

Oak Hammock

In the absence of fire, hardwoods can outcompete the pines of the flatwoods. This replacement of pines with oaks is an example of *habitat succession*.

The oak branches often drip with long trusses of a native bromeliad called Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*). This epiphyte related to pineapple does not harm the tree, as many people wrongly believe.

The plant layer growing under the canopy of trees (understory) features shrubs such as palmetto, wax myrtle, St. John's wort and lyonia. These plants provide food and shelter for many species of wildlife.

Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*)



Live oak leaves are small and leathery. When they fall, they create a rich leaf-litter layer in the forest.



Live oak boughs support several of our native epiphytes like resurrection fern (*Polypodium polypodioides*) and the Tampa orchid (*Encyclia tampensis*).