

Pine-Oak Rocky Woodlands

Ecoregions

- Allegheny Mountains
- Ridge and Valley
- Cumberland Mountains

Description

Pine-oak rocky woodland accounts for 0.5% of all state area. Pine-oak rocky woodlands are upland evergreen and mixed evergreen-deciduous woodlands and forests in hot, very dry topographic positions. Soils are usually shallow, rocky, coarse textured and highly acidic. This habitat type is confined to the eastern counties where a dry climate is produced by the rain shadow on the lee side of the Allegheny Mountains. Stands are often small patches on rocky summits, outcrops, and cliffs. Habitats include edaphic pine stands on extremely dry sites such as cliff tops, and successional pine stands which follow fire on deeper soils. Dominant pines which comprise distinct subtypes include Pitch Pine, Table Mountain Pine, Virginia Pine, and Red Pine. Oaks are sometimes codominant. Trees are often stunted and stand physiognomy is sometimes dwarf forest with canopy less than 16 feet tall. The understories are usually dominated by dense heath shrubs including Mountain Laurel, blueberries, and Black Huckleberry. The herb layer is typically sparse and has low diversity. This habitat type also includes sandstone glades with high exposure of bedrock pavement with scattered, dwarfed trees, including pines and Eastern Red Cedar.

Plant communities

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

Common Name	G-Rank
Natural Red Pine Forest	G1
Calcareous Shale Prairie Woodland	G2
Mountain Laurel - Black Huckleberry Heath Barren	G2
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Red Spruce / Heath Rocky Woodland	G2
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High Elevation Sandstone Boulderfield	G2?
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Species

This forest type supports multiple 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 platysayoides</i>	Flat-spined Threetooth	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>Stachys eplingii</i>	Epling's Hedge-nettle	G1G2
<i>Pyrgus wyandot</i>	Appalachian Grizzled Skipper	G1G2Q
<i>Allium oxiphilum</i>	Nodding Onion	G2
<i>Bombus affinis</i>	Rusty-patched Bumble Bee	G2
<i>Arabis serotina</i>	Shale Barren Rockcress	G2
<i>Paxistima canbyi</i>	Canby's Mountain-lover	G2?