

Walk On the Wild Side



You Can Help Save The Cypress Forest

(NAPSA)—Gardening season is marked for many by hauling and spreading bags of orange-red cypress mulch. But few gardeners know where this mulch comes from and its true cost to wildlife.



Photo credit USFWS

The practice of using cypress mulch for landscaping may help to threaten cypress forests.

Cypress trees grow in wildlife-rich wetlands in the southern United States, home to the newly rediscovered and endangered ivory-billed woodpecker, as well as owls, herons, deer and other wildlife.

Cypress trees can live for up to 1,500 years and grow to 150 feet tall and 25 feet in girth. However, fewer and fewer are left. That's because cypress is being clear-cut from wetlands to make mulch and the trees are not being replanted.

Fortunately, there are alternatives that make it possible to do the best for both your flowers and to protect the forests for future generations. For example, recycled yard waste, pine bark and pine straw can make great mulch and at the same time offer hope to the wildlife living in cypress forests by reducing the demand for cypress mulch.

For more information, contact National Wildlife Federation at www.nwf.org.