

High-Terrace Floodplain Forest

MNHESP State Rank: S2

PHYSICAL

Hydrology Temporarily flooded.

Soil Mineral soils with redoximorphic features within 60 cm (24 in) of the surface.

Topography Relatively level to undulating terrain, sometimes with evident floodwater channels cutting through the forest.

Elevation Occurring at 294 m (965 ft) in the primary study area.

Form Rich, forested community along high banks of medium to large rivers that receives floodwater flows during high-water events.

DOMINANT PLANT SPECIES¹

Canopy Basswood, white ash, sugar maple, and black cherry.

Subcanopy American hornbeam.

Shrubs Choke cherry, common buckthorn, Morrow's honeysuckle, and Japanese barberry.

Characteristics Shrub layer generally sparse except for dense colonies of non-native species (latter three species).

Herbs Wild leek, spring beauty, trout lily, Dutchman's breeches, white snakeroot, zig-zag goldenrod, ostrich fern, jumpseed, long-beaked sedge, bottlebrush grass, and pubescent sedge.

Characteristics Dominated by spring ephemerals (first four herbs listed above) during the early season then changing dramatically with emergence of later-appearing species.

Climbing Plants Largely absent.

Bryophytes Largely absent.

¹ Scientific names provided in Attachment F.



Notes Spring ephemeral species appearing prior to leaf emergence of canopy species and complete most of life cycle by early summer and disappear soon after (dieing back to underground storage organs). Non-native woody shrubs are prevalent in portions of this community.

COMMON ANIMAL SPECIES²

Mammals Gray squirrel and white-tailed deer.

Birds Wood thrush, veery, blue-headed vireo, black-capped chickadee, American crow, and ovenbird.

Herpetiles Wood frog, spotted salamander, and northern leopard frog.

Fish Absent.

Notes Vernal pools located in this community were used by breeding amphibians (in vernal pools).

CONSERVATION, DISTRIBUTION, AND NOTES

MNHESP State Rank³ S2.

Rare Species⁴ Early blue cohosh (S?), black maple (S3), and downy wild-rye (S2).

² Scientific names provided in Attachment C.

³ State rank follows Swain and Kearsley 2000.

⁴ State rank and status follow MNHESP 1999.

Distribution in MA Found throughout much of Massachusetts, though with the highest concentrations in the western half of the state.

Distribution in the Study Area Large stands limited to a stretch of river upstream of the Pittsfield Waste Water Treatment Plant outfall, though small inclusions infrequently found in Transitional Floodplain Forests in upper half of primary study area.

Variation None observed.

Synonyms Palustrine Forested (Cowardin *et al.* 1979); Floodplain Forest (Weatherbee and Crow 1992).

REFERENCES

- Cowardin, L.M., V. Carter, F.C. Golet, and E.T. LaRoe. 1979. Classification of Wetlands and Deep Water Habitats of the United States. U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. 1999. Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas: 2000-2001 Edition. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Westborough, MA, USA.
- Swain, P.C., and J.B. Kearsley. 2000. Classification of the Natural Communities of Massachusetts. Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, Westborough, MA, USA.
- Weatherbee, P.B., and G.E. Crow. 1992. Natural plant communities of Berkshire County, Massachusetts. *Rhodora* 94:171-209.

