

Minnesota's List of Natural Communities

Since its inception, the Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program has been gathering information on Minnesota's natural communities. This information has been used in the classification of the native plant communities into the *Types*, *Subtypes*, and *Sections* shown in the following list. This classification of recurrent natural units of Minnesota's landscape considers vegetation, topography, hydrology, landforms, substrates, soils, and natural disturbance regimes. Of these features, vascular vegetation is weighed most heavily in determination of native plant community Types. Each Type can be further divided into Subtypes, which describe variation within a native plant community Type that is related to abiotic features of the environment, such as substrate composition. Types may also be divided into sections, based on consistent geographic variation in a native plant community Type.

This classification presented here has been used by the Minnesota County Biological Survey since its inception in 1987. **A re-evaluation of the classification is in process in 1999-2000 to incorporate sampling data collected to date.** A revised classification is anticipated on Jan 1, 2001.

Community Name (Type (Section) Subtype)

DECIDUOUS FOREST

- Aspen Forest
- Aspen-birch Forest
- Aspen-birch Forest Northern Hardwoods Subtype
- Aspen-birch Forest Spruce-fir Subtype
- Lowland Hardwood Forest
- Maple-basswood Forest (Big Woods)
- Maple-basswood Forest (East Central)
- Maple-basswood Forest (Northern)
- Maple-basswood Forest (Southeast)
- Maple-basswood Forest (West Central)
- Northern Hardwood Forest (Northern)
- Northern Hardwood Forest (Southeast)
- Oak Forest (Big Woods)
- Oak Forest (Big Woods) Dry Subtype
- Oak Forest (Big Woods) Mesic Subtype
- Oak Forest (Central)
- Oak Forest (Central) Dry Subtype
- Oak Forest (Central) Mesic Subtype
- Oak Forest (Northeast)
- Oak Forest (Northeast) Red Maple Subtype
- Oak Forest (Northwest)
- Oak Forest (Northwest) Dry Subtype

Oak Forest (Northwest) Mesic Subtype
Oak Forest (Southeast)
Oak Forest (Southeast) Dry Subtype
Oak Forest (Southeast) Mesic Subtype
Paper Birch Forest
Paper Birch Forest Northern Hardwoods Subtype
Paper Birch Forest Spruce-fir Subtype

CONIFEROUS FOREST

Black Spruce-feathermoss Forest
Jack Pine Forest (Central Outwash Plain)
Jack Pine Forest (Central Outwash Plain) Blueberry Subtype
Jack Pine Forest (Central Outwash Plain) Hazel Subtype
Jack Pine Forest (Northeast)
Jack Pine Forest (Northeast) Jack Pine-black Spruce Subtype
Jack Pine Forest (Northeast) Jack Pine-fir Subtype
Jack Pine Forest (Northeast) Jack Pine-oak Subtype
Jack Pine Forest (Northwest)
Red Pine Forest
Spruce-fir Forest
Spruce-fir Forest Fir-birch Subtype
Spruce-fir Forest White Spruce-balsam Fir Subtype
Upland White Cedar Forest
Upland White Cedar Forest (Lake Superior)
Upland White Cedar Forest (Lake Superior) Mesic Subtype
Upland White Cedar Forest (Lake Superior) Wet-mesic Subtype
Upland White Cedar Forest (Northern)
Upland White Cedar Forest (Northern) Mesic Subtype
Upland White Cedar Forest (Northern) Wet-mesic Subtype
Upland White Cedar Forest (Southeast)
White Pine Forest (Central)
White Pine Forest (Northeast)
White Pine Forest (Southeast)

MIXED CONIFEROUS-DECIDUOUS FOREST

Boreal Hardwood-conifer Forest
Mixed Pine-hardwood Forest
Northern Hardwood-conifer Forest (Northern)
Northern Hardwood-conifer Forest (Northern) Y.birch-w.cedar
Northern Hardwood-conifer Forest (Southeast)
White Pine-hardwood Forest (North Central)
White Pine-hardwood Forest (Southeast)

White Pine-hardwood Forest (Southeast) Dry Subtype
White Pine-hardwood Forest (Southeast) Mesic Subtype

DECIDUOUS WOODLAND

Aspen Woodland
Oak Woodland-brushland (Big Woods)
Oak Woodland-brushland (Central)
Oak Woodland-brushland (Northwest)
Oak Woodland-brushland (Southeast)

DECIDUOUS SAVANNA

Aspen Openings
Aspen Openings Sand-gravel Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Central)
Dry Oak Savanna (Central) Barrens Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Central) Hill Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Central) Sand-gravel Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Northwest)
Dry Oak Savanna (Northwest) Barrens Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Northwest) Hill Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Northwest) Sand-gravel Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Southeast)
Dry Oak Savanna (Southeast) Barrens Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Southeast) Hill Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Southeast) Sand-gravel Subtype
Dry Oak Savanna (Southwest)
Dry Oak Savanna (Southwest) Hill Subtype
Mesic Oak Savanna (Central)
Mesic Oak Savanna (Northwest)
Mesic Oak Savanna (Southeast)
Mesic Oak Savanna (Southwest)

CONIFEROUS WOODLAND

Jack Pine Woodland
Northern Conifer Woodland

CONIFEROUS SAVANNA

Jack Pine Barrens
Northern Conifer Scrubland

UPLAND BRUSH-PRAIRIE

Mesic Brush Prairie

Mesic Brush Prairie Sand-gravel Subtype

UPLAND PRAIRIE

Dry Prairie (Central)
Dry Prairie (Central) Barrens Subtype
Dry Prairie (Central) Hill Subtype
Dry Prairie (Central) Sand-gravel Subtype
Dry Prairie (Northwest)
Dry Prairie (Northwest) Barrens Subtype
Dry Prairie (Northwest) Hill Subtype
Dry Prairie (Northwest) Sand-gravel Subtype
Dry Prairie (Southeast)
Dry Prairie (Southeast) Barrens Subtype
Dry Prairie (Southeast) Bedrock Bluff Subtype
Dry Prairie (Southeast) Hill Subtype
Dry Prairie (Southeast) Sand-gravel Subtype
Dry Prairie (Southwest)
Dry Prairie (Southwest) Hill Subtype
Dry Prairie (Southwest) Sand-gravel Subtype
Mesic Prairie (Central)
Mesic Prairie (Northwest)
Mesic Prairie (Southeast)
Mesic Prairie (Southeast) Carbonate Bedrock Subtype
Mesic Prairie (Southwest)
Mesic Prairie (Southwest) Crystalline Bedrock Subtype

BOG

Black Spruce Bog
Black Spruce Bog Intermediate Subtype
Black Spruce Bog Raised Subtype
Open Sphagnum Bog
Open Sphagnum Bog Intermediate Subtype
Open Sphagnum Bog Raised Subtype
Open Sphagnum Bog Schlenke Subtype

FLOODPLAIN FOREST

Floodplain Forest
Floodplain Forest Silver Maple Subtype
Floodplain Forest Swamp White Oak Subtype

HARDWOOD SWAMP FOREST

Black Ash Swamp

Black Ash Swamp Seepage Subtype
Mixed Hardwood Swamp
Mixed Hardwood Swamp Seepage Subtype

CONIFER SWAMP FOREST

Black Spruce Swamp
Tamarack Swamp
Tamarack Swamp Minerotrophic Subtype
Tamarack Swamp Seepage Subtype
Tamarack Swamp Sphagnum Subtype
White Cedar Swamp
White Cedar Swamp Seepage Subtype

SHRUB SWAMP

Alder Swamp
Shrub Swamp Seepage Subtype
Shrub Swamp Unknown/unresolved Subtype
Willow Swamp

EMERGENT MARSH

Cattail Marsh
Mixed Emergent Marsh (Forest)
Mixed Emergent Marsh (Prairie)

WET MEADOW/FEN

Calcareous Seepage Fen (Central) Prairie Subtype
Calcareous Seepage Fen (Northwest) Prairie Subtype
Calcareous Seepage Fen (Southeast) Prairie Subtype
Calcareous Seepage Fen (Southwest) Prairie Subtype
Calcareous Seepage Fen Boreal Subtype
Poor Fen
Poor Fen Scrub Tamarack Subtype
Poor Fen Sedge Subtype
Poor Fen Shrub Subtype
Rich Fen (Boreal)
Rich Fen (Boreal) Floating-mat Subtype
Rich Fen (Boreal) Sedge Subtype
Rich Fen (Boreal) Shrub Subtype
Rich Fen (Transition)
Rich Fen (Transition) Floating-mat Subtype
Rich Fen (Transition) Sedge Subtype

Rich Fen (Transition) Shrub Subtype
Seepage Meadow
Wet Brush Prairie
Wet Brush Prairie Seepage Subtype
Wet Meadow
Wet Meadow Shrub Subtype
Wet Prairie (Central)
Wet Prairie (Central) Seepage Subtype
Wet Prairie (Northwest)
Wet Prairie (Northwest) Saline Subtype
Wet Prairie (Northwest) Seepage Subtype
Wet Prairie (Southeast)
Wet Prairie (Southwest)
Wet Prairie (Southwest) Saline Subtype

PRIMARY COMMUNITY

Dry Cliff (Northeast)
Dry Cliff (Southeast)
Lake Beach (Inland)
Lake Beach (Inland) Bedrock Subtype
Lake Beach (Inland) Gravel-cobble Subtype
Lake Beach (Inland) Mud Subtype
Lake Beach (Inland) Sand Subtype
Lake Beach (Lake Superior)
Lake Beach (Lake Superior) Bedrock Subtype
Lake Beach (Lake Superior) Gravel-cobble Subtype
Lake Beach (Lake Superior) Sand Subtype
Moist Cliff (Northeast)
Moist Cliff (Southeast)
Moist Cliff (Southeast) Moderate Subtype
Mud Flat
Mud Flat Saline Subtype
River Beach
River Beach Bedrock Subtype
River Beach Gravel-cobble Subtype
River Beach Sand Subtype
Rock Outcrop (Central)
Rock Outcrop (Northeast)
Rock Outcrop (Southwest)
Talus Slope
Talus Slope Algific Subtype

AQUATIC RIVER COMMUNITY

River Bed

AQUATIC LAKE COMMUNITY

Lake Bed