

cypress heartwood lumber to decay, even when exposed to moisture (Roth, 1898; Mattoon, 1915; Betts, 1960), made old, large trees quite valuable. Most of the larger cypress trees were harvested during the cypress logging boom that peaked in the 1920s. The amount of standing timber reached its lowest point in 1933, but has steadily increased during the last 50 years.

Recently, recognition has been given to the importance of cypress swamps for other uses, such as wastewater treatment and wildlife habitat. Do these different uses of swamps conflict? Can rapid regeneration of cypress in harvested swamps be ensured, while allowing simultaneous use for other purposes? Is there enough information available to make sound management prescriptions? To help address these questions, this paper reviews the literature pertaining to the ecology and uses of cypress swamps. Although we draw on information extracted from the entire geographic range of baldcypress and pondcypress, we focus primarily on Florida, where both types are common.

## Ecological Relationships

### Distribution

Baldcypress is found along the Coastal Plain from southern Delaware into southern Florida and west to southeastern Texas (Fig. 1). It occurs north along the Mississippi Valley to southern Illinois. Pondcypress has a more reduced range, and its northern limit is southeastern Virginia. Baldcypress usually grows in flowing water, such as in river swamps and along stream banks and spring runs, as well as along lake shores. Pondcypress is generally confined to ponds and slowly moving water. Under extreme nutrient limitation, such as on the marl soils common in the Everglades and on

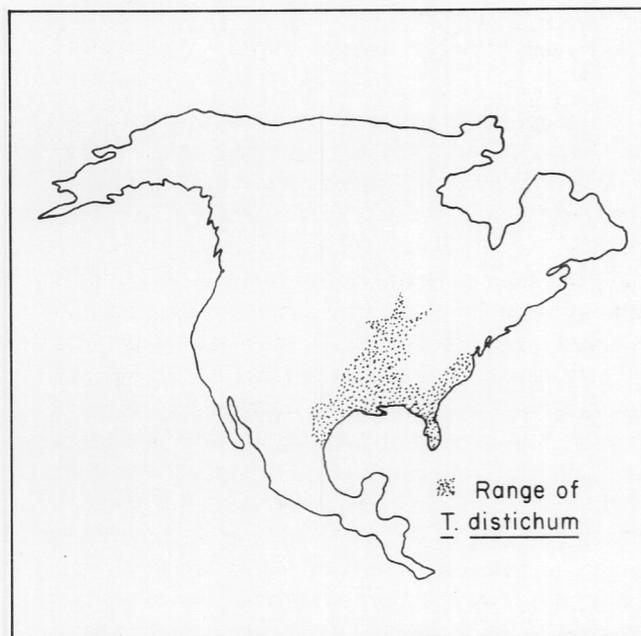


Fig. 1. Distribution of baldcypress and pondcypress in North America.

clay soils in the Florida Panhandle, growth is very slow, and the stunted pondcypress trees characteristic of these conditions are often called dwarf cypress or hatrack cypress.

The differences between pondcypress and baldcypress may be distinct at some sites but cloudy at others. We regard them as sibling species, which are populations that differ in many characteristics but can still interbreed. They overlap extensively, intergrading along a continuum. Trees at opposite ends of this continuum grow in different sites and at different rates (Table 1). The two often grow together, and characteristics of both types are occasionally found on the same tree.

Table 1. Important differences in characteristics of pondcypress and baldcypress

Characteristics	Baldcypress	Pondcypress
<u>Stand</u>		
Stern density	Low	High
Rate of average water flow	Moderate	Slow to stagnant
Nutrient availability	High	Low
Fire frequency	Rare	Occasional
<u>Individual tree</u>		
Growth rate	Fast	Slow
Maximum diameter	Large	Small
Bark	Thin, tight	Thick, shaggy