

'Venus flytrap' has captured attention at state park exhibit

By Don Reuter
Public Information Officer
N. C. Parks and Recreation

Witnesses are astonished. Scientists call it spectacular. It begins every spring and lasts until frost. It happens only at Carolina Beach State Park and places within a 75-mile radius of Wilmington.

Attracted by the brilliant colors of its captors, the prey is lured into the trap. Trigger hairs, aroused by the movement of the prey, activate the trap which snaps shut in less than a second. The guard hairs mesh; the unwary victim is snared and devoured. Satisfied, the trap reopens, readying itself for yet another unsuspecting visitor.

The mysterious predator is the Venus flytrap; its victims are small insects. The Venus flytrap and other fascinating carnivorous plants are the subject of "Plants That Bite Back", an environmental education learning experience recently released by the N. C. Division of Parks and Recreation.

Developed for Carolina Beach State Park, the environmental education learning experience focuses on the five carnivorous plants that grow in the park. It includes a series of hands-on activities, educator and student background materials, vocabulary, lists of curriculum areas and measurable objectives, references and worksheets.

Programs are geared to middle school grades and include pre-visit, on-site and post-visit activities. Students will be exposed to such major concepts as plant adaptations, folk-



The Venus flytrap

lore, resource management and preservation.

Eight distinct plant communities within Carolina Beach State Park offer students the opportunity to compare and contrast plant communities which, according to the curriculum, describe the extensive range of wild-life habitats in the area.

This curriculum is the first completed by the N. C. Division of Parks and Recreation, which plans to have one in place in each of North Carolina's 32 state parks and recreation areas by 1994.

The environmental education

learning experience initiative has been made possible through Carolina Power & Light Co.'s Adopt State Parks Program. The program, which includes a \$144,000 grant to be used between 1991 and 1994, provides support for environmental education, volunteer initiatives and a grant program challenging other industries to adopt North Carolina state parks.

"Since its creation in 1916, the North Carolina state parks system has provided its visitors with opportunities for educational experiences and programming," said Dr. Philip K. McKnelly, director of the N. C. Division of Parks and Recreation. "Through the years, we have

continued to revise and update our programming to make it more informative and more tailored to the needs of our state's school system.

"With the invaluable assistance from CP&L and the State Office of Environmental Education, we have been able to produce an outstanding mechanism for educating our school children about North Carolina's natural resources."

All of the environmental education programs are designed to meet curriculum requirements of the N. C. Department of Public Instruction. Subject areas covered include science, social studies, art, mathematics and communication skills.

"Our state parks system provides a

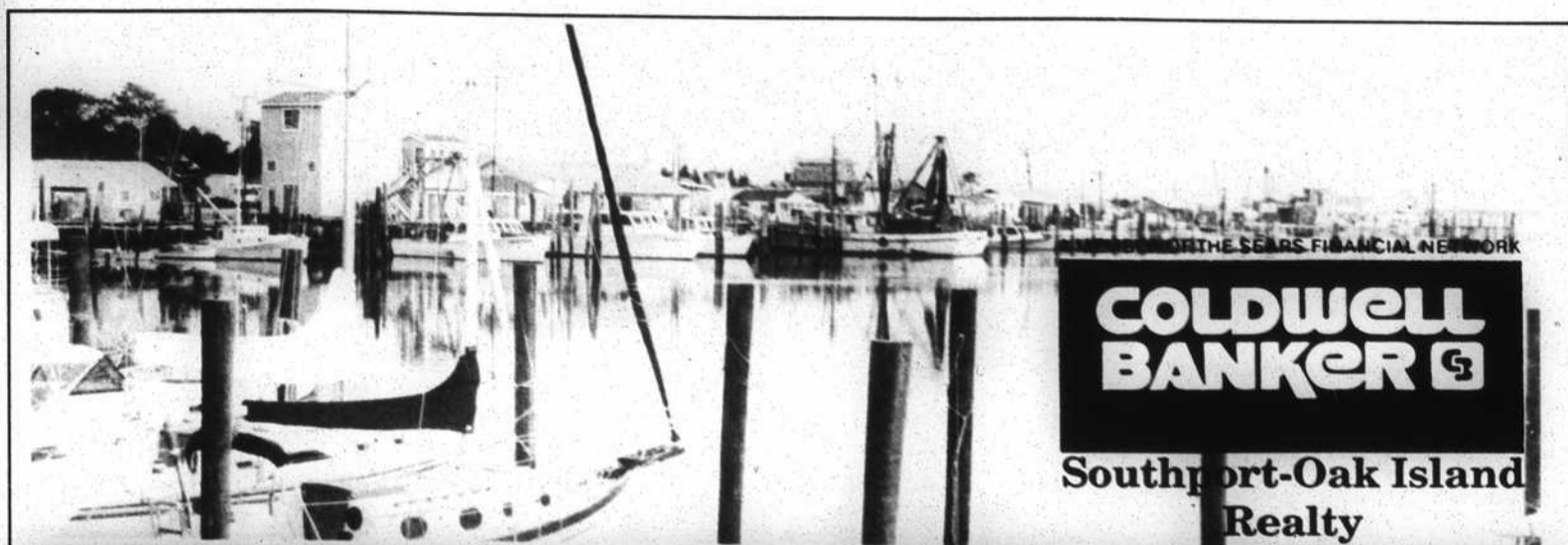
valuable outdoor classroom for learning about our North Carolina heritage," McKnelly said. "Each of our unique state parks offers a variety of environmental education opportunities which highlight our state's natural and cultural resources."

"The goal of our environmental education program is to generate an awareness of responsible stewardship of the Earth in all individuals."

Other education curriculum planned by the N. C. Division of Parks and Recreation include: descriptions of mountain geology for Hanging Rock State Park in Stokes County; healthy mountain

ecosystems for Mount Mitchell State Park in Yancey County; and restoration for William B. Umstead State Park in Raleigh; the cultures and lifestyles of Native Americans for Pettigrew State Park in Washington and Tyrrell counties; and water quality and aquatic life for Singletary Lake State Park in Bladen County.

The Division of Parks and Recreation will give the curriculums to local educators as they become available. For more information about the environmental education curriculums, persons should contact Becky Marty, N. C. Division of Parks and Recreation, 12700 Bay Leaf Road, Raleigh, NC 27614.



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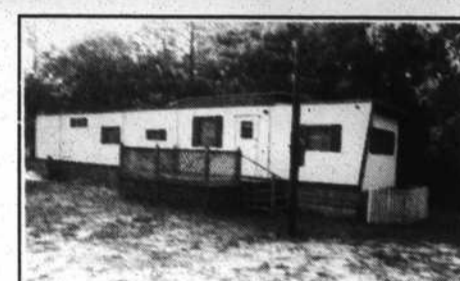


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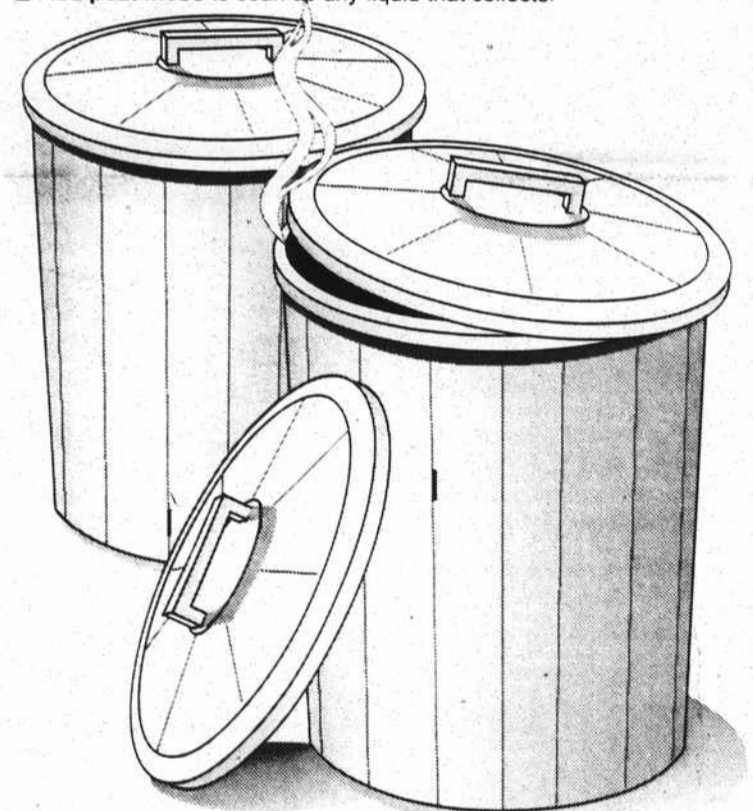
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GARDEN TIPS

Compost recipe

- **As you fill** a garbage can with lawn clippings, dead leaves, vegetable refuse and weeds, add a shovelful of garden soil and 2 cups of limestone.
- **Blend ingredients** by pouring them back and forth between two garbage cans. Add a half-gallon of water in the can of compost and set in full sunlight.
- **Air composting material** by pouring it from one garbage can to another once a day.
- **Add peat moss** to soak up any liquid that collects.



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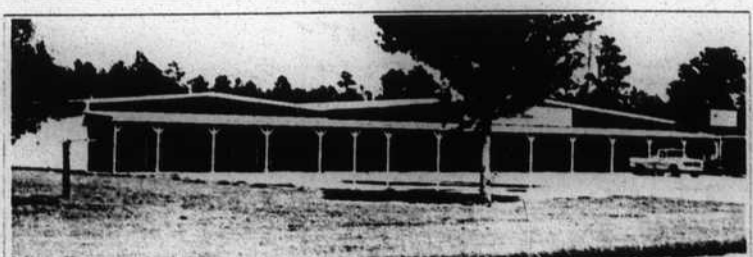


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