

Visit [https://youtu.be/3LC\\_KhleCTg](https://youtu.be/3LC_KhleCTg) to take the virtual field trip of two Silver River Ecosystems. While watching, fill out the student journal below. You may need to pause the video while you record your responses.

### ANSWER KEY

**Key Terms**

*Ecosystem*-is a community of living things that interact with each other and with their environment.

*Characteristics*-include the parts of plants and animals, their behaviors, and their life cycle variations.

1. What are some of the plants and animals you would expect to find at Silver Springs State Park?

*Answers will vary*

2. Describe the river ecosystem.

*The river is 5 miles of fresh water coming from the aquifer at Silver Springs.*

3. For each organism found in the river, name one characteristics and how that characteristic helps it survive.

| Organism          | Characteristics                                    | How it helps it survive                     |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Alligator         | <i>Eyes and nose above water, camouflage color</i> | <i>Sneak up on prey</i>                     |
| Cormorant         | <i>Hooked beak, fast swimmer</i>                   | <i>Grab fish, catch faster fish</i>         |
| Anhinga           | <i>Pointy Beak, drying off wings</i>               | <i>Spear fish, keep warm and fly better</i> |
| Bald Cypress Tree | <i>Cypress knees</i>                               | <i>support</i>                              |

4. Which animal on the river migrates and why?

*The manatee migrates to find warmer water in the winter. (Note: not all manatees migrate, some choose to live in warm water year-round)*

5. Why is the swamp beneficial?

*The swamp provides a home to plants and animals, filters the water, and provides flood control.*

6. Describe the sandhill ecosystem.

*The sandhill is dry, open and sunny. It also burns frequently.*

7. For each sandhill organism listed below, name one of its characteristics and how that characteristic helps it survive.

| Organism            | Characteristic                                  | How it helps it survive                                |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Whitetail Deer      | <i>Freeze when they spot danger, browser</i>    | <i>Blend in with surrounding, eat plants</i>           |
| Turkey              | <i>Male strut, can fly</i>                      | <i>Attract female/show dominance, escape danger</i>    |
| Gopher tortoise     | <i>Shoveled shaped front feet to dig burrow</i> | <i>Climate control, protection from fire</i>           |
| Long leaf pine tree | <i>Deep roots, thick bark, cones</i>            | <i>Reach water, protection from fire, reproduction</i> |

8. Describe one way that humans have had an effect on either the river ecosystem or the sandhill ecosystem.

*-Monkey-eat more than fair share, eat bird eggs, carry Herpes B, humans feed them making them lose their fear of humans.*  
*-Wild Hogs-compete with deer turkey squirrel for food, eat turtle and tortoise eggs and young mammals, also young trees/seedlings making restoration difficult.*  
*-Algae-fertilizers find way into aquifer and then into river, algae grows and uses too much oxygen, blocks sunlight, releases co2. Makes river unhealthy.*  
*-Stores and Parking lots-habitat loss as humans compete for resources.*

9. Describe at least one characteristics for each organism below and how it helps them survive.

| Organism              | Characteristic           | How it helps it survive                       |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Prickly Pear Cactus   | <i>Spines</i>            | <i>Protection from predators</i>              |
|                       | <i>Stems Store Water</i> | <i>Has plenty of water during dry seasons</i> |
| Eastern Spotted Skunk | <i>Colorful Flowers</i>  | <i>Attract pollinators</i>                    |
|                       | <i>Can climb trees</i>   | <i>Protection from predators</i>              |

10. Describe how humans have had an effect on the red cockaded woodpecker

*Humans have destroyed the habitat of the red cockaded woodpecker by harvesting old growth long-leaf pine trees for lumber.*

11. Read the article found here: <https://tinyurl.com/rcyck5h> . After reading the article, explain how are humans helping the Red Cockaded Woodpecker recover?

*Scientists have created 40 artificial cavities in trees and relocated 9 young woodpeckers to those trees to breed and start a new population in the area.*

12. Describe how do your actions have an effect on your local ecosystem?

*Answers will vary.*