



## Barrier Island Live Oak Forest

**Rarity Rank:** S1/G1

**Synonyms:** Maritime Forest

**Ecological Systems:**

CES203.513 Mississippi Delta Maritime Forest



### General Description:

- Currently restricted to Grand Isle, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, where it occupies a small area (less than 1,000 acres)
- All known occurrences are impacted by development, exotic species, clearing of understory vegetation, and habitat fragmentation
- Appears to be distinct from other *Quercus virginiana* (live oak) communities occurring to the east and west, but little is known about this habitat type
- Trees can exhibit the effects of saltwater spray and wind, having a stunted appearance and leaning away from the prevailing wind

### Plant Community Associates

#### Common woody species include:

*Quercus virginiana* (live oak),  
*Zanthoxylum clava-herculis* (toothache tree),  
*Gleditsia triacanthos* (honeylocust),  
*Persea borbonia* (red bay)

*Celtis laevigata* (hackberry),  
*Diospyros virginiana* (persimmon),  
*Morella cerifera* (waxmyrtle),

#### Federally-listed plant & animal species:

None

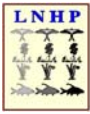
### Range:

Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes ecoregion in the southeastern portion of the state (only viable remnant found in Jefferson Parish, LA)

### Threats & Management Considerations:

There is no complete information regarding the presettlement extent of this natural community type on Louisiana's barrier islands. The last remaining barrier island live oak forest in Louisiana occurs on Grand Isle. Original forest composition is in doubt due to the long history of use. Activities causing direct impacts or destruction of this forest include residential or commercial





# *Natural Communities of Louisiana*



development, and construction of roads, pipelines or utilities. Habitat degradation or disturbance is caused by maintenance of existing roads, pipelines and utilities, off-road vehicle use, and adjacent residential development. Alteration of natural community composition and structure occurs with introduction of invasive or exotic species.

Use of appropriate management activities and developing a compatible management plan prevents destruction or degradation of this habitat type and promotes long-term maintenance of healthy barrier island forests. Management strategies should include:

- Preventing conversion of existing natural forests to other land uses
- Prohibiting off-road vehicle use, or restricting use to pre-existing trails.
- Surveying for and removal of any invasive plant species (exotics or woody) with use of spot herbicides or mechanical means.

