

What's for Supper?

Native American Foods in the Ouachita Mountains



by



Ouachita Chapter
Arkansas Archeological Society



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What's for Supper? Native American Foods in the Ouachita Mountains was created by the Ouachita Chapter of the Arkansas Archeological Society, Hot Springs, Arkansas, for Arkansas Heritage Month 2014. It is intended for second grade readers. The book was written by John Chapman, Florence Davis, Sue Dawson, Janice Fisher, Mary Ann Goodman, Vanessa Hanvey, Jim Hudgins, Judy Thye, Mary Beth Trubitt and Ron Zweifel. Original watercolor illustrations were created by Florence Davis. Photographs are courtesy of Arkansas Archeological Survey's Henderson State University Research Station and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Ouachita National Forest. Design and layout was by Tyler Stumpf. Funding for this project came from the Department of Arkansas Heritage and the Ouachita Chapter of the Arkansas Archeological Society.

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Hi, my name is Kallie. I live in Arkansas. Look at this neat rock I found!



Mom says it looks very old. Maybe Indians left it here. We are going to show it to archeologists to learn more. **Archeologists** study history from the things people leave behind.

Mom took me to an archeology dig in the Ouachita National Forest.

Here they are **excavating** an old town where Caddo Indians lived for thousands of years.

They will show me what they have found, and what they have learned about what these people ate.

Did You Know?

Caddo Indians lived in southwest Arkansas before 1700. Now most Caddos live in Oklahoma.







This archeologist found a point chipped from stone, just like mine. He carefully cleaned off the artifact, and recorded its location in his notebook.

An **artifact** is something made by people who lived here long ago.



He said my artifact was broken because it hit something. This was the stone tip of a spear. The early Indians hunted with spears.



Did You Know?

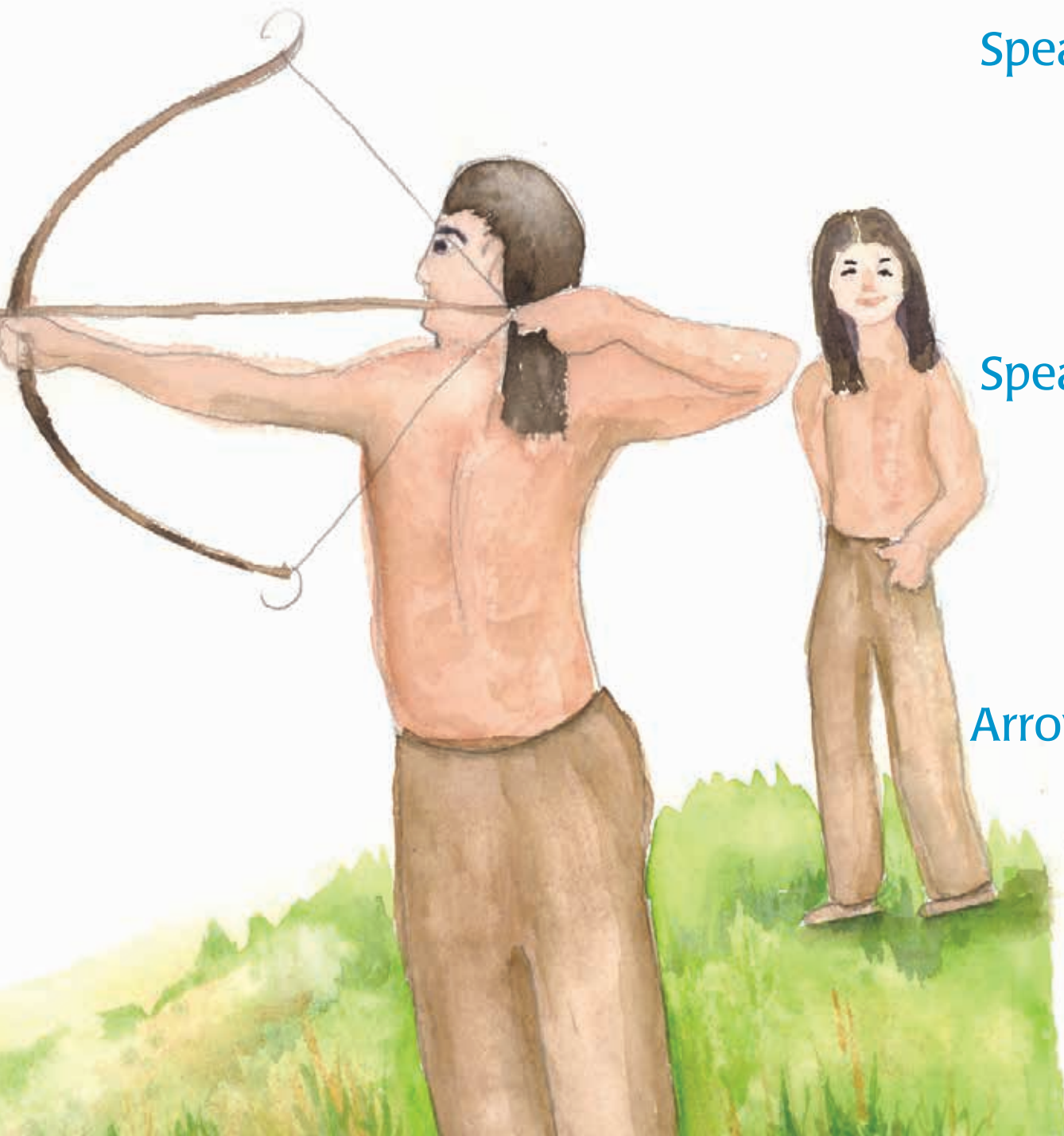
Archeologists call this kind of break an impact fracture.



Archeologists look carefully at artifacts found at the site to see how they were used. Cutting meat leaves traces on a tool. They learned that this spear point was used on deer meat.



Caddo Indians living here 600 years ago hunted deer, turkeys, rabbits, and squirrels. By this time, Indians used bows and arrows instead of spears to hunt. They also caught turtles and fish, and collected mussels from the Ouachita River. I love to go fishing with my Dad too!



Spear Point



Spear Point



Arrow Point





Did You Know?

Mussels are edible shellfish that live in rivers.

I met an archeologist digging a pit filled with very old garbage. What can you learn from garbage?

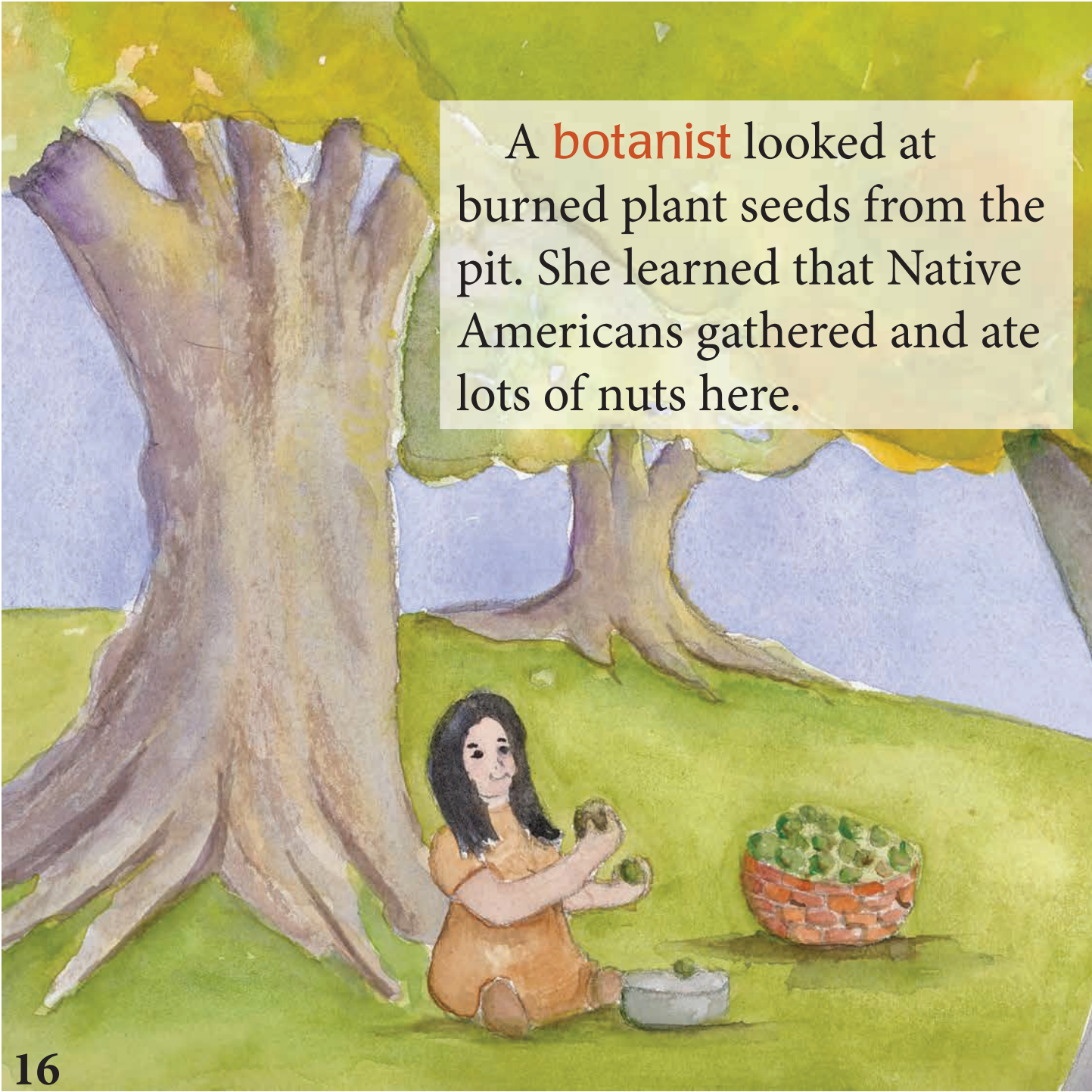
She was excited because she found animal bones, mussel shells, and even pieces of plants. The nut shells and plant seeds were burned, but not burned up, so they did not rot.



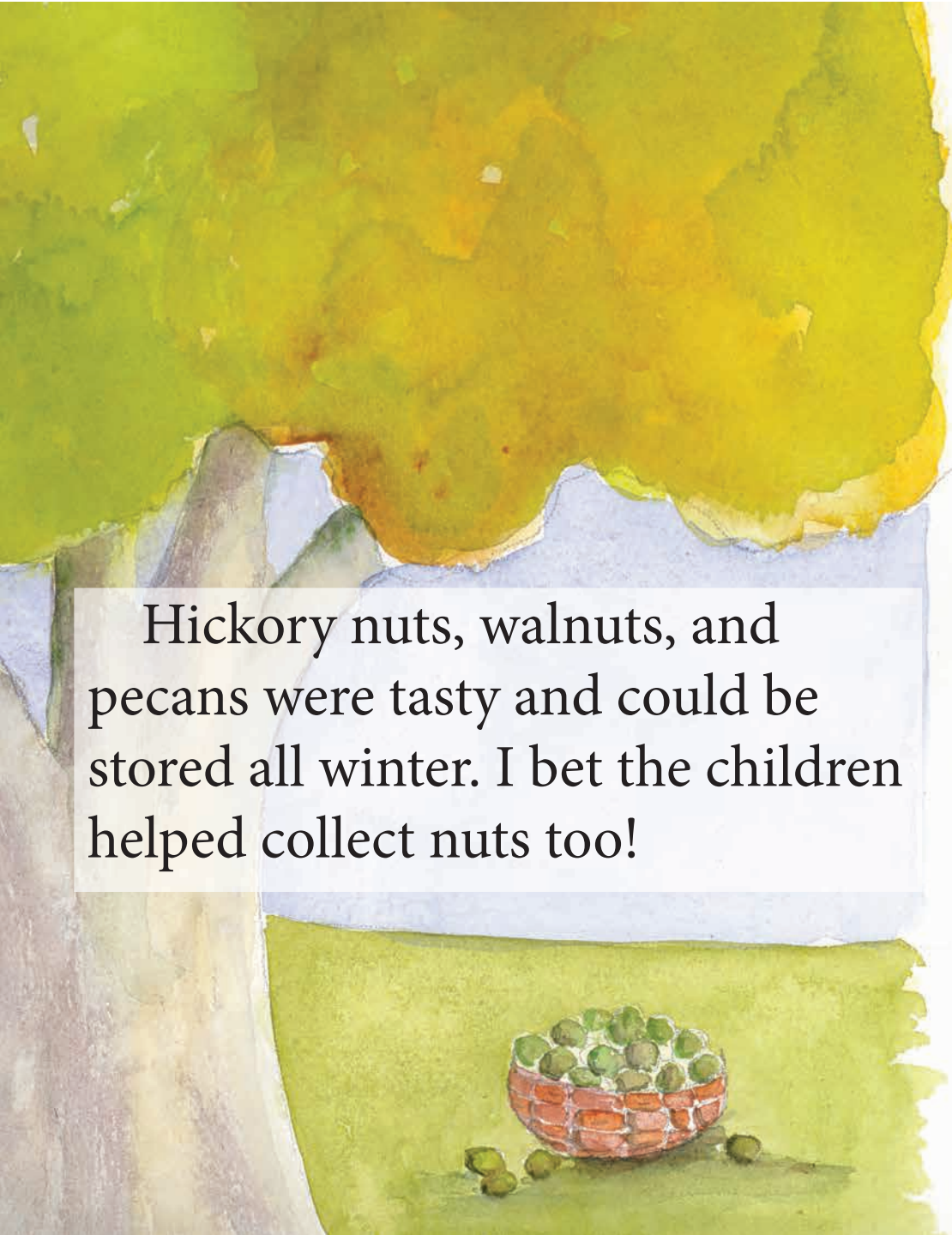
Modern Hickory Nuts



Burned Nut Shell from Excavation



A **botanist** looked at burned plant seeds from the pit. She learned that Native Americans gathered and ate lots of nuts here.

A watercolor illustration of a tree with a large, rounded canopy in shades of green and yellow. The trunk is light brown. In the foreground, a small woven basket filled with green nuts sits on a green patch of ground, with a few more nuts scattered nearby.

Hickory nuts, walnuts, and pecans were tasty and could be stored all winter. I bet the children helped collect nuts too!



Hickory Nut



Pecan Nut



Walnut



Modern Corn



Excavations

Caddo Indians ate berries, grapes, persimmons, and maypop that grew wild in the Ouachita Mountains.

They were also farmers who planted many different crops for food. Through the **microscope**, the botanist saw corn from the archeology dig.



Did You Know?

Corn is also called maize.



Domestication or farming made plants with bigger seeds and larger harvests.

The Indians grew grain crops like goosefoot and sunflowers for their **nutritious** seeds. Indians living here farmed corn, beans, and squash.

Can you name these
three vegetables?



Did You Know?

Goosefoot was grown for its seeds and greens.





The archeologist told me that he found an ancient food processor! He says Native Americans used grinding stones to turn seeds into flour. They also used stones to crack nuts. Archeologists find these stones with pits that held nuts.

Caddo Indians made pots of many sizes and shapes. The archeologists find many broken pieces. Some have soot from a fire or bits of burned food. These were used for cooking.





Where did they cook their food? These archeologists are excavating a fire pit in a Caddo house.



What do you think these pots were used for?



The Caddo family that lived here 600 years ago cooked dinner at this fire.



I think they ate corn and deer stew with grape dumplings!







The archeologists let me help too. I am going to ask my parents if we can come back and work on the archeology dig next year!

New Words to Learn:

Archeology is the study of history. **Archeologists** learn about the past by looking at things people made, used, and left behind.

Archeologists **excavate** by carefully digging and recording information about what they find.

An **artifact** is something made by people in the past.

Botanists are scientists who study plants. A botanist may use a **microscope** to see plants up close.

Domestication tames wild animals and makes plants grow bigger seeds or fruit.

Nutritious foods are good for you and your body.

Internet Resources:

Arkansas Archeological Survey's educational flyer
“Native American Food” (includes recipes!)

<http://archeology.uark.edu/learn-discover/classroom-materials/>

Arkansas Archeological Survey's “Indians of Arkansas”
website...

<http://archeology.uark.edu/indiansofarkansas/>

The “Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture”
website has entries on Indians and life in Arkansas
before it became a state...

<http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>

Arkansas Archeological Society website...

<http://arkarch.org>

How to Find an Archeologist...

At the Arkansas Archeological Survey:

Dr. Mary Beth Trubitt

Henderson State University Research Station

870-230-5510 or mtrubitt@uark.edu

At the Ouachita National Forest:

Mr. Meeks Etchieson

Heritage Program Manager

501-321-5252 or metchieson@fs.fed.us

Come to a Ouachita Chapter meeting!

We meet on the second Tuesday of every month (except June) at 7:00 p.m. at Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts in Hot Springs.

Find the Arkansas Archeological Society's Ouachita Chapter on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/chapterouachita>