

# The Living History Classroom



Published by TRYON PALACE HISTORIC SITES & GARDENS

SPRING 2008

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SPRING 2008

*A Look at*

## North Carolina Naturalists

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Exploring the New World

## New World, New Life

**H**ave you ever traveled to a different city, state, or country? Did you enjoy seeing new and different

things? Imagine if you could travel to a whole new land, and be one of the first people from your home to explore this new world. You would certainly have a lot to tell your friends and family back home!

European explorers coming to America were in just this situation. They saw landscapes, plants, animals, and peoples unknown in the countries they came from. It was truly an age of European discovery. These settlers and explorers understandably wanted to share their experiences with people and scientists back home.

This issue of *The Living History Classroom* focuses on some of the early naturalists who traveled through North Carolina and studied the life and cultures found here. They kept

journals, which are some of the first recorded details of Carolina's American Indian and natural histories. They illustrated and collected many plant and animal specimens, which when sent back to their home countries were a source of fascination and serious study.

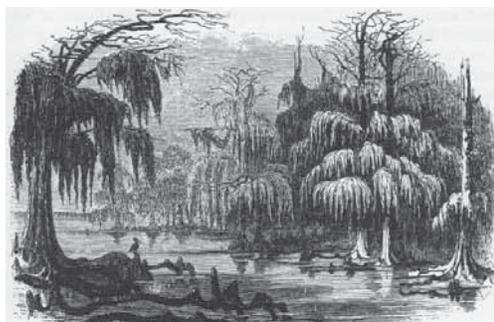
It is important to remember that the explorers discussed here had not actually found anything new. For the American Indians living here, the land and its life were very well known. American Indians often played an important part in helping early naturalists and settlers explore this foreign country and understand the flora and fauna they encountered.

After reading these articles, we hope that you will look at the environment around you with new eyes, and be inspired to do some exploration of your own!



Map of Carolina published in 1708. *Courtesy North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

### Early naturalists kept journals of Carolina's American Indian and natural histories.



Typical landscape seen by explorers in eastern North Carolina. *Courtesy North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

## Words to Explore



When early explorers traveled in the Carolinas and other colonies, they met American Indians who spoke a variety of different languages. Just like these explorers, you may encounter words you have never heard of in this issue of *The Living History Classroom*. Below are some terms you will find in the articles that follow. If you are not sure what they mean, do some research to discover their definitions!



Botanist  
Botany  
Colonist  
Colony  
Cultivate  
Expedition  
Medicinal  
Naturalist  
Naval Stores  
Savanna  
Specimen  
Surveyor

*The* **Living History**  
*Classroom* 

Is published twice each school year by Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens and is available free of charge to schools and teachers.

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## How This Issue Can Help You... Classroom Tips



The articles in *The Living History Classroom* relate to objectives in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for Grades 4, 5, and 8. For more information on curriculum standards, go to [www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum).

**Fourth Grade Objectives:** Social Studies 1.04, 3.02, 3.03, 3.04, 4.05; English Language Arts 1.04, 1.05, 2.03, 5.09; Visual Arts 7.01; Information Skills 1.11, 2.03, 3.05.

**Fifth Grade Objectives:** Social Studies 5.05; English Language Arts 1.04, 1.05, 2.03, 5.08; Visual Arts 5.01, 5.03; Information Skills 1.11, 2.03, 3.05.

**Eighth Grade Objectives:** Social Studies 1.02; English Language Arts 4.01; Visual Arts 5.01; Information Skills 1.11, 2.03, 3.05.

### Sources for references found in the articles of this issue of *The Living History Classroom*:

#### Page 3

- 1 John Lawson.  
*A New Voyage to Carolina*.  
(Chapel Hill: The University  
of North Carolina Press,  
1967) xi
- 2 Ibid xvii
- 3 Ibid xviii
- 4 Ibid xxiv

#### Page 4

- 1 Lawson xv
- 2 Ibid 6
- 3 Ibid 32-33

#### Page 5

- 1 Mark Catesby.  
*The Natural History of  
Carolina, Florida and the  
Bahama Islands (v1)*.  
(London: 1731) xi

#### Page 6

- 1 Catesby viii

#### Page 7

- 1 John Brickell.  
*The Natural History of North  
Carolina*. (Dublin: Printed by  
James Carson, 1737) 42-43

#### Page 8

- 1 Lawson 86
- 2 Ibid 86-87

#### Page 9

- 1 Mark Catesby.  
*Catesby's Birds of Colonial  
America*. (Chapel Hill: The  
University of North Carolina  
Press, 1985) 4-5
- 2 Lawson 125
- 3 Ibid 137
- 4 Ibid 149
- 5 William S. Powell, ed. *The  
Correspondence of William  
Tryon, (v1) 1758-1767*.  
(Raleigh: Division of Archives  
and History, 1980) 440-441
- 6 Theda Perdue.  
*Native Carolinians: The  
Indians of North Carolina*.  
(Raleigh: Division of Archives  
and History, 1985) 17
- 7 Ibid 17
- 8 Ibid 26
- 9 Ibid 28
- 10 Lawson 70



## “A Thousand Miles” in the Carolinas



**“Having spent most of my Time, during my eight Years Abode in Carolina, in travelling; I not only survey’d the Sea-Coast and those Parts which are already inhabited by the Christians, but likewise view’d a spacious Tract of Land, lying betwixt the Inhabitants and the Ledges of Mountains, from whence our noblest Rivers have their Rise, running towards the Ocean, where they water as pleasant a Country as any in Europe....” – John Lawson<sup>2</sup>**

Lawson’s journey through the Carolinas began in Charleston, South Carolina and ended on the banks of the Pamlico River, near present day Washington, North Carolina. Though Lawson figured his trip to have covered a thousand miles, experts today believe it to have been closer to half that distance.<sup>1</sup> In either case, it was an amazing accomplishment. In less than two months, in the winter, Lawson had traveled a tremendous distance through unexplored lands, filled with foreign plants and animals, and American Indian inhabitants with a language and culture vastly different from his own.

Lawson did not travel alone. Five Englishmen and four American Indians accompanied him for most of his journey through the interior of Carolina, passing what would one day become the cities of High Point, Durham, and Greenville. During his travels, Lawson wrote careful descriptions of the new plants and animals he encountered. He collected plant specimens that were shipped back to England, many of which are still in the collection of the British Museum.

Lawson was also fascinated by wildlife he had never seen before, particularly alligators. Lawson recorded how an alligator once made a den under his cabin and began roaring at night. Never having heard one before, Lawson was very frightened until an American Indian man explained it to him. Lawson found most of the American Indians he met during his travels to be helpful, offering him food and lodging. In his journal, he described many aspects of their cultures, and began a list of American Indian vocabulary.

In the years after his famous journey, Lawson continued to explore throughout North Carolina.

**“When we were all asleep, in the Beginning of the Night, we were awaken’d with the dismall’st and most hideous Noise that ever pierc’d my Ears: ...it was customary to hear such...there being endless Numbers of Panthers, Tygers, Wolves, and other beasts of Prey....”**  
– John Lawson<sup>3</sup>



Sketches of Carolina animals by John Lawson. *Courtesy Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens.*

# Become Your Own Naturalist

**N**ow it is your turn to be a naturalist like John Lawson! Pretend you were sent to investigate a new land. Go outside and find a plant, animal, or insect to study. As you watch it, think about how different it might look to someone who has never seen it before, and how you would draw it to show off all its unique features. For example, a bird can be drawn flying, perched on a branch, or with its food. Which do you find the most interesting?

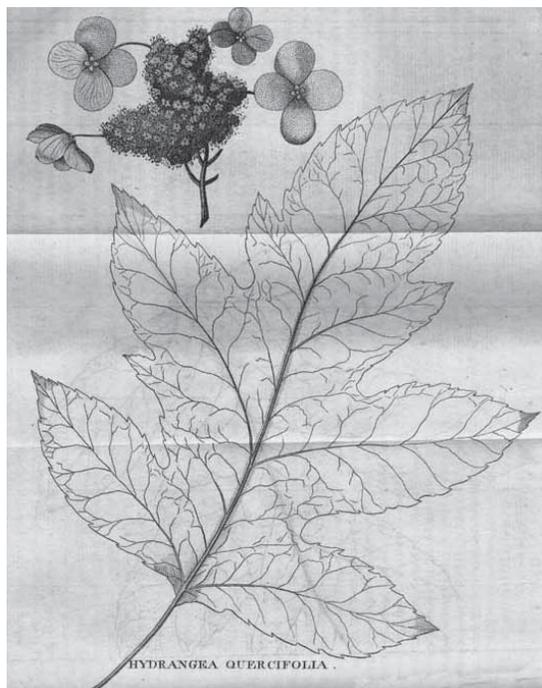
After you complete your illustration, give it a name and write it across the top, so everyone will know what this exciting plant or animal is. Pick a name that somehow describes the **specimen**...like the Slow Yellow Beetle. On another sheet of paper, write a short essay about your observations of this specimen. Think about its size, habitat, interaction with other plants and animals, its food, or what eats it. Remember, you are telling people about something that they have never seen. Look at the naturalists' illustrations on this page for ideas!

## Young Naturalist Contest

**Teachers:** Give your students a chance to get their work published in *The Living History Classroom!* Have them become their own naturalists by completing the activity on this page. Submit illustrations and essays to:

Living History Classroom Contest  
Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens  
PO Box 1007  
New Bern, NC 28563.

Make sure students include their name, age, grade, and school on their materials. **Submissions must be received no later than July 1, 2008.** We will publish the winning entries in the next issue of *The Living History Classroom*, due out in Fall 2008.



Hydrangea Quercifolia by William Bartram. *Courtesy North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

Don't Forget Your Tools!

- Paper – one for drawing and one for writing
- Colored Pencils, Crayons, or Markers
- Clipboard or something to use outside while you draw.

Sketches of various birds by John Brickell. *Courtesy Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens.*

## A Fellow Naturalist's Hint

**“The Animals, particularly the Birds, I painted ... and gave them their Gestures peculiar to every kind of Bird, and... I have adapted the Birds to those Plants on which they fed.” – Mark Catesby<sup>1</sup>**

# Noteable Naturalists

John Lawson was by no means the only person to take an interest in the new life found in the new world. On these two pages you will learn about several other important naturalists who studied and wrote about North Carolina's wildlife.

## John White

John White came to America from England more than 100 years before naturalists like John Lawson and Mark Catesby. In 1585 he and Thomas Hariot, a scientist and mathematician, were part of one the first attempts to start an English **colony**. They lived on Roanoke Island, but White and Hariot traveled all along the coastal areas. They drew maps, documented their natural findings, and illustrated the customs and life of the local American Indians. In 1588 Hariot published an account of their observations entitled *A briefe and true report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. The book featured engravings based on White's watercolor illustrations, and was the first surviving record of the people and natural life of the New World.

John White is also famous for his role as Governor of what has become known as the "Lost Colony." Attempting to create a permanent English settlement in North America. In 1587 White traveled with over 100 men and women and landed again at Roanoke Island. Two months after their arrival, White sailed to England for more supplies. It was nearly three years before he was able to return, and when he did, the **colonists** were gone. The missing settlers included John White's daughter and granddaughter, Virginia Dare, the first English child born in the Americas. The fate of the colonists remains a mystery to this day.

## Mark Catesby



Mark Catesby's Carolina Parrot. *Courtesy Private*

Mark Catesby was an English naturalist who first came to the New World in 1712 and traveled to the West Indies. Ten years later he was asked to go on a plant collecting **expedition** to the Carolinas by the Royal Society, a British group that studied natural sciences. He started collecting not only plants and seeds but birds, snakes, and other small animals, which he shipped back to England for others to study. Catesby returned to England himself in 1726 and published a book titled *Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands*. This book was similar to other naturalists' books because he wrote and drew pictures of what he saw in his travels. However, unlike most naturalists of his time, Catesby chose to keep his drawings simple and more true to science than many of his contemporaries' drawings, that may have been more detailed and artistic but less accurate.

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**“[M]y box, in which,  
besides paper and materials for  
painting, I put dry'd specimens  
of plants, seeds...”  
– Mark Catesby<sup>1</sup>**

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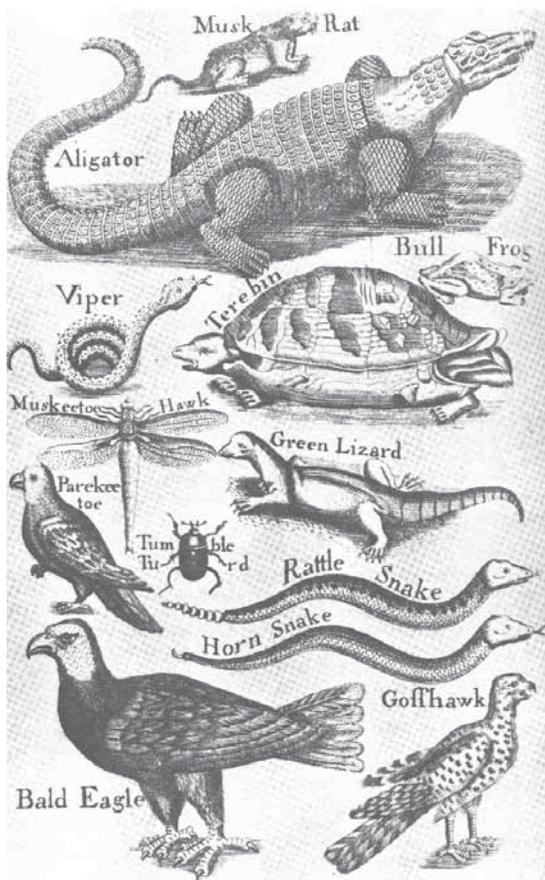


Title page from *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*.

*Courtesy North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

## John Brickell

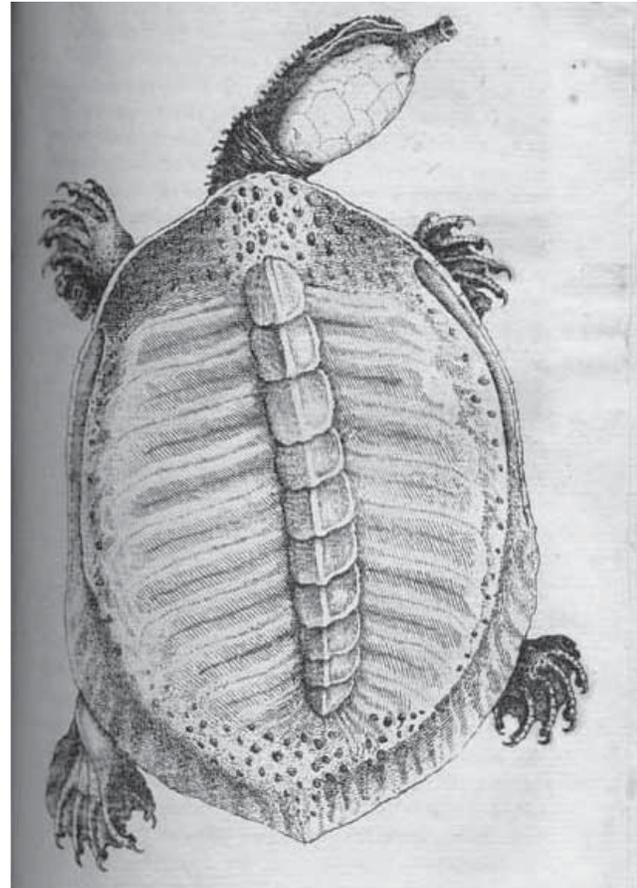
An Irish doctor and naturalist, John Brickell came to the Carolinas in the 1720s. He traveled the coast and countryside for about six years before he returned to Ireland and wrote a book called *The Natural History of North Carolina*. In this book, Brickell tells about his travels and the people, animals, and plants he observed and how they interacted with each other. He details how the people of the Carolinas used a variety of plants and animals found here for different things such as food and medicine. The book contains a map of the country and his illustrations of what he described as strange beasts, birds, fish, snakes, insects, trees and plants. Brickell's book is very similar to John Lawson's writings, and many historians believe he used Lawson's work as a guide when writing his own.



Compare these illustrations by John Brickell to photographs of each animal. *Courtesy Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens.*

## William Bartram

Unlike the other naturalists mentioned here, William Bartram was actually from the American colonies. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1739, over 150 years after John White explored the Outer Banks. William Bartram's father, John Bartram, was considered the leading expert on American **Botany**, and King George III appointed him the King's **Botanist** for North America. The younger Bartram gained much experience assisting his father, and followed in his footsteps studying plants. But by the age of fourteen his interests had expanded, and he began to draw and study birds as well.



Drawing of a turtle by William Bartram. *Courtesy North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

As Bartram's skill and study progressed he undertook ventures of his own, illustrating and observing a number of animal species. He published a book in 1791 with his findings. Many of his drawings, and plant specimens he collected during his travels, are still protected in museums today.

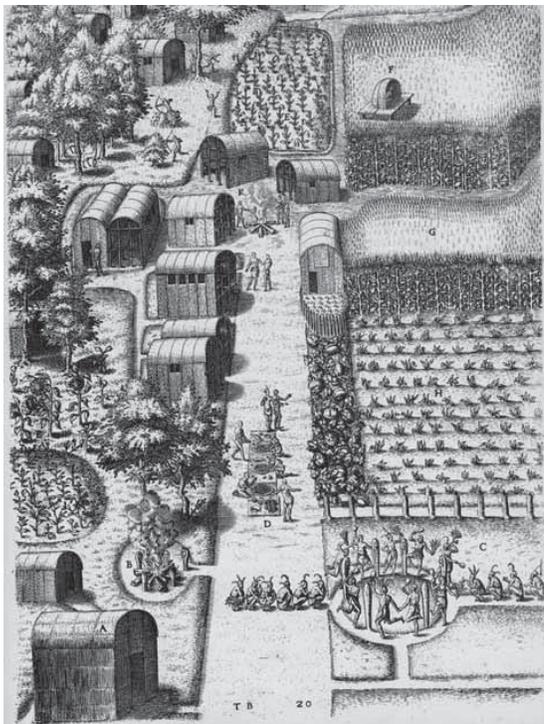
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**“The Mountains that are most considerable are the Charokee or Appelapean Mountains ... they are vastly high, and abound with Trees, various kinds of Plants, and Stones of several different Natures. Beyond these mountains you Have a prospect only of large Woods, Savannas, dismal Swamps and Forrests ...”**  
**– John Brickell<sup>1</sup>**

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# Planting a Future in a New World

"The Inhabitants of Carolina," wrote John Lawson, "thro' the Richness of the Soil, live an easy and pleasant Life...the Land being several sorts of Compost, some stiff, others light, some marl, others rich



The Towne of Secota, showing an American Indian village with crops. 1590 engraving based on a John White watercolor.

*Courtesy North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*



black Mould ...one part bearing great Timbers, others being **Savanna's**...."<sup>1</sup> This diversity in land formation and soil type—from the coastal plains with its nearly year-round growing season, through the piedmont to the western mountains—allowed for a large variety of plant life to thrive in North Carolina.

Naturalists John Lawson and Mark Catesby looked to the surrounding environ-

ment to provide answers for what, where, and how a plant grew. They carefully noted its uses, and made drawings to show the plant in its natural and **cultivated** states. Their records, along with plant specimens, were shipped back to England for botanical collectors to study. Catesby shipped seeds packed in gourds or small boxes. Naturalists also pressed plants between paper. As travel between Europe and America increased,

they were even able to send living specimens across the Atlantic Ocean.

American Indians introduced many new varieties of plants to the explorers. Knowledge of kidney and bushel beans, corn, crook neck squash, new types of berries, fruits, **medicinal** herbs, and nuts came from naturalists asking and observing what American Indians used and how they used it.

Lawson early on realized the economic importance of these new and abundant plants. The vast savannas would supply livestock with feed year-round, meaning less work for colonists by not having to gather up fodder for animals for winter. (What Lawson did not realize is that often these savannas were not naturally occurring, but had been cleared by American Indians for agricultural use.) He saw that the forests held longleaf pines to be used for ships' masts and other **naval stores**. Small settlements quickly began to trade naval stores, agricultural products, and medicinal herbs with Madera, New England, and the West Indies. In exchange, they received sugar, salt, molasses, clothing, and other items.

With such bounty and variety, it's easy to understand why John Lawson concluded that Carolina was "...adorn'd by Nature with a Pleasant Verdure, and beautiful Flowers, frequent in no other Places...in a country that, with moderate Industry, will afford all the Necessaries of Life."<sup>2</sup>

## Student Activity: Create a Botanical Scrapbook

Have an outside day of exploration at your school or home. See how many plants you can identify. Collect leaves and small plants to study. When you have finished documenting your specimens, carefully arrange and attach your notes and plants between the pages of a scrapbook. Place a heavier book on top of it. When five or more days have passed, look and see how your botanical journal has turned out.

# Discovering a New Animal Kingdom

**E**ven more so than plants, Europeans were captivated by the new animals explorers encountered. Special care was often needed to ensure that animal specimens arrived intact. Snakes and other smaller animals were placed in jars filled with rum or other spirits. Birds were sometimes preserved in spirits (alcohol); another technique was to bake them in an oven, stuff them, and cover them with tobacco dust.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes live animals were sent back in wooden crates, at considerable cost and trouble.

Some of the animals that were particularly intriguing to Europeans included the:

- Possum: “[The possum] is found nowhere but in America. He is the Wonder of all the Land Animals....The Female ... has a Paunch, or false Belly, wherein she carries her Young ....”<sup>2</sup>
- Bull Frog: “Of Frogs we have several sorts; the most famous is the Bull-Frog, so call’d because he lows exactly like that Beast, which makes Strangers wonder what’s the matter, for they hear the Frogs low, and can see no Cattle; ....”<sup>3</sup>
- Humming-Bird: “[The hummingbird] is the Miracle of all our winged Animals; He is feathered as a Bird, and gets his Living as the Bees, by sucking the Honey from each Flower.”<sup>4</sup>
- Panther: “As the Panther of this Continent I am told has never been imported into Europe, and as it is the King of the American Forests, I presume to send a male Panther... to be presented for His Majestys Acceptance... I am very Sollicitous for his safe Arrival, as I am ambitious that He may be permitted to add to His Majesty’s Collection of Wild Beasts.”<sup>5</sup>

For American Indians, animals were an important food source. In addition to hunting deer, bear, and wild turkeys, they also ate smaller animals such as rabbits, squirrels, or birds. Native Carolinians supplemented their diet by fishing with nets, traps, and hooks.<sup>6</sup> The skins, bones, antlers, and other animal parts were used for clothing, tools, and much more.<sup>7</sup>

As with plants, animals and animal products from the new world also became items of economic trade. Englishmen discovered that a handsome profit could be made by trading with American Indians for animal skins, particularly deerskins. Arthur Barlowe, captain of a ship in 1584 reported: “We exchanged our tin dish for twenty skins, worth twenty crowns or twenty nobles, and a copper kettle for fifty skins, worth fifty crowns.”<sup>8</sup> (A crown in 1584 is equivalent to approximately \$95 in today’s money.) Europeans used deerskin to make a variety of leather goods, and the demand for American skins was virtually limitless.<sup>9</sup> Lawson noted that “for these Commodities [wheat, corn, beef, pork, tallow, hides, deerskins, and furs] the New-England-Men and Bermudians visited Carolina in their Barks and Sloops, and carry’d out what they made, bringing them, in Exchange, Rum, Sugar, Salt, Molasses, and some wearing Apparel....”<sup>10</sup>



American Indians used a variety of methods to catch fish. 1590 engraving based on a John White watercolor. Courtesy North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

# Activities



In our Fall 2007 issue of *The Living History Classroom*, we discussed the many and diverse foods and cultures that have come together to create our American diet. As a project we asked students to select one of their favorite recipes and write about why it is important or meaningful to them. We wish we had room to print them all, but here are two of the outstanding submissions we received from Ms. Leap's 4th grade class at St. Raphael's Catholic School in Raleigh.

## Irish Soda Bread— from Leah M. Mills

My recipe is Irish soda bread and it started in County Kerry sometime in the 1900s. My great grandmother, Julia O'Conner, when she was young loved to bake with her mother. This recipe has been enjoyed by our family often, but especially around St. Patrick's Day. I personally like it toasted with strawberry jelly and a glass of cold milk. My grandmother told me when she bakes Irish soda bread she thinks of her mother, and it gives her a warm feeling. We want you to have this warm feeling also. So try this recipe in my great grandmother's memory. Mmm, so good!

- ¼ c. butter
- 2 c. flour
- 1/8 c. sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 caraway seeds
- ½ c. raisins
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- 1 egg yolk
- ¾ c. buttermilk
- ½ tsp. baking soda

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In bowl, combine butter, flour, sugar, salt, caraway seeds, raisins, and baking powder. Mix. In another bowl, whisk together egg yolk, buttermilk, and baking soda; set aside. Knead the butter and flour mixture into a dough. Put into a cake pan, flatten down two inches. Have an adult use a sharp knife to cut a cross in the very middle; make sure the cross goes to the end of the pan. Brush with egg wash. Cook 40 minutes in the oven and check with toothpick.



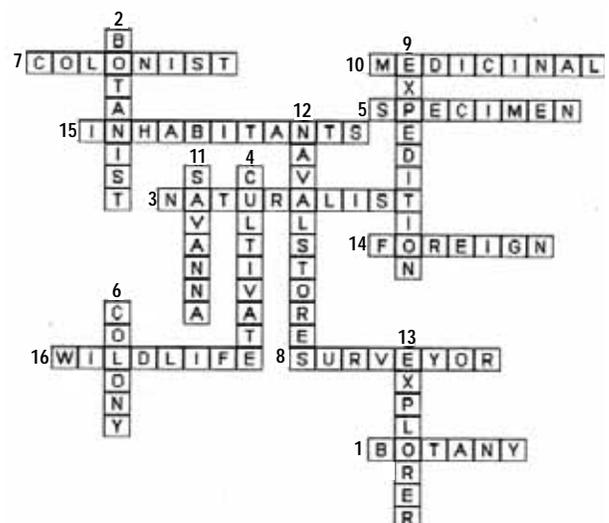
## Dad's Chicken— from Jessica Perciouante

I like it so much because its taste is so good and all the different things you can put on it gives it great taste. We have it on regular days. We have been eating it for many years. My dad just made it one day, and we loved it! I also like that we can help make it! Each time we make it we add a little difference.

- 1 or 2 pkg. thin chicken breast
- ½ c. milk
- 2 T. mustard
- 1 egg
- 1 c. Italian bread crumbs
- Olive oil
- 1 head roasted garlic for garnish
- Diced tomatoes for garnish

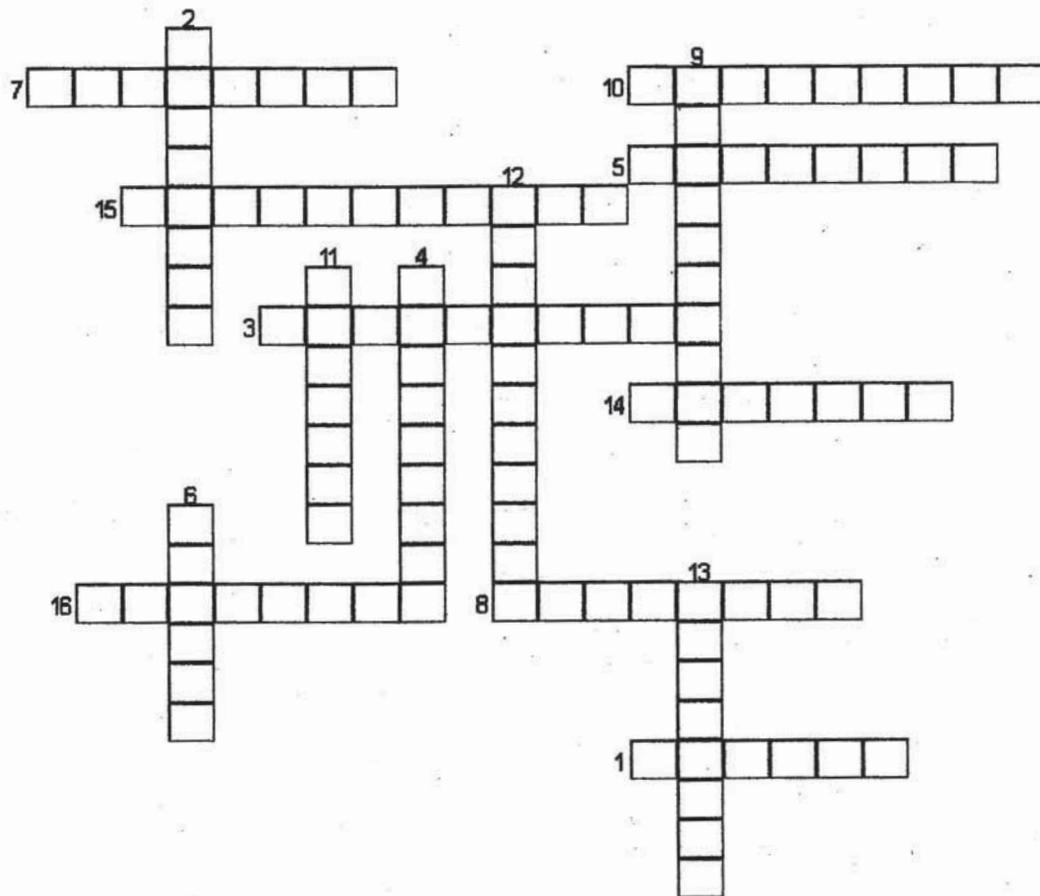
Mix the milk, mustard, and egg together. Dip the chicken breast in the mixture, then coat with bread crumbs. Fry the chicken in preheated pan of olive oil. Garnish with diced tomatoes and garlic.

### Crossword Puzzle



# Crossword Puzzle

## Natural History



### ACROSS

1. the science of plants
3. a person who is an expert in natural history
5. something used as a sample to be studied
7. a person who settles in a new colony
8. a person whose job is to survey buildings or land
10. having the power to heal and used as a medicine
14. from another country or land
15. people or animals that live permanently in a place
16. wild animals and plants

### DOWN

2. a person who specializes in the study of plants
4. to work on land in order to raise crops
6. a group of people who form a settlement in a country that is under the rule of another country
9. an organized journey made for some specific purpose
11. a grassy plain with few trees
12. products used to build and maintain wooden ships
13. a person who investigates unknown regions

# Additional Resources

## Books to Read

- John Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*
- Dirk Frankenberg, ed., *Exploring North Carolina's Natural Areas*

## Websites to Explore

- North Carolina Office of Environmental Education  
[www.eenorthcarolina.org](http://www.eenorthcarolina.org)
- Virtual Jamestown: John White drawings/Theodor De Bry engravings  
[www.virtualjamestown.org/images/white\\_debry\\_html/introduction.html](http://www.virtualjamestown.org/images/white_debry_html/introduction.html)
- North Carolina Native Plant Society  
[www.ncwildflower.org](http://www.ncwildflower.org)

## Places to Visit

- Roanoke Island Festival Park  
1 Festival Park  
Manteo, NC 27954  
252-475-1500, [www.roanokeisland.com](http://www.roanokeisland.com)
- Fort Raleigh National Historic Site  
1401 National Park Dr.  
Manteo, NC 27954  
252-473-5772, [www.nps.gov/fora/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/fora/index.htm)

- North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences  
11 W. Jones St.  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
919-733-7450, [www.naturalsciences.org](http://www.naturalsciences.org)
- North Carolina Museum of Forestry  
415 South Madison St.  
Whiteville, NC 28472  
910-914-4185  
[www.learnnc.org/discover/Columbus/ncforestrymus](http://www.learnnc.org/discover/Columbus/ncforestrymus)
- Explore more at Tryon Palace!
  - Discover more about the people and topics discussed in this issue at our new exhibit, *Discovering the New World*, opening April 25, 2008 in the Tryon Palace Visitor Center.
  - In the Young Sprouts program, the Tryon Palace gardens become your outdoor classroom. Students join in activities that include plant science, garden design, and colonial history. (Grades 2-4). Contact our Group Sales Manager at 252-514-4935 or [kpierson@tryonpalace.org](mailto:kpierson@tryonpalace.org) to schedule your group's visit, or check our website at [www.tryonpalace.org](http://www.tryonpalace.org) for more information on this and other tours. 

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