

Northern Hardwood Forests

Ecoregions

- Allegheny Mountains
- Ridge and Valley
- Western Allegheny Plateau
- Cumberland Mountains

Description

Northern hardwood forest accounts for 6.1% of all state area. Northern hardwood forests are upland deciduous and mixed deciduous-evergreen forests at high elevations. Common deciduous tree species in natural forests include Sugar Maple, Red Maple, American Beech, Yellow Birch, Sweet Birch, Black Cherry, Red Oak, Cucumber-tree, and White Ash. Some stands may include or be dominated by Eastern Hemlock. Red Spruce is often present but is not abundant in the tree canopy. Common shrubs include Striped Maple and Mountain Holly. The herb layer is characterized by species adapted to short, cool growing seasons, including Intermediate Woodfern, New York Fern, Mountain Wood Sorrel, and Canada Mayflower. This upland forest ecosystem may include forest seeps which are too small to map as a separate wetland habitat. Semi-natural forests within this map class often have canopy composition similar to natural forests, or may be dominated by a single species such as Black Cherry or Red Maple. The map class may also include plantations of Red Pine, Eastern White Pine, Norway Spruce, and Red Spruce.

Plant communities

This forest type supports a number of rare plant communities, as identified in the table below.

Common Name	G-Rank
Balsam Fir - Black Ash Swamp	G1
Natural Red Pine Forest	G1
Calcareous Prairie	G1G2
Balsam Fir - Oatgrass Swamp	G2
Balsam Fir - Winterberry Swamp	G2
Calcareous Shale Prairie Woodland	G2
Cranberry - Beakrush Peatland	G2
High-Elevation Boulderfield Forest	G2
Mountain Laurel - Black Huckleberry Heath Barren	G2
Nodding Sedge - Prickly Bog Sedge Seep	G2
Red Maple - Black Gum / Peatmoss Swamp	G2
Red Maple - White Oak Forest Seep	G2
Red Spruce - Southern Mountain Cranberry Swamp	G2
Red Spruce – Yellow Birch Forest	G2
Red Spruce / Heath Rocky Woodland	G2
Red Spruce / Southern Mountain Cranberry Forest	G2
High Elevation Sandstone Boulderfield	G2?
Red Spruce - Hemlock / Rhododendron Swamp	G2?

Species

This forest type supports several known Species of Greatest Conservation Need, as identified in the table below.

Scientific Name	Common Name	G-Rank
<i>Calymmaria virginica</i>	A Hahniid Spider	G1
<i>Triodopsis rugosa</i>	Buttressed Threetooth	G1
<i>Triodopsis platysayoides</i>	Flat-spined Threetooth	G1
<i>Mesomphix sp. 1</i>	Pygmy Button	G1
<i>Platanthera shriveri</i>	Shriver's Frilly Orchid	G1
<i>Glyphyalinia sp. 1</i>	West Virginia Glyph	G1
<i>Pycnanthemum clinopodioides</i>	Basil Mountainmint	G1G2
<i>Plethodon nettingi</i>	Cheat Mountain Salamander	G1G2
<i>Pyrgus wyandot</i>	Appalachian Grizzled Skipper	G1G2Q
<i>Pseudosinella meganporteri</i>	A Springtail	G2
<i>Stenotrema simile</i>	Bear Creek Slitmouth	G2
<i>Corallorhiza bentleyi</i>	Bentley's Coralroot	G2
<i>Ptilimnium nodosum</i>	Harperella	G2
<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Indiana Bat	G2
<i>Bombus affinis</i>	Rusty-patched Bumble Bee	G2
<i>Arabis serotina</i>	Shale Barren Rockcress	G2
<i>Anthrobia coylei</i>	A Sheetweb Weaver	G2?
<i>Paxistima canbyi</i>	Canby's Mountain-lover	G2?