

Natural Communities of Louisiana



Pine Flatwoods

Rarity Rank: S3/G2G3

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure

Synonyms: Wet Pine Flatwoods

Ecological Systems: CES203.375 East Gulf Coastal Plain Near-Coast Pine Flatwoods
CES203.557 East Gulf Coastal Plain Southern Loblolly-Hardwood Flatwoods
CES203.191 West Gulf Coastal Plain Wet Longleaf Pine Savanna and Flatwoods



General Description:

- Found on the Pleistocene prairie terraces of Louisiana's East and West Gulf Coastal Plains
- Found in a mosaic with other flatwoods, savannahs, and bayhead swamps
- Occur on flat, low-relief areas with a high water table
- Soils are mesic, strongly acidic and fine sandy or silty loams with presence of a clay hardpan
- In Louisiana's Florida Parishes, *Pinus palustris* (longleaf pine) and *Pinus elliottii* (slash pine) are often co-dominants. In southwest Louisiana, only longleaf pine and *Pinus taeda* (loblolly pine) are present
- Fire dependent natural community
- Varies considerably in structure and somewhat in composition from one place to another, as a consequence of minor variations in topography, soil conditions, and hydrologic and fire regimes
- Has a stratified appearance with pine dominating the canopy, a low woody shrub layer, and a herbaceous layer

Plant Community Associates

Common tree species include:

Pinus palustris (longleaf pine)
Pinus taeda (loblolly pine)
Quercus nigra (water oak)
Magnolia virginiana (sweetbay magnolia)
Liquidambar styraciflua (sweetgum)
On wetter sites:
Taxodium distichum (baldcypress)

Pinus elliottii (slash pine, SE LA)
Pinus glabra (spruce pine, SE LA)
Quercus laurifolia (laurel oak)
Acer rubrum (red maple)
Nyssa sylvatica (blackgum)

Taxodium ascendens (pondcypress, SE LA)

Common midstory and understory species include:

Sabal minor (palmetto)
Ilex coriacea (sweet gallberry)
Lyonia lucida (fetterbush, SE LA)
Morella cerifera (waxmyrtle)

Cyrilla racemiflora (swamp cyrilla)
Ilex glabra (littleleaf gallberry)
Hypericum spp. (St. John's-worts)
Clethra alnifolia (summer sweet, SE LA)

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Common midstory and understory species continued:

Rubus spp. (blackberries)

Vaccinium spp. (blueberries)

Gaylussacia spp. (huckleberries, SE LA)

Common herbaceous species include:

Liatris spp. (blazing-stars)

Andropogon spp. (broomsedges)

Chaptalia tomentosa (sunbonnet)

Panicum spp. (panic grasses)

Federally-listed plant & animal species:

Picoides borealis (red-cockaded woodpecker)

Endangered; G2; S2

Range:

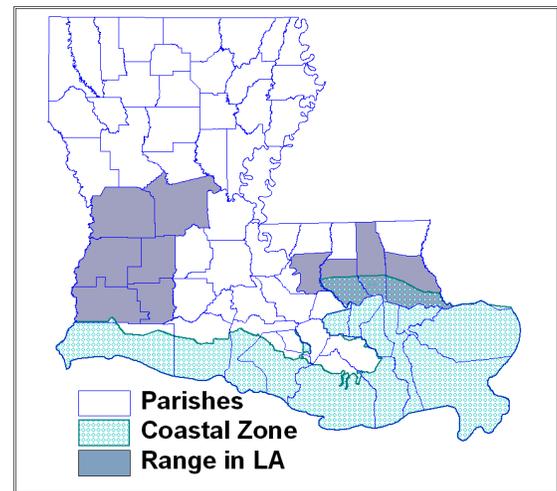
Within Louisiana, found primarily in the Florida Parishes and southwest LA with a few occurrences extending up into central LA

LA River Basins:

Pontchartrain, Pearl, Vermilion-Teche, Mermentau, Calcasieu, Sabine

Threats:

- Construction of roads, pipelines or utilities
- Conversion to slash or loblolly pine plantations
- Residential or commercial development
- Soil damage from timber harvesting and planting activities (eg. bedding)
- Hydrological alterations (to include adjacent areas)
- Contamination by chemicals (herbicides, fertilizers)
- Off-road vehicle use
- Fire exclusion or inappropriate fire regime
- Invasive exotic species



Beneficial Management Practices:

- Prevent conversion of existing natural forests to other land uses
- Use of growing season prescribed fire (April-June) at a frequency of every 5 to 10 years
- No logging during wet periods when the soil is saturated
- No bedding or other soil disturbance that may alter natural water flow patterns
- Prohibit off-road vehicle use, or restrict use to pre-existing trails
- Remove any invasive exotic plant species with use of spot herbicides or mechanical means