



### **Submitted stories:**

#### [Rogard Ross](#)

I've climbed trees for the joy of ascending into nature.

#### [Ann McDowell](#)

I spent half my childhood up in a tree - a huge white oak with steps nailed on. And a smaller maple to ride out windy storms.

#### [Stuart McCausland](#)

Both my parents are from Maine, so we spent several summers up there when I was a kid. I had read Robert Frost's poem "Swinging Birches" and came to agree that "One could do worse than be a swinger of birches." I showed my own son how to climb up the right-sized tree and then kick out and ride it down until feet touched ground. I was happy that he passed this skill to his own children. I hope there will still be trees to swing when my great-grandchildren come of age.

Peter Navin

A cypress on Lake Drummond. We call it the Chapel, because when the lake level is right one can kayak inside, and because we skipped church a few times to go there. If you look close on the left side, part of the tree resembles a lion.



Ann Farley

**"To really feel a forest canopy you must use different senses, the most useful one being imagination."**

**— adapted from Joan Maloof**

**In our region, trees carry big personalities and inspire imaginings. They also provide boundless play, as you know if you ever held back foes in a tree fort. The North End's "spider tree" splays its limbs like a proud arthropod. Courtland boasts "Big Mamma" a gargantuan bald cypress, possibly 2000 years old. But a hands down favorite are those dripping with Spanish moss, especially in First Landing State Park, the northernmost area where Spanish moss thrives.**

**With its silvery garlands swaying in the breeze, First Landing's Spanish moss groves have served through history and evoke deep-set feelings. Native Americans harvested Spanish moss for bedding and diapers--ouch. Henry Ford even stuffed Model T seats with it. Visitors at First Landing have described these living elements of the Antebellum South as "ethereal" and "beautiful and eerie at the same time.**

