

Open Headland

State Rank S4

Community Description

In this community patchy herbaceous vegetation of seaside goldenrod, goosetongue, bluebell, and yarrow covers coastline bedrock. Overall vegetation cover is usually 10-35% but may be locally more extensive. Crowberry or creeping juniper may be present, but they do not cover extensive areas. Downeast of Acadia National Park, species of the Canadian Maritimes may be present, such as roseroot, beachhead iris, marsh-felwort, and glabrous knotted pearlwort. The primary bryoids are crustose lichens on the rock, including the lime-green map lichen and bright orange Xanthoria lichen. Where the forest edge abuts, cover is more dense, and often includes shrubs such as meadowsweet, currants, or small white spruce.



Nova Scotia False-foxglove

Soil and Site Characteristics

Sites occur on bedrock areas exposed to salt spray and storm tides, typically between the high tide line and the upland forest. Sites are flat to sloping, and plants grow in the fissures of the rock or in small depressions with almost no soil.

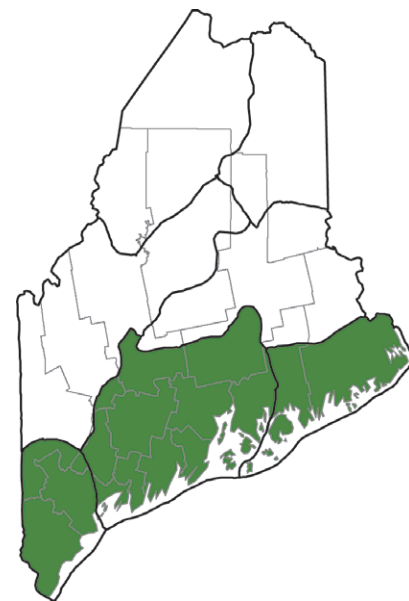
Diagnostics

Sparse herb dominated vegetation occurs on oceanside bedrock.

Similar Types

Crowberry - Bayberry Headlands share many species, but these have more vegetation (usually >50% total cover and >25% shrub or dwarf shrub cover)

Location Map



- Community is known from this Ecoregion
- Community may occur in this Ecoregion
- Bailey's Ecoregion
- County



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and are dominated by shrubs rather than herbs. Rose - Bayberry Maritime Shrublands are dominated by shrubs >1 m tall.

Conservation, Wildlife, and Management Considerations

This type is well distributed along the Maine coast. Many sites are on public lands or private conservation lands. Some areas receive moderate to heavy foot traffic. To the degree that users remain on the bare rock, impacts can be minimal.

Rocky headland communities, especially those that occur on uninhabited islands, may provide nesting habitat for some oceanic bird species.

Distribution

Coastwide, largest occurrences east of Penobscot Bay. Extends into the Canadian Maritimes and south to Massachusetts (Laurentian Mixed Forest Province and Eastern Broadleaf Forest Province).

Landscape Pattern: Small Patch

Characteristic Plants

These plants are frequently found in this community type. Those with an asterisk are often diagnostic of this community.

Herb

Bluebell
Bluejoint grass
Gall of the earth
Goosetongue
Red fescue
Roseroot*
Seaside goldenrod*
Yarrow

Associated Rare Plants

Birds-eye primrose
Blinks
Marsh-felwort
Nova Scotia false-foxglove

Examples on Conservation Lands You Can Visit

- Acadia National Park - Hancock Co.
- Cutler Public Lands - Washington Co.
- Great Wass Island Preserve - Washington Co.
- Petit Manan National Wildlife Refuge - Washington Co.
- Quoddy Head State Park - Washington Co.