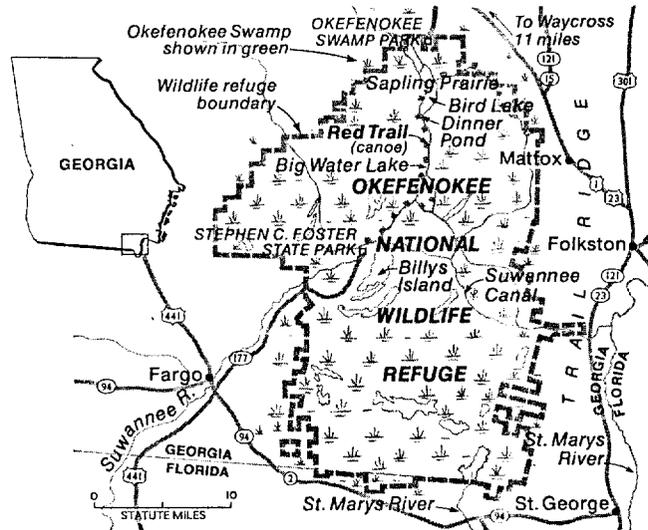


32° 20' 0"



Okefenokee, the Magical Swamp

THERE IS SOMETHING wonderfully elemental, marvelously primeval about bog, marsh, or swamp. The waters, the muck, the rushes and cattails fairly teem with life from the lowest forms on up the scale of evolution. Indeed it was in swamps, was it not, that life first emerged from the sea to colonize the land? And thus it was with an atavistic feeling of coming home that I stepped into Clay Purvis's canoe at the northern entrance to Okefenokee Swamp on a cold, clear December morning.

Clay, a quick-moving, slightly built naturalist-guide for Okefenokee Swamp Park, has spent a good part of his 22 years exploring the inner recesses of Okefenokee.

Like a vast saucer of tea, Okefenokee spills its dark waters across 680 square miles of southeast Georgia and northern Florida. Here Spanish moss-draped cypress, open-marsh "prairies," and piny islands offer refuge to wildlife and serenity to man.

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