

LEARNING ABOUT NATURE

Working hard and loving it

Youngsters sweat, learn at Koreshan park camp

By ANDREA STETSON
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Big, plump mosquitoes stuck to the eyelashes and sweaty face of 10-year-old Sean Ashton-Travis, but he didn't mind.

"I don't care," he said. "They're biting, but it's fun."

Under the midday sun, surrounded by swarms of bugs, Sean and 16 other children toiled at Koreshan State Park in Estero, raking the ground, pulling weeds and cutting dead vegetation. But almost every one of the youngsters said they were having fun.

The children spent the day and night at the park Tuesday, learning more about the environment and helping to make the park sparkle. The youngsters are part of a summer science camp sponsored by the Lee County School's Environmental Education program.

Sean said he wants to be a scientist, and he's learned a lot that will help him during the three-week camp.

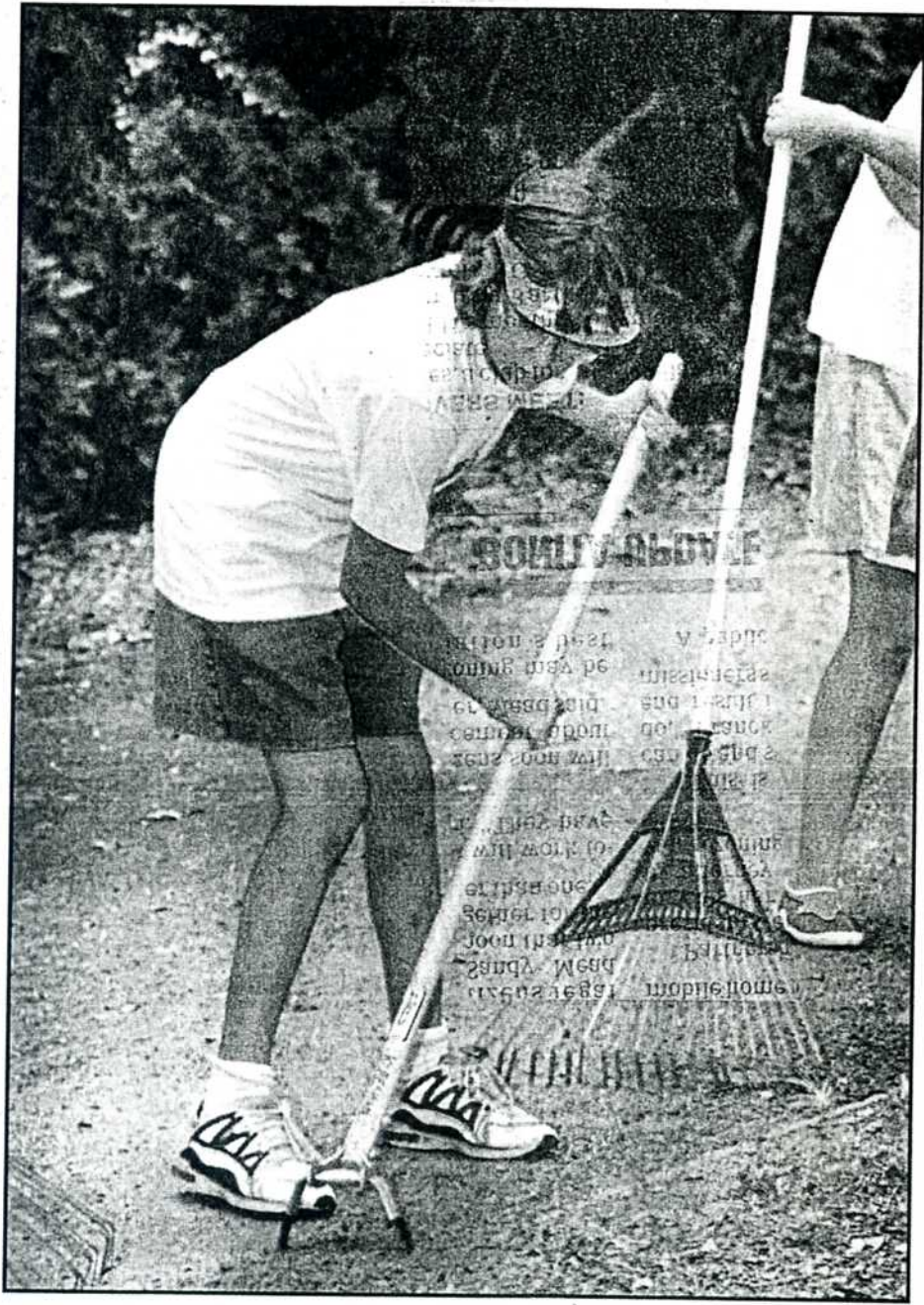
"I learned all kinds of stuff about animals and water," he said.

They are also learning about teamwork, and what it takes to run a big state park.

"We want them to appreciate the park a lot more and the people who take care of it," explained Koreshan State Park assistant manager Jeanne Parks. "We hope they will look to us as role models and maybe think of careers in this field."

Shelby Frame, 11, beamed with a brilliant smile as she raked the ground. Despite the work, she was so excited to be at the park. Shelby had never been camping before, and she couldn't wait to roast marshmallows, stay up late, and sleep in a tent.

But she also understood the work was part of the deal.



TOM KANE/News-Press

Shelby Frame, 11, uses a weed scraper on a pathway at Koreshan State Park in Estero on Tuesday. Shelby was one of 17 science camp participants who arrived for an overnight campout and environmental lessons at the park.

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