

Subalpine Meadow

State Rank S1

Community Description

These shrub and graminoid dominated meadows occur near treeline. Dominants vary according to substrate moisture but often include mountain alder, bluejoint, and meadowsweet. In drier areas, bush-honeysuckle may be prominent. This vegetation is taller and more dense than typical alpine dwarf shrub vegetation. Openings around pondshores or other disturbed areas may support rare plants.

Soil and Site Characteristics

Sites occupy upper mountain slopes, flats, or basins near or above treeline. Slopes vary from almost flat to quite steep, and substrate moisture varies from dryish to seepy soil conditions.

Diagnostics

Sites are in an alpine setting with dense mountain alder, bluejoint grass, and/or bush-honeysuckle; dwarf shrubs are absent or minor.

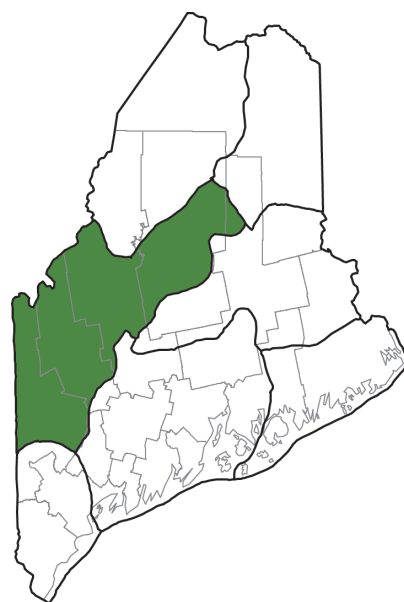


Lowbush Blueberry

Similar Types

Other alpine and sub-alpine types have different characteristic species. However, this is not a well documented type, and its distribution and relationship to other alpine and subalpine vegetation types needs work.

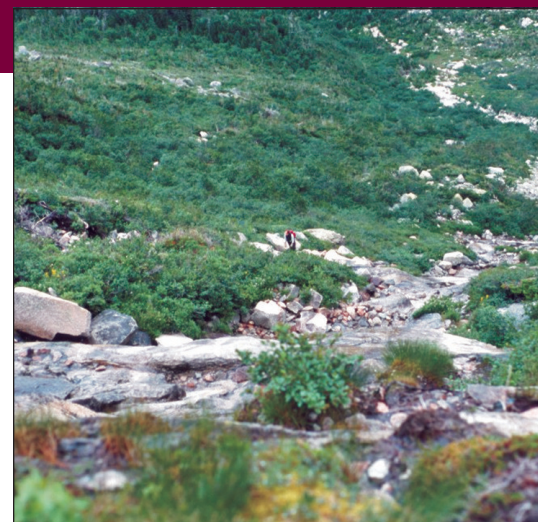
Location Map



Community is known from this Ecoregion
 Community may occur in this Ecoregion
 Bailey's Ecoregion
 County



Bush-honeysuckle



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Conservation, Wildlife, and Management Considerations

Both known occurrences in Maine are on protected lands. Hiker impacts have been minimal. Understanding the importance of fire and other disturbances to initiating and maintaining the vegetation in this community type warrants study.

Distribution

Upper-elevation ridges of Maine's western and central mountains (mostly in the New England - Adirondack Province); may extend to Gaspé Peninsula.

Landscape Pattern: Small Patch

Characteristic Plants

These plants are frequently found in this community type. Those with an asterisk are often diagnostic of this community.

Sapling/shrub

- Bush-honeysuckle*
- Meadowsweet
- Mountain alder*
- Squashberry

Dwarf Shrub

- Lowbush blueberry

Herb

- Bluejoint*
- Gall of the earth
- Large-leaved goldenrod
- Low rough aster
- Three-toothed cinquefoil

Associated Rare Plants

- Black sedge
- Northern painted-cup
- Russett sedge

Examples on Conservation Lands You Can Visit

- Mt. Katahdin, Baxter State Park – Piscataquis Co.
- North Traveler, Baxter State Park – Piscataquis Co.