

Terrestrial & Palustrine Plant Communities Of Pennsylvania

By Jean Fike

Great Lakes Region bayberry – cottonwood community (also a woodland type)

In Pennsylvania this community type occurs only on Presque Isle. This community type is dominated by a mixture of trees and shrubs. Characteristic species include *Myrica pensylvanica* (bayberry), *Amelanchier* spp. (shadbush), *Salix* spp. (willows), *Cornus* spp. (dogwoods), *Populus deltoids* (cottonwood), and the exotic species *Betula pendula*¹ (European white birch) and *Lonicera morrowii*¹ (Morrow's honeysuckle). Herbaceous species include *Sorghastrum nutans* (Indian grass), *Rumex acetosella*¹ (sheep sorrel), *Panicum virgatum* (switch grass), *Schizachyrium scoparium* (little bluestem), *Carex tonsa* (a sedge), and *C. muhlenbergii* (a sedge). This type includes both shrubland and woodland physiognomy. Because of the extremely dynamic nature of this system, a variety of successional stages is maintained in a complex mosaic. This community type is part of the "Great Lakes Region beach – dune – sandplain complex."

Related types: Because of the extremely dynamic nature of this system, the hydrology, physiognomy, and species composition of these sites may shift dramatically over short periods of time. Lake level changes, storm action, and shifting sands cause this community type to intergrade in space and time with the "Great Lakes Region dry sandplain," the "Great Lakes Region bayberry – mixed shrub palustrine shrubland," and, to a lesser extent, "Great Lakes Region sparsely vegetated beach." For more information on the ecology of this system, please see description for the "Great Lakes region beach – dune – sandplain complex."

Range: Great Lakes Region.

Selected references: Bissell and Bier, 1987.

[**Crosswalk:** Smith's "Eastern Lakes Dune Community," TNC – no crosswalk.]