

Welcome to Cypress Gardens!

We hope that you enjoy the following self-guided activities.

For the best experience, we encourage large groups to split up and rotate through the park and not all visit one area at the same time.

For everyone's safety and enjoyment, please follow the rules (some are listed here, the rest are posted in each area.) Use sensible caution near water and wildlife.

Butterfly House – A large greenhouse filled with flowering plants, live butterflies, birds, and a pond with fish and turtles. An arthropod exhibit and an observation beehive are behind glass, but everything else roams free. You can search for the different stages of the butterfly's life cycle and may even see butterflies feeding and laying eggs, but **please do not touch the butterflies**; it shortens their lives.

Swamparium – Our redeveloped aquarium/reptile center. The tanks and terrariums feature fish, amphibians, and reptiles (including venomous snakes) native to the swamp and nearby waterways. Representative animals from swamps of the world are also displayed such as a South American anaconda and African crocodiles. Identification signs and interpretive exhibits help to answer students' questions.

Heritage Museum – NEW! The history of Cypress Gardens is told through interpretive text and displays of slave artifacts found onsite. Discover the techniques used by the historians and archeologists to tell the story of this former rice plantation and of the many people whose sacrifices and innovations created it.

Walking Trails – The paths that loop through the swamp and gardens are on dikes from the rice-growing era that were used to impound the water. Interpretive and plant identification signs are along the trails. **Please do not pick the flowers**, they are here for everyone to enjoy (including the bees and butterflies.) There are approximately 3 miles of trails total; each loop is less than a mile. The main trail is covered with shell sand, the rest have natural surfaces.

Flat-bottom Boats (Bateaus) – Our smaller boats can be paddled along a marked route through the shallow swamp. A quiet group may even be able to see alligators and other wildlife; however, **feeding and harassment are illegal**. Each boat will hold about 4 – 6 people depending on the boat and the size of the participants. An adult must be aboard each boat and lifejackets are available. (There are a limited number of boats that can be taken out at one time.)

Gift Shop – Toys, snacks, books, stuffed animals, T-shirts, jewelry, and garden décor are available. Prices start at .50 + tax. Most children's merchandise is between \$2-\$5, but some items are much higher. Ten students are permitted inside the shop at a time and an adult chaperone must be with them. Souvenirs are also available in bulk; please make arrangements ahead of time.

Group Picnic Shelters – There are two separated by a play area; each has about eight tables. The guided school group (Mon.-Fri.) usually does not use them until their programs end, so other groups are encouraged to **use them anytime before noon**. Trashcans, recycle bins, and port-a-lets are nearby (the real bathrooms are behind the gift shop.) There is also a small shelter with drink machines next to the gift shop for the public to use.