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HAWK GARCIA

JUNE BUG

BY T. R.
ZIMMERMANN

Medicinal Insect

The small boy lay on his pallet slowly dying. He moaned and stirred in delirium, trapped in a never-ending nightmare filled with threatening blood-red evil beings he was unable to escape.

A mysterious illness had suddenly struck him down, like a lightning bolt from a stormy sky, the night before. High fever and its accompanying symptoms tormented him, ravaging his frail body of its vitality.

His concerned parents sent for the Medicine Man, begging him to come quickly. After a short journey from the village, the healer arrived prepared; ready to render assistance.

Chanting to the healing spirits for guidance, the Medicine Man examined the boy, studying his symptoms and noting the progress of the malady. Afterwards he began his treatment.

A pottery vessel full of water was used to boil and purify drinking and bathing water. The boy was stripped and cleansed with a mixture of white wood ash and hot water. Dried moss was used as a towel to rub him dry.

His soiled pallet and blanket were burned in the fire to stop the spread of the disease. A fresh pallet was prepared and a new blanket issued. Hot rocks wrapped in clean rags were placed near the victim to keep him warm and to ward off chills. Water-soaked pads of soft deer skin were used as sponges to swab the boy's face and brow, using evaporation to cool the fever.

Cattail leaves brewed into a weak tea were prescribed to lower fever symptoms, ingesting the tea in small measured amounts. The tea also helped to reduce pain and alleviate headache, inducing restful dreamless sleep.

Soon after, the symptoms were quelled and the boy

seemed to be recovering, but the ordeal had left him very weak and anemic. With little appetite, his stomach refused the rich meat broth offered. Beyond a few small sips of water, the lad would not ingest anything.S



The Medicine Man knew what to do. The healer bade the lad's parents to build a series of bonfires at dusk, allowing them to burn brightly in the summer night to attract flying

insects.

Catching the bugs landing near the fire-pits, only the fat beetles, not the moths, would do. From them, a beneficial remedy for the ailing boy could be made.

Each crawling, alive bug was tossed into the hot ashes to roast. Moments later, a small "snap" sound was heard from the toasted bug. This indicated the bug was dead, and cooked to the well-done stage.

Raked from the ashes, each bug was peeled of its legs, wings, and wing case, leaving behind a small ball of edible flesh. Dozens of cooked bugs were crushed into a powder, adding it to a bowl of hot water to make a weak drink.

When fed a spoonful at a time, the ailing boy's hunger soon became apparent. The bug soup had stimulated his appetite. His desire to eat the rich meat broth and solid foods returned. He then made a complete recovery from his illness.

Which kind of insect did the Medicine Man utilize as a Whealing remedy? What does the insect contain that makes it so beneficial? And, how does it counter anemia? The answers are as follows:

The insect used is the June Bug, common throughout late spring and summer months. A nocturnal insect, the beetle is active at night, feeding mainly on favored plants, such as buds and flowers of shrubs and fleshy garden vegetables.

Beginning as a fat white grub, the larval stage of the June bug lives in rich humus and leaf litter. Hatching from deeply buried eggs, the grub worm feeds mainly on roots, moldy leaves, and other plant matter. It lives underground until it molts into the adult stage.

Easy to capture, the grub-worm is a favorite live-bait among fishermen. Very few fish will refuse the chance to take the grub, filling the stringer or basket with fish. Birds and other wild animals like them too, feeding avidly on the fat worm.

The adult June bug is a robust insect, reaching up to two inches in length. A true beetle, it has a set of powerful wings protected by a wing case. Exterior color can vary from pale tan to dark brown or almost black.

A chemical analysis of the June Bug revealed its hidden secrets as a beneficial healing remedy. Full of edible fats and proteins, the bug is a rich source of food and appetite stimulating medicine when prepared correctly.

When toasted in hot ashes, the internal body parts and juices of the bug congeal into a nugget of pure golden nutrition. After peeling off shriveled legs, wings, and wing case, the remaining orb of nourishment can be eaten one at a time or by the handful.

Toasted June bugs have a surprisingly sweet delightful taste. The flavor closely resembles thick raw molasses or crudely made ribbon cane syrup. It is difficult to eat just one.

Crushed into fine powder, bug-flour added to hot water forms a rich nourishing drink perfectly suited to victims suffering from anemia, dehydration, and other maladies. If mixed with warm milk, it has a malted milk taste.

However, toasted June bugs should be consumed in measured proportions because of the heavy concentration of protein and fat. If eaten in large amounts, the rich oily meal can result in stomach ache or mild diarrhea.

In conclusion, the June bug remedy works best as a life-saving supplement to other foods. When relieving anemia, the remedy stimulates poor appetite, stirring the patient's interest in eating again.

Also, as a food source, both the larvae and the adult June bug are one of the best insects for eating there is. Grubs should be toasted in hot ashes before serving or adding to soups and wilderness stew.

Toasted adult June bugs preserve well when crushed into a meal and sun-dried, storing the meal in an airtight and waterproofed container.

Living the wilderness way means utilizing nature's bounties to the fullest while existing in harmony with the environment.



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