

Big Cypress

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Cypress
National Preserve



Ranger-Led Activities

Winter 2016 through Spring 2017

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. Some programs require reservations, which can be made up to 14 days in advance, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. daily. Programs begin November 20, 2016, and extend through April 15, 2017.*

Activity Descriptions	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Scales, Teeth & a Big Tail! — 1:00 and 2:00 p.m., 15 minute talk at the Oasis Visitor Center boardwalk. Learn about our largest native freshwater reptile, the alligator. Discoveries abound!	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mangroves & Manatees! — 2:00 and 3:00 p.m., 15 minute talk at the Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center viewing platform highlighting one of our largest native marine mammals, the manatee.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cypress Sights & Sounds -1:30 p.m. (1 hour). Venture into the heart of a cypress strand on this leisurely one-mile (round-trip) stroll on a boardwalk. Water, binoculars and insect repellent recommended. Meet at the Kirby Storter Boardwalk parking lot 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! Experience cypress trees and sawgrass prairies. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes with laces that you can get wet and muddy. Bring a change of clothes and shoes. Meet at the Oasis Visitor Center. Recommended for children eight or older. Reservations required , call 239-695-1201.		X					X
Heart of the Swamp Canoe Trips — 10:00 a.m. (4–5 hours), beginning December 7. 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 to explore a river. Trips vary by weather, water level, and park ranger's choice of location and duration. Adults must know canoeing basics. Recommended for children eight or older. Reservations required-6 maximum per reservation. For Wednesday adventures, call 239-695-1201. For Saturday adventures, call 239-695-4758.				X			X
Walk on the Wild Side – Deep Lake Hike — 1:00 p.m. (2 hours). Deep Lake is a rare natural sinkhole lake that has a rich history. The hike runs through lush greenery and standing water. Long pants are necessary. Wear sturdy shoes with laces 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 start November 27 and go through April 9. Reservations required , call 239-695-4758.	X						
Midway Campground Campfire Talk — (1 hour) on alternating Fridays. Ranger choice for talk topics. Some seating available, or bring your own folding chair. 7 p.m. January 6, January 20, February 3, February 17, and March 3 8 p.m. March 17 and April 7						X	
Monument Lake Campfire Talk — (1 hour) on alternating Fridays. Ranger choice for talk topics. Some seating available, or bring your own folding chair. 7 p.m. January 13, January 27, February 10, February 24, and March 10 8 p.m. March 31st and April 14.						X	

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

Activity Descriptions Continued...

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

<p>Hike to the Big Trees – Old Growth Cypress — January 7, February 4, and March 4, 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 still stand. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes with laces that you can get wet and muddy. Bring lunch, water, sun protection, insect repellent and change of clothes for your ride home. Meet at Oasis Visitor Center. Reservations required, call 239-695-1201.</p>							X
<p>Birding in the Swamp — December 18, January 29, February 26, March 26, at 9:00 a.m. (2 hours). Explore an one mile round-trip walk to listen and look for birds of the swamp and be introduced to field guides and birding techniques. Look, listen, learn, and share stories. Bring binoculars, water, and a birding field guide. Insect repellent optional. Meet at Kirby Storter Boardwalk. Reservations required, call 239-695-1201.</p>	X						
<p>Tamiami Trail Triathlon — Do it on your own anytime or join a Ranger on January 8, February 5, March 5, or April 2. Paddle round-trip from Gulf Coast to Sandfly Island and back, hike three miles of trail at Oasis, and bicycle the 15-mile loop at Shark Valley. Complete all three activities and earn the title “Tamiami Trail Triathlon Finisher!” Bring your own canoe or kayak and a bicycle, or rent them. Reservations required, call 239-695-3311.</p>	X						

Star Party!

7 p.m. December 3
7 p.m. January 21
TBD February
8 p.m. March 25

Explore the night sky with park rangers and astronomers in this newly designated International Dark Sky Place.

For more information
call 239-695-1149

JOIN THE CONVERSATION
ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



#BigCypress
#FindYourPark

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

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. 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

There is excellent wildlife viewing by car 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 or www.nps.gov/bicy.