

Interpreter

A Publication of The Sugarloaf
Interpretive Center Association
9096 Highway 61, PO Box 63
Schroeder, MN 55613 218.740.2755

Summer at Sugarloaf Interpretive Center

For thirty years, Sugarloaf Cove had two modes of operating: stacking up and rafting. In the winter months, loggers would harvest the pulpwood from the forests and bring it down to the Cove to be stacked up, ready for summer. Then, in two hectic months of July and August,

the wood was dumped into the cove and in a few huge shipments towed across the lake.

Just as in the rafting days, Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association has a quiet season and a busy one. Our summer plans are all "stacked up," and we're hoping you can come along for the learning and the fun.



Molly Hoffman of Grand Marais led a spring birdwalk for our May Second Saturday program, welcoming migrants and new summer residents.

Center open for summer

Thanks to a terrific bunch of volunteers, the interpretive center at Sugarloaf will be open almost every day this summer, from 10 to 3. Drop by and reacquaint yourself with the Cove, tour the new wetlands interpretive trail, and chat with our staff and volunteers. We're sprucing up the building and hoping for a banner summer. Some weekends are still open!

Learn a little or a lot

Our popular Second Saturday interpretive programs continue through the summer. Join SICA executive director Andrew Slade for an introductory geology walk on June 14. Investigate dragonflies with local author Kurt Mead July 12. Tour the Cove with a local legend in August to get the behind-the-scenes view of Sugarloaf Cove history.

This summer also marks the start of our new weekend interpretive programs. Thanks to a grant

from Minnesota's Lake Superior Coastal Program, we are creating a new educational opportunity on the North Shore, two-day workshops with local scientists and naturalists looking in-depth and hands-on at local natural history. Botanist Chel Anderson, who did much of the initial plant survey work at Sugarloaf, will lead a program on the wildflowers of the North Shore July 19 and 20, and geologist John Green, who has been the leading North Shore geology researcher for forty years, will lead a geology program August 2-3. Finally, Andrew Slade will teach a general natural history program September 20-21. See inside for more information.

Come one, come all

Finally, mark your calendars for Saturday, August 16 and the annual Sugarloaf fish boil and annual meeting. Live music, guided hikes and more will help us celebrate our successes in protecting, restoring and interpreting Sugarloaf Cove.

Once again, it's going to be a great summer to "unload" at Sugarloaf Cove. See you there!

Site Hosts... Help Still Wanted

Looking for a way to relax on the North Shore while helping out, too?

Sugarloaf still needs site host volunteers for the following weekends:

June 28-29 **August 30-31**
July 5-6 **September 6-7**

Contact Andrew at the SICA office for more information.

SICA's VISION is a healthy Minnesota North Shore of Lake Superior where an informed citizenry takes personal and group responsibility to ensure that natural and ecological systems and human economic and social systems coexist in a fashion sustainable into the future.

New program debuts at Sugarloaf this summer!

CONNECTING THE PIECES: NORTH SHORE NATURAL HISTORY

September 20-21 Andrew Slade, instructor

North Shore Naturalist Summer 2003 Programs

Registration for all 2003 North Shore Naturalist programs is \$50 for Sugarloaf members, \$60 for non-members. This special introductory rate is thanks to start-up support from Minnesota's Lake Superior Coastal Program

Why can a bird song tell you about glaciers? How do arctic plants survive our summer heat? It's all connected in nature, and on the North Shore it's easy to see the pieces. Andrew Slade is the executive director of Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association and the former director of education at Great Lakes Aquarium. Workshop participants will travel from the waters edge to the top of the Sawtooth Mountains ridge line to unveil the interrelationships of North Shore natural history, through both natural science and the humanities.

THE ECOLOGY OF COLOR: WILDFLOWERS AND HABITAT ON THE NORTH SHORE

July 19-20 Chel Anderson, instructor

North Shore wildflowers are not only beautiful, they are a significant part of a unique ecosystem. From the rare to the everyday, wildflowers reflect their habitats. Chel Anderson has studied wildflowers and plant communities on the shore for 29 years, including work for both The Nature Conservancy and the Minnesota DNR. Workshop participants will learn far more than just the names of these wildflowers, as they explore how and why they fit into the North Shore environment.

All programs run from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday, and 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. Programs meet at Sugarloaf Cove, 9096 W. Highway 61, Schroeder. No background necessary. Participants must provide their own lodging. Programs will involve light hiking outdoors, rain or shine. Participants may travel by carpool.



GEOLOGY ON DISPLAY: THE NORTH SHORE'S ANCIENT VOLCANIC ORIGINS

August 2-3 Dr. John Green, instructor

North Shore geologic history is some of the oldest and most dramatic in the region. Join the North Shore's preeminent geologist for a weekend investigation of Sugarloaf Cove and the North Shore. Dr. Green has researched the igneous rocks of the area since 1958. He was instrumental in protecting Sugarloaf Cove as a state Scientific and Natural Area for its world-class geologic features. Participants will study the Sugarloaf site in depth as well as visit other sites on the shore.

Current SICA Board

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Elmer Andersen	Founding Director
Andrew Slade	Interim Executive Director

■ New board members will be elected at the August 16 annual meeting. If you would like to serve on the SICA board, contact Andrew at sugarloaf@lakenet.com

Red Pines: Natural or not?

Nature is an amazingly powerful force. Over time, everything returns to a wild state. Buildings crumble and turn back into forest. Even a parking lot will become a forest, one grassy crack at a time. At Sugarloaf Cove, we see this amazing power of nature unfolding practically before our eyes, as an industrial site returns to its primeval state.

However, in the numerous red pine groves that dot the site, we see how in trying to help nature along, people have actually delayed this incredible force.

What could be more attractive on a hot summer day than a cool grove of pines? The Sugarloaf interpretive trail passes through two large and several smaller red pine groves. The forest floor is softly carpeted with needles. Sunlight scarcely reaches into the grove. To the untrained eye, this is nature at its finest.

Yet the red pine groves of Sugarloaf are far from "natural." Consolidated Paper employees planted them as they left the site, to initiate the restoration of the site from its heavily impacted industrial days.

Red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) is also known as Norway pine and is the official state tree of Minnesota. As with all pines, its needles come in bundles. It is distinguished from the white pine (*Pinus strobus*) by the fact that its needles come in bundles of two rather than five. The jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) has two needles to the bundle, but the needles are much shorter and the tree, in general, is much shaggier.

Interestingly, the red pine was only designated Minnesota's state tree in 1953, after a campaign begun by a women's club from Minneapolis. The legislation states that having the red pine would "disseminate information concerning the history, background and physical characteristics of the State of Minnesota throughout the world."

When I think of red pines in nature, I see them on the rocky granite shore of a Boundary Waters lake, one or two or maybe three in a small area, twisted and organic as they have weathered storms. Or they are the scattered red pines in a grove of white pines, just as tall, not quite as feathery.

But the red pines at Sugarloaf, like those many of us see, are found in neat lines. They are all one age, and all stand tall and tight together. They were planted thirty years ago and then left to grow and compete. Over time, the strongest trees will survive. But for now, the thick growth leaves out virtually any other species. And trees in a natural forest do not grow in straight lines.

In a natural setting, red pines are uncommon because they have very precise requirements for their seeds to germinate. The seeds require a bare mineral

soil, like that found after a powerful forest fire. Much like their fellow pine the jack pine, their cones require the heat of a fire to open and release their seeds.

If Sugarloaf is ever to return to its truly natural state, these stands of red pine will not remain as they are. As Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association continues its forest restoration work on the site, not only will we plant other native species, we will likely clear out a lot of these red pine stands. Rather than a stand with a tree every four or six feet apart, eventually the red pines will be as scattered as the spruce or birch trees. As sunlight returns to those forest groves, we will be able to plant a new generation of paper birch, mountain maple and cedar.

Nature is a powerful force. Given hundreds of years, Sugarloaf Cove or any other land will become wild again. We are choosing to accelerate that process, by seeking to first understand and then accelerate nature's progress. By thinning our red pine stands, actually by killing trees, we will be helping the forest live.



Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association
9096 Highway 61, PO Box 63
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S I C A A C T I V I T I E S

J U N E 1 4

Second Saturday at Sugarloaf – Geology basics

J U L Y 1 2

Second Saturday at Sugarloaf – Dragonflies of the Northwoods

J U L Y 1 9 - 2 0

North Shore Naturalist – Ecology of Color

A U G U S T 2 - 3

North Shore Naturalist – Geology on Display

A U G U S T 9

Second Saturday at Sugarloaf – History walk

A U G U S T 1 6

Annual meeting and traditional North Shore fishboil

*All Second Saturday programs start at 10 am at the Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center.
For Summer 2003, the Interpretive Center is generally open Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am to 3 pm.*

Address Correction Requested

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Annual memberships are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association, and mail to the SICA office at 1040 Minnesota Avenue, Duluth, MN 55802. SICA is an educational, non-profit 501(c)(3) Minnesota Corporation.

membership
A P P L I C A T I O N

Please enroll me as a member of the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association in the category I have indicated.

NAME _____

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M E M B E R S H I P C A T E G O R I E S

- \$ 25 Contributing
 \$ 50 Supporting
 \$ 100 Sustaining
 \$ 500 Patron
 \$ 1000 Benefactor
 \$ _____ Other

New Renew

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T H A N K Y O U !