

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## THE CYPRESS SWAMP



Cypress trees and cypress knees in freshwater.

The Everglades has many **habitats** for plants and animals to call home. One is a **wetland** forest called the cypress swamp.

The cypress swamp is without a doubt a very wet **freshwater** habitat. Even in the dry season, you can find water in the deeper parts of the cypress swamp.

**Bald cypress** trees are the **dominant** plant of this habitat. Bald cypress trees **thrive** in the still or slow-moving water of the cypress swamp. The roots of the bald cypress produce “**knees**” that reach above the soil and water. They can grow to be six feet tall! The purpose of these knees is not completely understood by scientists. One idea is that they help the tree **anchor** itself in the soft, muddy soil.

Cypress swamps provide food, water, shelter, and space for many kinds of plants and animals. One group of interesting plants are the **epiphytes** or **airplants**. They grow on the trunks and branches of the bald cypress trees. Instead of having their roots in the soil, airplants are wrapped around the cypress tree to keep securely in place. This is also a favorite habitat for large wading birds, like the Great Blue Heron and the Wood Stork.

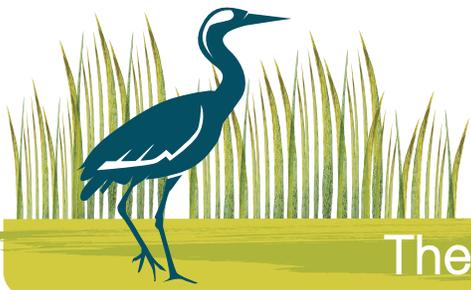


An epiphyte growing on a cypress tree.



A Great Blue Heron wading in the water.

Bald Eagles use the tops of the tall bald cypress trees as **perches**. Often, the American alligator will dig its **alligator hole** in the cypress swamp during the dry season. These holes fill with water and help the alligator and other animals survive.



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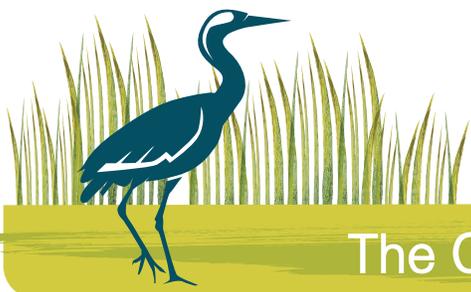
## The Cypress Swamp Questions

**Directions:** Answer the following questions about the Cypress Swamp habitat in the Everglades.

Remember to use your vocabulary glossary if you need help with a vocabulary word.

### Circle the Correct Answer

1. What does the reader understand using the information from the text and the illustration?
  - a. Bald cypress trees are the dominant plant here.
  - b. The cypress swamp is an open, sunny habitat.
  - c. The cypress swamp dries out in the winter.
  - d. Bald cypress trees are the only plants that grow here.
- 2a. Based on the information in the text, with which statement would the author agree?
  - a. The cypress swamp is not a suitable habitat for very many animals.
  - b. The bald cypress tree has a unique feature other trees don't have.
  - c. Birds find it difficult to wade through the cypress swamp.
  - d. The cypress swamp would only be wet part of the year.
- 2b. Which piece of evidence from the text supports your answer in 2a?
  - a. The cypress swamp is a very wet freshwater habitat.
  - b. Bald cypress trees thrive in the still or slow-moving water of the cypress swamp.
  - c. The roots of the bald cypress produce "knees" that reach above the soil and water.
  - d. The cypress swamp is habitat for large wading birds, like the Great Blue Heron.
3. What is the meaning of anchor as it is used in this text?
  - a. To hold firmly in place.
  - b. To weigh down.
  - c. A heavy object.
  - d. To present information.
4. Which sentences best describe airplants in the cypress swamp? Select all that apply.
  - a. Cypress swamps provide food, water, shelter, and space for many kinds of plants and animals.
  - b. One group of interesting plants in the cypress swamp are the epiphytes or airplants.
  - c. Airplants grow on the trunks and branches of the mangrove trees.
  - d. Instead of having their roots in the soil, airplants are wrapped around the cypress tree to keep securely in place.



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## The Cypress Swamp Teacher Guide

### Annually Assessed Benchmarks:

**LAFS.3.RI.1.1** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. (Selectable Text)

**LAFS.3.RI.1.2** Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea. (MC)

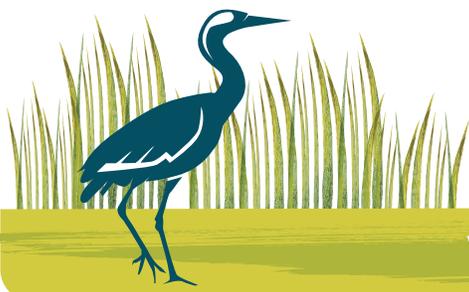
**LAFS.3.RI.2.5** Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently. (MC)

**LAFS.3.RI.3.7** Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur). (MC)

**LAFS.3.RI.3.8** Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence). (Multiselect)

## Answer Key

1. What does the reader understand using the information from the text and the illustration?
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- 2a. Based on the information in the text, with which statement would the author agree?
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- 2b. Which piece of evidence from the text supports your answer in 2a?
  - a. The cypress swamp is a very wet freshwater
  - b. Bald cypress trees thrive in the still or slow-moving water of the cypress swamp.
  - c. **The roots of the bald cypress produce "knees" that reach above the soil and water.**
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  - a. Cypress swamps provide food, water, shelter, and space for many kinds of plants and animals.
  - b. One group of interesting plants in the cypress swamp are the epiphytes or airplants.
  - c. **Airplants grow on the trunks and branches of the mangrove trees.**
  - d. **Instead of having their roots in the soil, airplants are wrapped around the cypress keep securely in place.**



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## Vocabulary Glossary

Use the glossary below to look up the vocabulary words from the habitat fact sheets.

### Vocabulary for Cypress Swamp

Airplants	A plant that gets its water and nutrients from the air and rain and grows usually on another plant
Alligator Hole	A large hole the alligator digs that fills with water in the dry season of the Everglades that other animals use for water
Anchor	To hold something firmly in place
Bald Cypress	A large deciduous tree in U.S. swamps that has flexible flat needles, roundish cones, and sometimes aerial root knees
Cypress Swamp	A habitat that is dominated by bald cypress trees that is a wet habitat year-round
Dominant	Most common in an area
Epiphyte	A plant that gets its water and nutrients from the air and rain and grows usually on another plant
Freshwater	Water that is not salty
Habitat	The place where a plant or animal lives where it can find food, water, shelter, and space
Knee	One of the outgrowths from the roots of bald cypress
Perch	To sit or rest on
Thrive	To grow or develop very well; Flourish
Wetland	An area of land (such as a marsh or swamp) that is covered with shallow water