

January 1960

## Sanctuary lies 'a million years from Miami'

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### Recommended Citation

Dunn, Hampton, "Sanctuary lies 'a million years from Miami'" (1960). *Hampton Dunn Phototouring Florida Collection*. 324.

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# Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



## SANCTUARY LIES 'A MILLION YEARS FROM MIAMI'

By HAMPTON DUNN

IMMOKALEE --- Florida history is where you find it. Some curious souls discover the raw background of this interesting state in the pure wild status of the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary.

This is only a 100 miles or so from the glittering, bustling Gold Coast, but one visitor has exclaimed "I feel I am a million years from Miami!" So be it.

The Sanctuary is at the northern tip of the Big Cypress Swamp in Collier County. The entrance is on State Road 850 near Immokalee. The National Audubon Society back in 1954 rescued this piece of primitive paradise from the timber man's saws by purchasing the site.

The Society now owns some 10,000 acres containing this country's largest remaining stand of virgin bald cypress---said to be the oldest trees in eastern North America. It is the last sizeable remnant of millions of acres of cypress that once thrived throughout the southeast.

They tell you here that many of the trees tower 130 feet into the sky and have a girth of 25 feet. Cores taken from some of these monarchs place their age at 700 years and indicate that they were over two centuries old when Columbus discovered this new world!

Bald cypress gets that name because in the winter it is without leaves. And Corkscrew is named for the twisting, winding stream that roams through the northern end of the swamp.

The previous owners of this virgin strand was the Lee Tidewater Cypress Company. They worked with the Audubon people and the Garden Clubs and other conservation groups in saving the property for nature lovers. In fact, the firm gave one chunk of 640 acres and it's named "J. Arthur Curry Forest" in honor of the president.

