

Terrestrial & Palustrine Plant Communities Of Pennsylvania

By Jean Fike

Black locust forest

This community type usually occurs on highly disturbed sites or in small woodlots in an agricultural or suburban matrix. *Robinia pseudoacacia* (black locust) is usually the dominant tree. *Betula lenta* (sweet birch) is frequently codominant. Other associates vary; typical representatives include *Acer rubrum* (red maple), the exotic *Acer platanoides*^I (Norway maple), *Sassafras albidum* (sassafras), various oaks (*Quercus* spp.), or *Prunus serotina* (wild black cherry). There is generally a dense graminoid understory due to the light penetration through the canopy. *Toxicodendron radicans* (poison ivy) is commonly abundant. Exotic species usually predominate; common representatives include *Lonicera japonica*^I (Japanese honeysuckle), *Ailanthus altissima*^I (tree-of-heaven), *L. morrowii*^I (Morrow's honeysuckle), *Berberis thunbergii*^I (Japanese barberry), *Alliaria petiolata*^I (garlic mustard), *Polygonum perfoliatum*^I (mile-a-minute), *Microstegium vimineum*^I, (stilt grass), *Poa pratensis*^I (Kentucky bluegrass), *Dactylis glomerata*^I (orchard grass), and *Holcus lanatus*^I (velvet grass).

Related types: Other forest types may contain *Robinia pseudoacacia* (black locust), this type refers to sites where it is clearly dominant.

Range: Piedmont, Pittsburgh Plateau, Ridge and Valley.

Selected references: Eyre 1980.

[**Crosswalk:** Smith's "Young Miscellaneous Forest," TNC -no crosswalk, SAF's Black locust (50).]