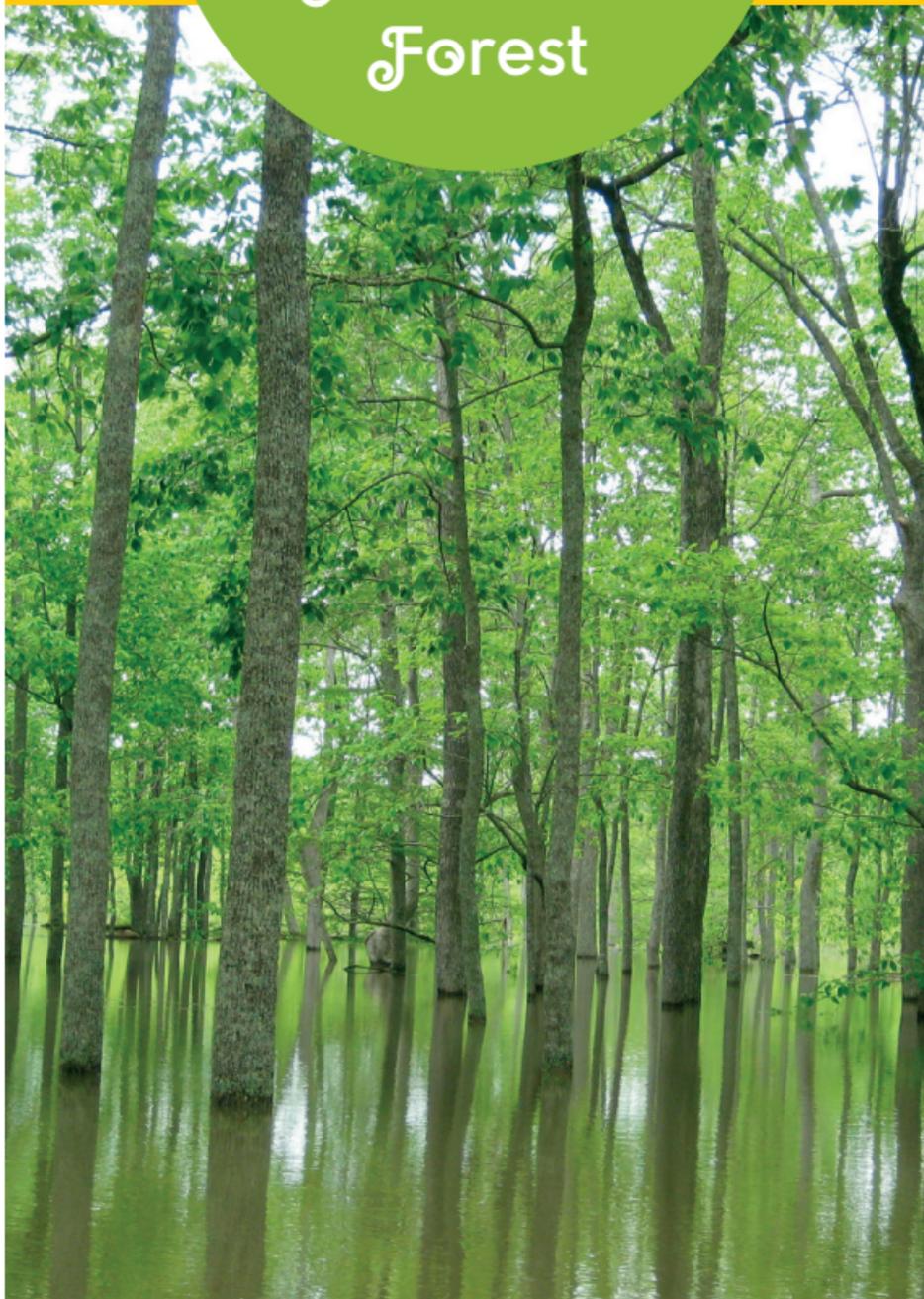




The Return of
Earth's Greatest
Bottomland
Hardwood
Forest



Science
You Can
Use!

The Return of Earth's Greatest Bottomland Hardwood Forest

Why Should You Care About the Bottomland Hardwood Forest?

The Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley (LMAV), Earth's greatest bottomland hardwood forest, is the historic floodplain and valley of the lower Mississippi River. It is the most significant winter habitat area for mallard ducks in North America. The LMAV once covered 24.7 million acres of forested wetlands interspersed with cypress-tupelo swamps, scrub-shrub wetlands, swamps, and marshes. This vast complex of wetlands, through which nearly 40 percent of North America drains, provides wetland functions and wildlife values of incalculable worth.

Did You Know?

The LMAV landscape has changed dramatically during the last 200 years, with the most rapid change occurring within the last 75 years. Today, only about 20 percent of the original forest remains in the LMAV. The rest has been converted to agriculture.

What Are Scientists Doing to Help?

The LMAV Reforestation project, led by the Forest Service, is reforesting at least one million acres throughout Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri and Illinois. This region is a vital habitat for migratory birds and numerous plant and animal species. The project will also help to address climate change by holding more carbon on Earth.

Take Action!

The LMAV is one of the best habitats in North America for migrating waterfowl (ducks and geese). No matter where you live, however, you can help migrating waterfowl. One of the most important things you can do may seem counter-intuitive. Never feed waterfowl! Artificial feeding results in poor nutrition, water pollution, and concentrated areas where waterfowl both eat and defecate, causing disease. Artificial feeding can also delay migration.



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