

# Oak - Ash Woodland

## State Rank S3

woodlands usually develop over bedrock that is not strongly acidic.

### Community Description

These partial canopy deciduous woodlands are dominated by red oak and ironwood (the latter often as subcanopy). Basswood is an indicator species. Sugar maple may be codominant at some sites. The herb layer features species typical of somewhat enriched sites, such as Venus' looking-glass, herb Robert, round-lobed hepatica, plantain-leaved pussytoes, and wild-licorice, among an often dense cover of graminoids. Marginal wood-fern is characteristic of the herb layer. Vegetation may be patchy, developing in pockets among the rocks, or more continuous along upper slopes and ridges.

### Soil and Site Characteristics

Sites occur on upper hill slopes and ridges or on talus slopes, often with some southerly exposure. Soils are thin and very well drained. The exposure and thin soils create dry conditions. These

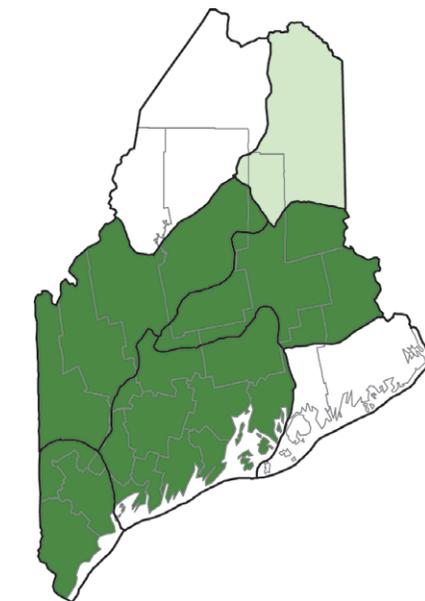
### Diagnostics

Ironwood is well represented and may be codominant with red oak. Sugar maple and/or basswood are present if not abundant. Some rich site indicators are present in herb layer.

### Similar Types

Birch - Oak Talus Woodlands are similar but have far less ironwood, ash, and sugar maple, generally lack basswood, and have less extensive graminoid cover. Intermediates can be difficult to classify. Maple - Basswood - Ash Forests share some rich woods species but typically contain less oak and ironwood and occur on deeper, more mesic soils.

### Location Map



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



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### Conservation, Wildlife, and Management Considerations

These types are subject to fragmentation from development pressure in southern Maine. The hilltop setting of many makes them attractive as house sites, although the shallow soils generally will not support intensive residential use. Some sites were probably pastured at some time in the 1700s - 1800s but have regrown. Almost all known sites are on private land with individual ownership.

Sites that have eastern red cedar present may host the rare juniper hairstreak butterfly, which uses cedar as its larval host plant. Two other insects, the columbine dusky wing butterfly and the aureolaria seed borer moth, may have historically inhabited this community type where they used uncommon larval host plants, columbine and false foxglove, respectively.

### Distribution

Eastern Broadleaf Forest Province, extending southwestward from Maine.

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.

#### Canopy

Basswood\*  
Ironwood\*  
Red oak  
Sugar maple  
White Ash

#### Sapling/shrub

Beaked hazelnut  
Ironwood\*

#### Herb

Columbine  
False spikenard  
Fibrous-rooted sedge  
Marginal woodfern  
Rough-leaved ricegrass  
Round-lobed hepatica  
Woodland sedge\*

#### Bryoid

Dicranum moss  
Large hair-cap moss  
Pincushion moss

### Associated Rare Plants

Blunt-lobed woodsia  
Bottlebrush grass  
Douglas' knotweed  
Dry land sedge  
Early crowfoot  
Ebony spleenwort  
Fern-leaved false foxglove  
Hairy wood brome-grass  
Missouri rockcress  
Summer grape

### Associated Rare Animals

Juniper hairstreak

### Examples on Conservation Lands You Can Visit

- Derry Mountain, Camden Hills State Park - Knox Co.



Ebony Spleenwort