

Big Cypress

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Big Cypress
National Preserve



Ranger-Led Activities

Winter 2015 through Spring 2016

Join the Big Cypress National Preserve staff for FREE outings and activities that explore the wonders of the Big Cypress Swamp. For more details, visit our website at www.nps.gov/bicy. For programs requiring reservations, they can be made up to 14 days in advance of the activity date, between 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. Programs begin November 22, 2015, and extend through April 02, 2016.*

Activity Descriptions	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Who's Home? — 1:00 and 2:00 p.m., 15 minute talk at the H.P. Williams wildlife viewing platform. Sightings often include alligators, turtles, fishes and colorful wading birds.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Scales, Teeth & a Big Tail! — 1:00 and 2:00 p.m., 15 minute talk on the Oasis Visitor Center boardwalk to learn about our largest native freshwater reptile, the alligator. Discoveries abound!	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mangroves & Manatees! — 2:30 and 3:30 p.m., 15 minute talk at the Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center viewing platform to learn about one of our largest native marine mammals, the manatee.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cypress Sights & Sounds – Kirby Storter Boardwalk — 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, Friday & Saturday, 1:30 p.m. on Sunday (1 hour). Explore a cypress forest while venturing into the heart of a cypress strand on this one-mile, round-trip, leisurely stroll. Water, binoculars and insect repellent recommended. Meet at the boardwalk trailhead along U.S. 41.	X				X	X	X
Wet & Wild Swamp Walks — 10:00 a.m. (2 hours). This is a great way to explore the swamp and discover what's beyond the road! Cypress knees and sawgrass make long pants necessary. Wear sturdy shoes that you can get wet and muddy. Bring a change of clothes and shoes. Meet at the Oasis Visitor Center. Reservations required call 239-695-1201.		X					X
Heart of the Swamp Canoe Trips — 10:00 a.m. (4–5 hours), beginning November 28. We'll provide canoes and equipment, or bring your own. Come prepared with water, lunch, binoculars, sun protection, insect repellent and a sense of adventure. Trips vary by weather, water level, tide and park ranger's choice of location and duration. Knowing canoeing basics is helpful. Reservations required call 239-695-4758.	X				X		X
Walk on the Wild Side – Deep Lake Hike — 1:00 p.m. (2 hours). Introduces swamp history. Deep Lake is a rare natural sinkhole lake. The hike runs through lush greenery in bear country. Long pants necessary. Wear sturdy shoes that you can get wet and muddy. Bring a change of clothes and shoes. Come prepared with water, food, binoculars, sun protection and insect repellent. Hikes are offered on alternating Sundays beginning December 13, through March 6. Reservations required , call 239-695-1201.	X						
Walk on the Wild Side – Gator Hook Hike — 1:00 p.m. (3 hours). Gator Hook Strand is a rugged wet trail with a diversity of plants. Long pants necessary. Wear sturdy shoes that you can get wet and muddy. Bring a change of clothes and shoes. Come prepared with water, food, binoculars, sun protection and insect repellent. Hikes are offered on alternating Sundays beginning December 20, through March 13. Reservations required , call 239-695-1201.	X						
Campfire Programs — 7:00 p.m. (1 hour). Alternating campgrounds. Midway Campground - January 8 and 22, February 5 and 19, March 4. Monument Lake Campground - January 15 and 29, February 12 and 26, March 11. Ranger choice for talk topics. Some seating available, or bring your own folding chair. Insect repellent optional.						X	



*Subject to change without notice. Call ahead to confirm.

Activity Descriptions Continued...

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Fire Prairie Trail Bike Ride — January 16, February 13, and March 12, at 10:00 a.m. (around 4 hours). Ride on a raised trail over moderate terrain. Bring your bicycle, water, food, and sun protection. Meet a park ranger at the Fire Prairie Trail access point along Turner River Road 14 miles north of U.S. 41. Explore a part of Big Cypress many may not be familiar with. Reservations required call 239-695-4758.							X
Hike to the Big Trees – Old Growth Cypress — January 2, February 6, and March 5, at 9:00 a.m. (6-7 hours). Strenuous eight-mile round-trip hike on the Florida Trail from Oasis Visitor Center, where tall ferns, epiphytes, and old growth trees that escaped the loggers' saws, still stand. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes that you can get wet and muddy. Bring lunch, water, sun protection, and change of clothes for your ride home. Meet at Oasis Visitor Center. Reservations required call 239-695-1201.							X
Birding in the Swamp — December 27, January 31, February 28, March 27, at 9:00 a.m. (2 hours). You'll explore a mile round-trip walk to search for the birds of the swamp, be introduced to field guides and birding techniques. Look, listen, learn, and share stories. Bring binoculars, water, and a birding field guide. Meet at Kirby Storter Boardwalk. Reservations required. Call 239-695-1201.	X						
Centennial Campfire Program — 7:00 p.m. (1 hour). Midway Campground December 19 and February 13. Monument Lake Campground January 16 and March 12. Discover the <i>Heroes of Big Cypress</i> , the men and women that played a significant role in protecting this region of the Greater Everglades.							X
Tamiami Trail Triathlon — Do it on your own anytime or join a Ranger on December 20, January 24, February 21, or March 6th. For reservations call, 239-695-3311. Bicycle the 15-mile loop at Shark Valley, hike three miles of trail at Oasis, and paddle round-trip from Gulf Coast to Sandfly Island. Complete all three activities and earn the title "Tamiami Trail Triathlon Finisher." Bring your own bicycle, canoe/kayak, or rent one.	X						

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for the Fourth Annual
**Big Cypress
Star Parties**

Saturdays, 8:00 p.m.

- December 5 - January 9
- February 6 - March 5

Explore constellations, meteor showers,
and more with park rangers and
astronomers of South Florida
Astronomer Association

For more information call
239-695-1149 or 1164

FREE

33000 Tamiami Trail East
Ochopee, FL 34141

Big Cypress Swamp Heritage Festival

Annually, First Saturday in December

Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center
33000 Tamiami Trail East
Ochopee, FL 34141

This FREE family-friendly event celebrates the
history and culture of the Big Cypress Swamp
of south Florida. Enjoy regional food, music,
informative presentations and exhibits.

www.nps.gov/bicy/SwampHeritageFestival.htm

JOIN THE CONVERSATION
ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



#BigCypress

#FindYourPark

Explore Safely!

Before your adventure begins always let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return. Remember to fill out a backcountry permit if you are entering at one of the backcountry access points. To enjoy your visit come prepared by bringing water, food, sturdy shoes, sun protection, and insect repellent. Always be aware of your surroundings and be respectful of wildlife.

Wildlife viewing

While visiting you may see a multitude of bird life, or alligators and the fish they prey on. Observe wildlife respectfully. Never attempt to feed or approach wild animals! Wildlife observation platforms are located at the Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center, H.P. Williams Roadside Park, Kirby Storter Roadside Park, and at Oasis Visitor Center.

Driving

Excellent wildlife viewing by car may be seen along the Turner River/Birdon Road loop, starting at H.P. Williams - 17 miles in length. Loop Road, another great option - 24 miles in length. These gravel roads offer views of national preserve animal life and subtropical habitats. Help protect wildlife by observing the speed limit. Stop by Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center or Oasis Visitor Center for more information.

Hiking

The Florida National Scenic Trail runs through the heart of Big Cypress, presenting excellent backpacking opportunities. Fire Prairie Trail is five miles round trip and is found off of the northern end of Turner River Road, providing superb views of several of South Florida's natural habitats.

Canoeing

Explore the waters of Big Cypress by bringing your own canoe or kayak, or renting them in nearby communities. The access for Turner River Canoe Trail is located along U.S. 41. Halfway Creek Canoe Trail offers a saltwater option with the ramp located off of U.S. 41 at the end of Seagrape Drive, three miles east of S.R. 29. Typical canoeing trips in the area will take a minimum of two to three hours.

Biking

Within the Preserve, many of the gravel roads off of Tamiami Trail, and several of the off-road vehicle trails, provide opportunities for exploration by bicycle. The Bear Island Grade, accessible from S.R. 29, is a popular route. While biking, please be aware of traffic. While on backcountry trails yield to hikers and off-road vehicles. For more details on bike riding in the national preserve, please ask a park ranger.