

White Pine Forest

State Rank S5 very well drained), often with a slowly decomposing duff layer of conifer needles. Soils are generally shallow (<40 cm) and moderately acidic (pH 5.0-6.0). These forests are usually at low elevations (<900') on slopes or coarse-textured flats.

Community Description

This is a closed canopy forest type in which white pine is dominant. Occasionally red spruce, red pine, hemlock, or (coastally) northern white cedar may be nearly co-dominant with the white pine; in fact, because the pine trees tend to be larger and the other trees smaller, the smaller trees may be more numerous. In many of these forests, the dense and strongly coniferous canopy limits understory growth. Shrub cover is rarely >20% and the herb layer rarely exceeds 30%. The herb layer can include a spotty mixture of dwarf shrubs such as lowbush blueberry, forbs, or ferns, but graminoids are very uncommon. Canada mayflower is frequent. The ground layer is mostly conifer litter, with bryoid cover <25%; large hair-cap moss and red-stemmed moss are common species.

Soil and Site Characteristics

This type occurs on sandy to loamy mesic soils (usually well drained, occasionally imperfectly drained or



White Pine

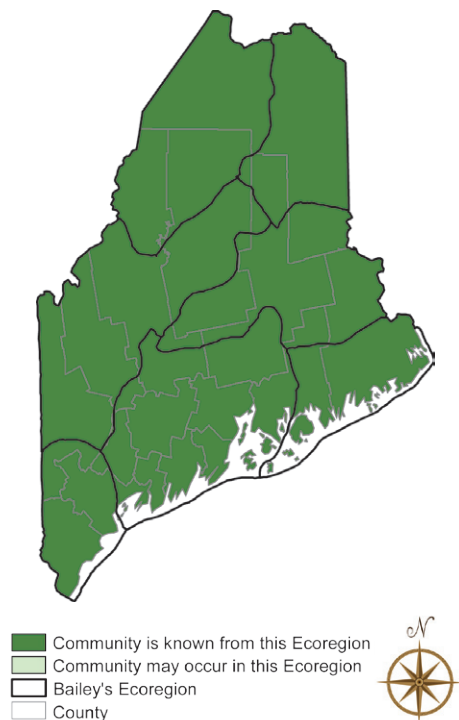
Diagnostics

White pine is dominant (>33% cover); red oak and northern hardwood species (beech, sugar maple, yellow birch) total <25% cover. The heath shrub and herbaceous layers are sparse.

Similar Types

Red Pine - White Pine Forests have >33% cover of red pine. Hemlock

Location Map



White Pine Forest

Forests have more hemlock than white pine. Where red spruce is co-dominant, this type can grade into Spruce - Fir forest types. Oak - Pine Forests and Red Oak - Northern Hardwoods - White Pine Forests have red oak at > 33% cover.

Conservation, Wildlife, and Management Considerations

Demand for white pine has considerably reduced mature, undisturbed examples of this type. Most sites known to be of high ecological quality lack formal protection. Maintaining the surrounding lands as forest is important in conserving particular stands of this type, particularly given that many known examples are small (<50 acres).

This community type may be used as nesting habitat by a number of coniferous or mixed forest specialist bird species such as the sharp-shinned hawk, pine warbler, black-throated green warbler, Blackburnian warbler, and red crossbill.

Distribution

Statewide, less common northward; extends in all directions from Maine.

Landscape Pattern: Large Patch

Characteristic Plants

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

Canopy

Eastern hemlock*
Northern white cedar
Red maple
Red spruce
White pine*

Sapling/shrub

Balsam fir
Beaked hazelnut*
Eastern hemlock
Red maple*
Red spruce
White pine*
Wild-raisin*

Dwarf Shrub

Lowbush blueberry*
Swamp dewberry*

Herb

Balsam fir
Canada mayflower*
Eastern hemlock
Starflower
White pine*

Bryoid

Dicranum moss*

Examples on Conservation Lands You Can Visit

- Bearce Lake, Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge – Washington Co.
- Bigelow Preserve Public Lands – Franklin Co.
- Chamberlain Lake Public Lands – Piscataquis Co.
- Gero Island Public Lands – Piscataquis Co.
- Scientific Forest Management Area, Baxter State – Piscataquis Co.