

Anyone For A Swamp Romp?

BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN

Do you have a yen to see a snake in its natural habitat? How about getting acquainted with ticks and red bugs? Take a trip, then, to the Honey Hole with Charles Humphries on April 20.

Wait, don't turn the page; there's more about this event and it's all good, more than a balance for those critters you don't particularly cherish.

You will be treated to an extravaganza of colorful plants and the sight and sound of such endangered species as the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker by joining the 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. field trip in a portion of Brunswick County's Green Swamp.

Naturalist, wildlife photographer and writer Humphries will conduct the study at the request of the sponsoring New Hanover County Museum.

"I'll show people the Honey Hole," he explained, "where there is every wildflower known to man. There are 10 or 12 carnivorous species, too, a result of tree farm operations there. Preparations for tree planting make for great diversity of habitat."

The Honey Hole is a ten-acre tract north of Boiling Springs Lake and bordering the Green Swamp. It has long been a natural habitat for many endangered species

and one that Humphries has photographed over the past eight years.

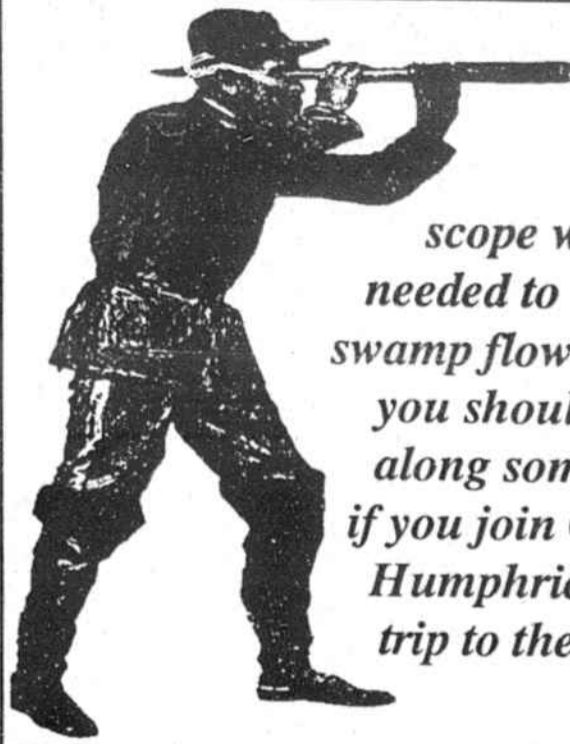
The Wilmington native returned to this area 19 years ago when he retired from his career as research chemist with DuPont in Wilmington, Delaware.

"My father put canals in the Green Swamp," he said, "back when the Waccamaw Lumber Company owned most of it." Presently, much of the area is owned by Federal Paper Board who conducts continuous tree plantings and harvestings there.

With his naturalist bent and photographic skills, Humphries has been in demand for wildlife programs since his retirement. "I put on slide shows about birds of the barrier islands, wading birds, plants, trees, herbs, reptiles and mammals."

The coming trek to the Honey Hole is the first of its kind, however, and Humphries said he will keep registration to about 12. Those interested are urged to wear knee boots and long-sleeved shirts and bring insect repellent, binoculars and a lunch. Participants will meet at the museum, 814 Market St. in Wilmington.

The fee for this adventure is \$5. You can register by calling 341-4350 no later than April 17.



This special scope won't be needed to observe swamp flowers, but you should bring along some boots if you join Charles Humphries' field trip to the Honey Hole.

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