

Chestnut Oak Woodland

State Rank S1

Community Description

This partial canopy woodland type is dominated by chestnut oak in association with other oak species, white pine, and rarely shagbark hickory. The sapling layer typically includes small oaks as well as various shrub species. Beneath the trees, a mixture of low heath shrubs and herbs covers much of the ground surface, with some bare rock patches. Bracken fern and lowbush blueberry are most common. Bryoids are virtually absent.

Soil and Site Characteristics

These woodlands occupy dry ridges and south facing slopes on thin, excessively well drained and stony soils. Known sites are in extreme southern Maine only, on granite-syenite bedrock.



Red Oak Twig with Acorns

Diagnostics

These woodlands (25 to 65% canopy cover) are dominated by chestnut oak.

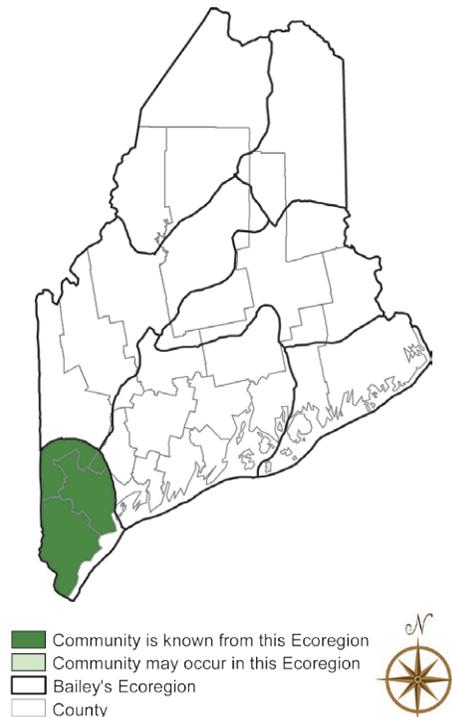
Similar Types

Other hardwood forest types are dominated by trees other than chestnut oak.

Conservation, Wildlife, and Management Considerations

The single documented site in Maine is in public ownership, with attention given to conserving this rare type. In other parts of the range of this type, fire appears to have played a role in preventing the invasion of fire sensitive

Location Map



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hardwood trees and shrubs. The suppression of fire could therefore result in the gradual conversion of these woodlands to a more mesic oak-pine type. In Maine, chestnut oak does not seem to regenerate well under its own canopy.

Mature occurrences of this type offer excellent potential sites for cavity dwellers such as the southern flying squirrel.

Distribution

Characteristic of the Eastern Broadleaf Forest Province, extending southward and southwestward from Maine and only barely reaching into the state.

Landscape Pattern: Small to Large Patch in Maine; matrix-forming further south.

Examples on Conservation Lands You Can Visit

- Mt Agamenticus – York Co.

Characteristic Plants

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

Canopy

Black cherry
Chestnut oak*
Red maple
Red oak
White oak
White pine

Sapling/shrub

Black huckleberry
Maple-leaved viburnum
Meadowsweet
Shadbush
Witch-hazel

Dwarf Shrub

Lowbush blueberry*
Velvet-leaf blueberry

Herb

Bracken fern*
Common hairgrass
Partridgeberry
Rough-leaved ricegrass
Wild-oats
Wintergreen
Woodland sedge

Bryoid

Hair cap moss

Associated Rare Plants

Chestnut oak
Flowering dogwood

Associated Rare Animals

Red-winged sallow
Whip-poor-will