

Red Maple Swamp

MNHESP State Rank: S5

PHYSICAL

Hydrology Seasonally flooded and saturated for part of the growing season.

Soil Mineral soils with redoximorphic features, histic epipedons rarely present.

Topography Generally flat or undulating surface.

Elevation Mostly at 296 – 298 m (971 – 978 ft) in primary study area.

Form Closed canopy, forested landscape located in drainage basins, near seepage discharges on slopes, and adjacent to streams. Usually located further from river than transitional floodplain forest.

DOMINANT PLANT SPECIES¹

Canopy Red maple, swamp white oak, gray birch, and black cherry.

Characteristics Trees often 30 – 50 cm (12 – 20 in) diameter. Canopy height 13 – 20 m (43 – 66 ft) tall. Trees 25 – 60 years old.

Subcanopy Red maple and gray birch.

Characteristics Usually poorly developed and consisting of small trees.

Shrubs Northern arrowwood, winterberry, swamp dewberry, and silky dogwood.

Characteristics Variable in density and sometimes forming dense thickets.

Herbs Royal fern, cinnamon fern, New York fern, interrupted fern, drooping wood-reed, and calico aster.

Characteristics Ferns often dense, except in low, wet areas.



Climbing Plants Carrion flower.

Bryophytes Limited in distribution, *sphagnum* in wet depressions.

COMMON ANIMAL SPECIES²

Mammals White-footed mouse, northern short-tailed shrew, southern red-backed vole.

Birds Yellow-breasted sapsucker, northern waterthrush, eastern wood pewee, veery, and chestnut-sided warbler.

Herpetiles Wood frog, spotted salamander, snapping turtle, and eastern garter snake.

Fish Absent.

Notes Many herpetiles use vernal pools within this community. Predatory reptiles and great blue herons also feed in the vernal pools.

¹ Scientific names provided in Attachment F.

² Scientific names provided in Attachment C.

CONSERVATION, DISTRIBUTION, AND NOTES

MNHESP State Rank³ S5.

Rare Species⁴ Crooked-stemmed aster (S3), Jefferson Salamander (SC), and northern four-toed salamander (SC).

Distribution in MA Primarily known from the eastern and central portion of the state.

Distribution in the Study Area Major occurrences are downstream of the Pittsfield Waster Water Treatment Plant outfall and upstream of Yokum Brook confluence.

Variation Those swamps occurring near the Housatonic River channel are transitional to alluvial red maple swamps, a community known from eastern Massachusetts.

Synonyms Palustrine Forested (Cowardin *et al.* 1979); Circumneutral hardwood swamp (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.

³ State rank follows Swain and Kearsley 2000.

⁴ State rank and status follow MNHESP 1998.

