

## WILDLIFE ACTION ADVENTURE CAMP

The warm days of June and the end of another school year were all that most kids needed to lure themselves to the out of doors for a day of fishing. In today's world it takes a little more planning because of the fast pace in which we live.

Bunny Beeson and Wildlife Action give today's parents an opportunity for their children to participate in memories long gone by having Wildlife Action Adventure Camps. The theme of the camps is conservation of our natural resources and to educate the children of today in ways of yesterday. If you walk around the camp at Fork Retch you will see remnants of wagons and mule harnesses, pitcher pumps, wigwams and gourds for bird houses. They teach canoeing, gun safety, bait casting, fishing, pottery and Indian lore, etc. For example, they pride themselves teaching self preservation and living off the land. When it comes to advice, Bunny will tell you he is just passing down what his Daddy and Grandmother taught him. For example, Mayapple jelly is good for you. Never mind the fact parts of the Mayapple plant (*Podophyllum peltatum*) are known to be toxic. The pale globes of fruit, when ripe, have been transformed into a jelly, or eaten raw, for ages. But let's start with the basics. Mayapples aren't really apples at all. The plant, related to the Barberry, rises out of rich forest soils in late March and April throughout South Carolina, and the deeply lobed, umbrella-like leaves form dense colonies in the shady understory. The plants produce a white flower a few weeks later, and a pea-sized fruit soon appears. As summer progresses, the green fruit swells to almost golf-ball size and turns pale yellow or almost white. That's when the Mayapples are ripe although few people today know about such things.

Bunny says he teaches the children about fruits and roots and that paper comes from wood, not Wal-Mart. "We actually take a piece of wood and process it into mulch, press the water out and let it dry so that it becomes paper. When they leave here they can write their name on it. We transform the wood into paper so they understand that all our lives are supported by this good earth".

Just yesterday, Wildlife Action taught the children how to drink water by cupping their hands under a deep well flow. One child remarked he had never had water except from a container that you had to screw off the top. "Things we take for granted that we know, and I'll be 64 my next birthday, the children of today haven't got a clue. That's not their fault, and I'm not saying it is the fault of their parents because we do live in a busy society. But at Wildlife Action Adventure Camps we teach such things, and they love it."

"Everyone wanted us to move our camp so that we would not be having it when school was still in. Horry County schools don't get out till June 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup>. Our goal is to have 75 children. Last year we had 101 and turned down 19. I thought if I left the camp dates same as last year, I would be able to get my goal of 75 hopefully, because kids couldn't come, they would be in school. This year under those circumstances we have 96 kids and turned down 7. I think the children enjoy learning about ways of yesterday. We have a lot to learn from the past. Come join us, won't you?"