering another kayaker. Those places are still quiet because they score poorly in icons - tidewater glaciers, brown bears and whales. Whether they'll ever buzz like Point Adophus depends on a host of factors: rave reviews from travel writers; preciousness of solitude in an overpopulated commons; icon manipulations; government regulations; terrorism; trendiness; oil prices; raingear technology; and displacement of mom & pops by interloping corporations.

Today's secret places will be pawns in that game.

**Caves** Secrecy may have been invented in a cave. From paleolithic initiation rites under the ceiling paintings of Lascaux, to fugitive slaves on the underground railroad, to spelunkers in PVC jumpsuits, holes in the earth invite the clandestine. If we don't have secrets going into a cave, we do when we come out.

That's certainly been the case for members of the Tongass Caves Project who have discovered and mapped hundreds of caves in soluble limestone and marble bedrock from Dall Island to Glacier Bay. These caves hold treasures more interesting than gold, including insights into human colonization of North America, and remains of long-vanished caribou, ringed seal, and bears of both species larger than those alive today.

The National Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988 attempts to guarantee anonymity for these places. The Forest Service doesn't release cave whereabouts except for a few demonstration sites like El Capitan. But caving attracts mavericks, and decisions on what not to reveal emerge from the same sort of anarchic "kitchen cabinet" approach we use in the Landmark Trees project. Some cavers don't even reveal locations to other members of their own societies. David Love, president of the Alaska chapter of the National Speleological Society, feels that advancement of knowledge comes at a price. "I'm always torn." he says of the cave research. "It bothers me to be in these places."

**Cultural sites** When cultures collide, place-secrecy is sometimes forced upon native peoples. But it may have been unnecessary when everyone shared the same values. At one time shaman burial sites, the most potent of all locations, were anything but obscure. Prominent points, bay-entry islands, and the most arresting summit on Prince of Wales held graves. Secrecy was in some ways moot to those whose ancestors watched over everything. But to Europeans the sacred artifacts of the northwest coast were souvenirs or, at best, museum pieces. Harriman Expedition dignitaries looted Sanya Kwan totem poles from a village north of Cape Fox that they conveniently deemed "deserted."

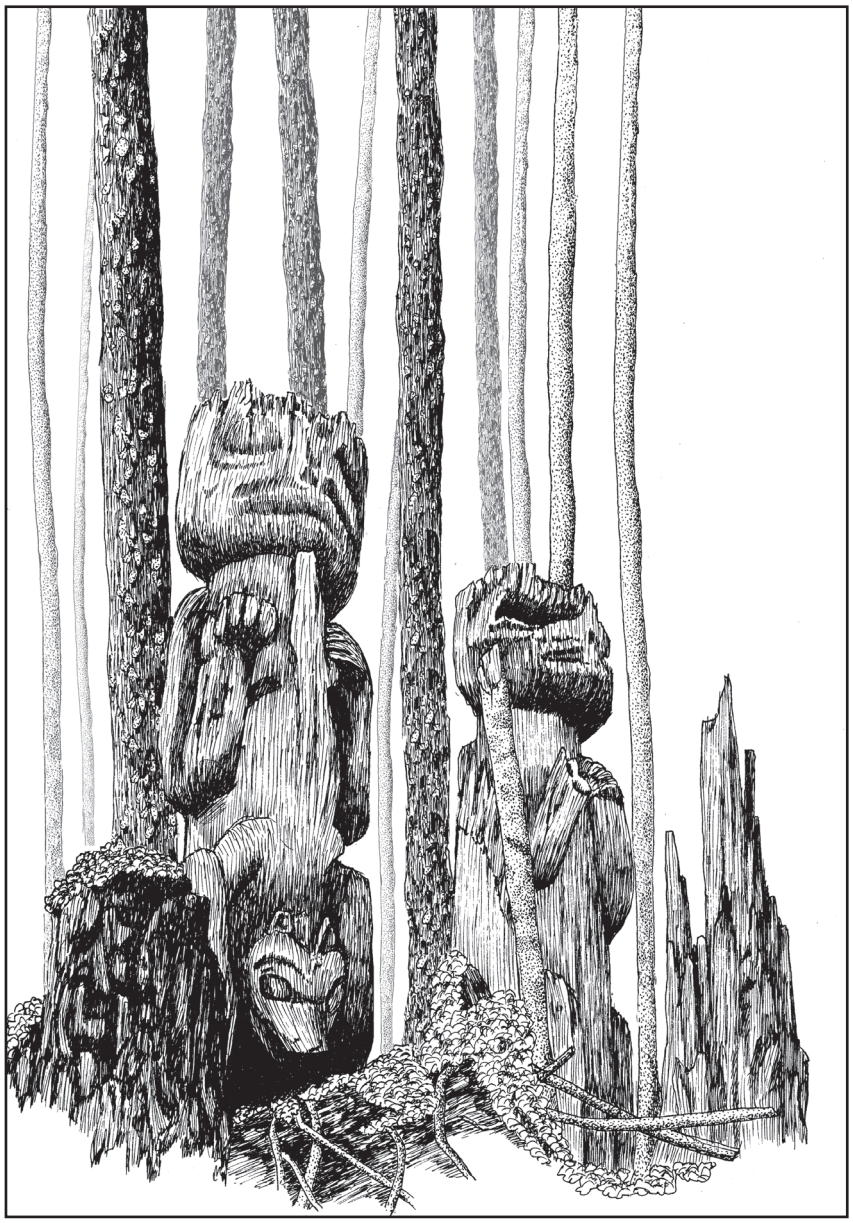
The era of systematic, institutionally sponsored plunder of Tlingit treasures has largely passed. Today, most abuses of cultural sites are spontaneous defacements or theft by people who lack respect or misunderstand the gravity of their actions. Small petroglyphs continue to "walk away." Elders and archeologists are understandably tight-lipped about locations of historic villages, cemeteries, garden and subsistence sites, canoe pullouts, rock art and culturally modified trees. Under the Archeological Resources Protection Act, these locations are legally confidential, immune even from a Freedom of Information Act request. So relics return to soil, their stories unheard by passing pilgrims of every ilk.

Humans without room to be wild - to make mistakes, to know predation, to resurrect ritual - become philosophically and emotionally warped. If we could herd everyone into cities, fence off the Land of Large Bears, and allow backpacking only in wilderness-simulation parks, both bears and people would still ultimately lose. The animal rights movement, for example, is a good-hearted

expression of humans segregated from wildness for so many generations that bloodless idealism has displaced basic ecological understanding.

Sometimes it's only those who have bodily muddied the river that eventually learn enough to save it. A child growing up wild may gleefully murder sparrows, wolves and bison before becoming Aldo Leopold or Theodore Roosevelt - an undignified but conventional grounding. Discovery naturalists lead troops of rambunctious kids through destructible woods because nature and humans must stay connected. Some secrets must be told.

But for others there are just too many ears. Until the day when NASA night shots show a planet with more dark spaces, caretakers will list imperiled beings and spirits: ghost orchids, red-crowned parrots, colossal conifers, yelloweye rockfish, shamans' bones, and 8-inch-wide footprints in the sand. Guard their homes at all costs: with law, sacrifice and silence.



Thanks to all who provided information and review for this article: Bob Armstrong, Nathan Borson, Judy Brakel, Jan Carlile, Bob Christensen, Scott Foster, Karla Hart, Kim Heacox, Keith Heller, Kathy Hocker, Karen Iwamoto, Hank Lentfer, David Love, Steve Merli, Richard Nelson, Marie Olson, Wally

## Mary Lou King funds Discovery laminates for Juneau school libraries

Long before the birth of Discovery Southeast, Mary Lou King was taking hundreds of Juneau students to the Mendenhall wetlands to see birds. One of the original founders of SeaWeek - now a statewide program, Mary Lou is always on the lookout for new ways to contribute to nature education in our schools.

This spring, recognizing that our field identification laminates for birds and intertidal animals would be valuable for teachers leading their classes outdoors, Mary Lou purchased full sets for all public school libraries, and presented them at a recent librarians' meeting. She also made available a new CD on Southeast birds by Bob Armstrong, which includes his best film images plus many of his great new digital photos. Armstrong photos are available in slide form as well as digital. Now all Juneau teachers have access to these great materials on birds and intertidal life.


Our hats off to Mary Lou King and Bob Armstrong for this generous contribution.

# Winter adaptations

## Getting cozy in rain on snow

Steve Merli

Wintertime 4th grade nature studies at Mendenhall River and Glacier Valley elementary schools just got cooler. . . I mean warmer. . . I mean both.

The 4th grade curriculum introduces adaptation, usually a brand new word for kids. At Discovery Southeast we focus on adaptations of animals expected on our field trips. This builds easily on previous 3rd grade winter tracking classes. In 4th grade we ask what physical and behavioral adaptations allow animals to be active all year long , preparing for the concepts of niche, communities, abiotic vs biotic, and other ideas the students will encounter in 5th grade. The curriculum lists 3 basic winter strategies used by local animals: hibernation, migration and "permanently active." I usually refer to this last group as "eaters," the only type we will encounter on winter field trips. Humans are also in that category, something that most of us tend to forget.

Standing outside in 20°F temperatures quickly separates the body/feeling 'wheat' from the intellectual/rational 'chaff'. It's humorous to watch some students, after boasting of handling cold conditions from inside the classroom, ask through chattering teeth if it's time to go back in when we've stood outside for a time. These are the students in particular that I want to reach.

So I borrowed 15 sleeping bags and two large tarps from Butch Carber of Alaska Discovery. Suspending one tarp and laying another on the ground, we can put half the class in sleeping bags at a time.

You can imagine the excitement over the prospect of 'going camping' during the school day. But there is a palpable tension as well because a lot of students have never been outside on the ground in sleeping bags. Fewer still have done so in the winter. I cultivate this tension. Going outside and moving away from the heated box of school to the isolation and distance of the forest has captured the attention of all.

After settling in, students do some writing in the sleeping bags, describing their experience in that moment. Here are a few examples from the field:

I am nice and cosy!
I am not swetty.
I am nice and warm
I want the sleeping bag!
The snow that is falling on't of me!
I wish we could do this
Tommarow!

ziper opening and closeing
cars splashing water
my feet are swetting
I can hear sounds like a boat horn
I see steam coming out of my sleeping bag

I feel warm, happy
I here snow rain zippers on the slepping bags.
I see snow gray clouds and a gray sky I feel the warmth of my slepping bags
I hear the tarp rattaling when steve taps on it!
I smell the sweat comeing off my sleeping bags.

When it's time to get out of the bags I ask how many would like to stay? Everyone says yes. Remember, it's winter in Southeast Alaska. Some field days are cold mixed with rain and others are cold mixed with snow, but laying in that insulated sleeping bag is just right.

The follow up class centers on humans' inadequate capacity for preventing heat loss, the cause of hypothermia. We discuss insulation and its value to all animals, resting comfortably upon the rich memory of lying on frozen ground.

I hear snow driping on top of the tarp-
I hear pencels moving-
I feel like Im in a peacefull place-
I feel like Im camping
I feel sleepey-
I Feel relaxed- warm- comfrtabal- quite
Jessica

Guy
I feel Happy today and it's snowing all day.

Drip, Drop, Drip.
the rain falls on the roof
Drip, Drop, Drip.
Beating like a hoof Ben

The are is cold my lips are chaped but I'm as happy as a squrle in a walnut sack. Nick

*While half of the class and their teacher are in the sleeping bags, the rest of us go tracking. Here, discovery of porcupine scat and "nip twigs" has us scanning tree tops for the well insulated maker.*

# Many Thanks to our Great Supporters!

## Foundation Support

Discovery Southeast thanks the following foundations and organizations for their generous support in the past year.

Alaska Conservation Foundation
Membership Development
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Vanderbilt Creek Stewards Project
Alaska Fund for the Future
Nature Studies in Southeast Alaska Communities
B.G.A. Herrdum Foundation
Nature Studies in Angoon
City and Borough of Juneau - Youth Activities Fund
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Wrangell Nature Studies
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Operating Support
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Nature Studies
SB Foundation
Operating Support
U.S. Forest Service
Bears of Admiralty Teachers' Expedition

## A Special Thanks to Parents ...

Nature Studies is supported at each Juneau Elementary School thanks to a 50% match from the parent groups. It would be impossible to engage every third through fifth grade student in Nature Studies without this terrific support.

Auke Bay PTA
Friends of Gastineau
Glacier Valley PTO
Harborview PTA
Juneau Community Charter School
Mendenhall River PTO

## ...and to Volunteers

So many of you lend a hand when it's needed. Special thanks this quarter to Lisa Blacher, Rob & Koren Bosworth, Sue Baxter, Dave Carlile, Kathy Hocker, Colleen Jones, Nancy Lehnhart, Laurie McKinney, Linda Miller, Scott Miller, Tracey Miller, Susan Phillips

## Business Sponsors

These businesses support us. We recognize their contribution in our community.

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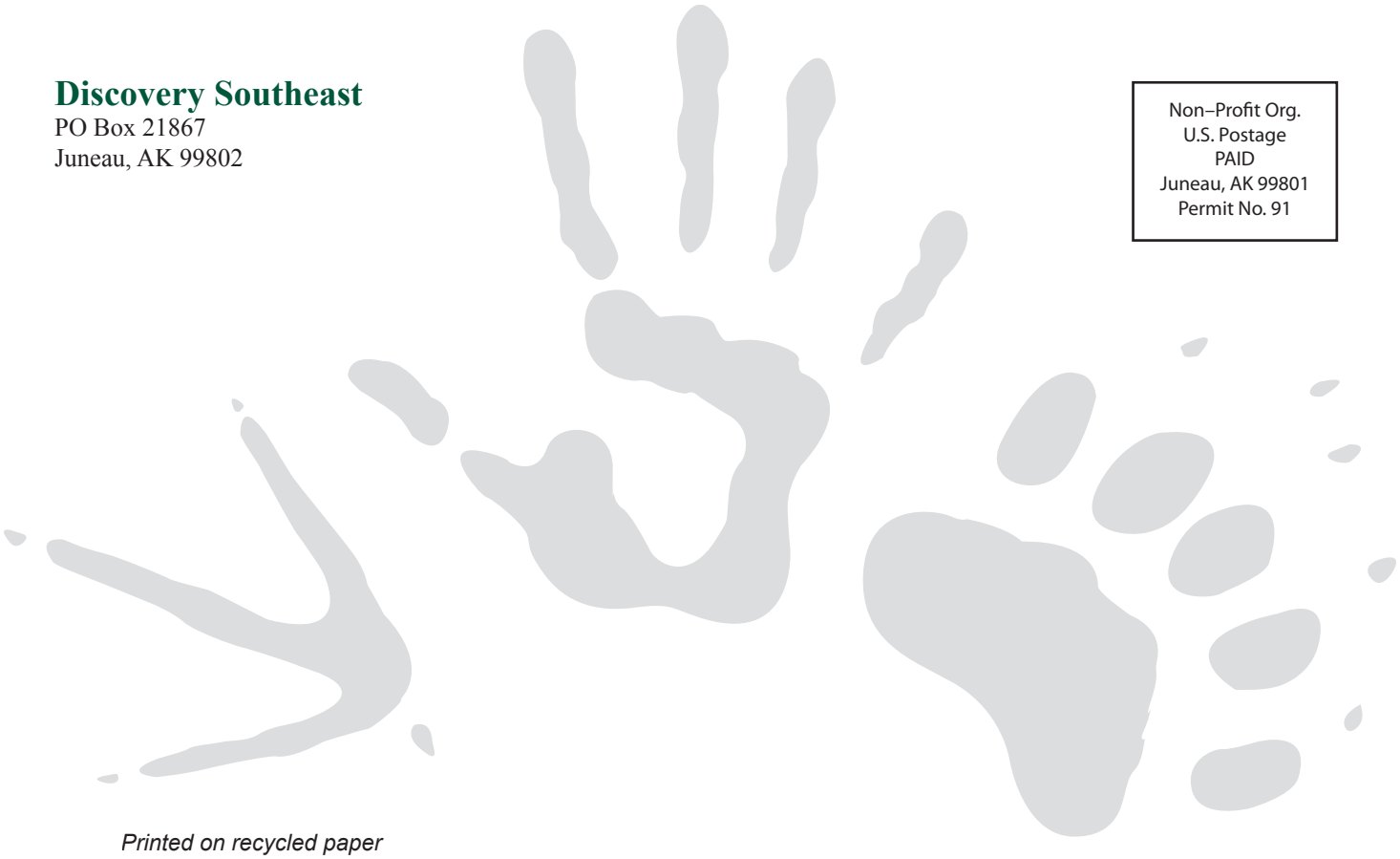

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