Natural Communities of Louisiana

Eastern Longleaf Pine Savannah

**Rarity Rank:** S1/G1

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**Synonyms:** Pine Savannah, Pine Flatwood, Grass-Sedge Bog, Pitcher-Plant Prairie, Pitcher-Plant Meadow, Pitcher-Plant Bog, Herbaceous Bog, Flatwood Bog

**Ecological Systems:** CES203.375 East Gulf Coastal Plain Near-Coast Pine Flatwoods

**General Description:**
- Floristically rich, herb-dominated wetlands with many of the plants closely-allied to hillside bogs
- Sparsely stocked with *Pinus palustris* (longleaf pine) as the dominant tree species
- Occupies the poorly drained and seasonally saturated/flooded depressional areas and low flats
- Commonly associated with mesic pine flatwoods on slight rises and low ridges, often grading down slope to slash pine-pondcypress/hardwood forest, bayhead swamp and/or small stream forest
- Subject to a highly fluctuating water table associated with seasonal hydrologic patterns
- Soils are hydric (wet), very strongly acidic, nutrient poor, fine sandy loams and silt loams, low in organic matter
- Soils may be underlain by an impeding layer slowing water movement in the soil
- Fire maintained natural community (frequent fires prevent woody encroachment and maintain herbaceous layer)

**Plant Community Associates**

**Common woody species include:**
- *Pinus palustris* (longleaf pine)
- *Magnolia virginiana* (sweet bay)
- *Quercus virginiana* (live oak)
- *Quercus laurifolia* (laurel oak)
- *Morella* spp. (wax myrtles)
- *Styrax americana* (littleleaf snowbell)

**Common herbaceous species include:**
- *Andropogon* spp. (broomsgedes)
- *Schizachyrium tenerum* (slender bluestem)
- *Aristida* spp. (three-awn grasses)
- *Muhlenbergia capillaris* (hairawn muhly)
- *Coelorachis* spp. (jointgrasses)
- *Xyris* spp. (yellow-eyed grasses)
- *Scleria* spp. (nut-rushes)
- *Eriocaulon* spp. (pipeworts)
- *Fimbrystylis* spp. (fimbry-sedge)

*Pinus elliottii* (slash pine)
*Nyssa biflora* (swamp black gum)
*Quercus marilandica* (blackjack oak)
*Cyrilla racemiflora* (swamp cyrilla)
*Hypericum* spp. (St. John's worts)
*Taxodium ascendens* (pondcypress)
*Schizachyrium scoparium* (little bluestem)
*Panicum* spp. (panic grasses)
*Ctenium aromaticum* (toothache grass)
*Erianthus* spp. (plume-grasses)
*Rhynchospora* spp. (beak-rushes)
*Fuirena* spp. (umbrella grasses)
*Dichromena latifolia* (white top sedge)
*Lachnocalon* spp. (bog buttons)
**Common forb (wildflower) species include:**

- *Sarracenia* spp. (pitcherplants)
- *Agalinis* spp. (gerardias)
- *Rhexia* spp. (meadow beauties)
- *Oxypolis filiformis* (hog-fennel)
- *Liatris* spp. (blazing-stars)
- *Drosera* spp. (sundews)
- *Pinguicula lutea* (butterwort)
- *Platanthera* spp. (fringed-orchids)
- *Aletris lutea* (yellow colic-root)
- sunflower family (Asteraceae)
- *Cleistes bifaria* (spreading pogonia)

**Federally-listed plant & animal species:**
- *Picoides borealis* (red-cockaded woodpecker)

**Range:**

The eastern Florida Parishes of Louisiana were historically dominated by extensive stands of longleaf pine. Now barely 1% of the original estimated 100,000 to 500,000 acres of longleaf pine savannas remains.

**LA River Basins:**
- Pontchartrain, Pearl

**Threats:**

- Residential or commercial development
- Construction of roads, pipelines or utilities
- Conversion to slash or loblolly pine plantations
- Hydrological alterations (to include adjacent areas)
- Soil damage from timber harvesting and planting activities (eg. bedding)
- Contamination by chemicals (herbicides, fertilizers)
- Fire exclusion or inappropriate fire regime
- Off-road vehicle use
- 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 1 to 3 years
- No logging during wet periods when the soil is saturated
- Replanting with longleaf seedlings only
- No bedding, plowed fire lines 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

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](http://www.wlf.la.gov/wildlife/louisiana-natural-heritage-program)
- [www.BTNEP.org](http://www.BTNEP.org)

or 225-765-2811 or 1-800-259-0869