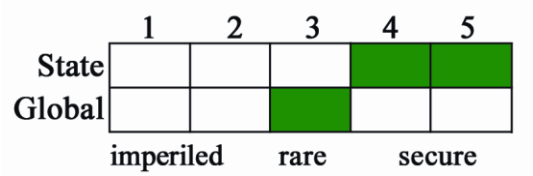
Natural Communities of Louisiana

Scrub/Shrub Swamp

Rarity Rank: S4S5/G3?



Synonyms: Shrub Swamp, Buttonbush Swamp

Ecological Systems: CES203.489 East Gulf Coastal Plain Large River Floodplain Forest
CES203.490 Mississippi River Bottomland Depression
CES203.488 West Gulf Coastal Plain Large River Floodplain Forest
CES203.065 Red River Large Floodplain Forest

General Description:

- A low, flat freshwater swamp with large shrubs and small trees less than 35 feet in height
- This community likely represents a transitional phase of regeneration following disturbance such as cutting or natural blowdown of canopy trees. Additionally, shrubs and trees may be stunted due to some environmental conditions present on the site
- Often associated with newly accreted lands and partially drained wetlands
- Generally occur along sluggish streams and occasionally in semi-permanent pools associated with depressions, old ox bows, and scour channels
- May be found in transition zones between marsh and higher areas such as cheniers
- Soils are often continually flooded, but can become dry during the summer months or during prolonged drought

Plant Community Associates

Common species include:

Cephalanthus occidentalis (buttonbush)
Acer rubrum var. drummondii (swamp red maple)
Baccharis halimifolia (saltbush)
Morella cerifera (waxmyrtle)
Amorpha fruticosa (lead plant)
Forestiera acuminata (swamp privet)
Planera aquatica (water elm)
Salix spp. (willows)
Iva frutescens (marsh-elder)
Sabal minor (palmetto)

Federally-listed plant & animal species:

None

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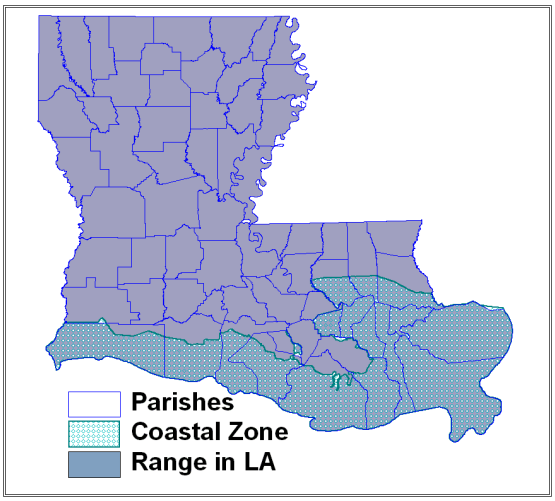
Range:

Occurs throughout Louisiana in depressions and bottoms associated with floodplains of rivers and streams



LA River Basins:

Mississippi, Pearl, Pontchartrain, Barataria, Terrebonne, Atchafalaya, Vermilion-Teche, Mermentau, Calcasieu, Sabine, Red, Ouachita

Threats:

- Construction of roads, pipelines or utilities
- Hydrological alterations (to include adjacent areas)
- Contamination by chemicals (herbicides, fertilizers)
- Invasive exotic species

Beneficial Management Practices:

- Prevent conversion of existing natural forests to other land uses
- Remove any invasive exotic plant species with use of spot herbicides or mechanical means

Funding provided by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program
For more information, please visit our Web pages at
www.wlf.la.gov/wildlife/louisiana-natural-heritage-program or 225-765-2811
www.BTNEP.org or 1-800-259-0869