

Terrestrial & Palustrine Plant Communities Of Pennsylvania

By Jean Fike

Red spruce palustrine woodland

These wetlands tend to be small in size, or may occur as part of a structurally diverse wetland complex. The substrate is usually sphagnum peat. *Picea rubens* (red spruce) is always present in some amount and is often dominant or codominant; the most common associate trees are *Acer rubrum* (red maple) and *Betula populifolia* (gray birch). Common shrub species include *Vaccinium corymbosum* (highbush blueberry), *Nemopanthus mucronatus* (mountain holly), and *Lyonia ligustrina* (maleberry). Characteristic herbs include *Eriophorum vaginatum* ssp. *spissum* (a cotton-grass), and *E. virginicum* (tawny cotton-grass), *Carex folliculata*, *C. trisperma*, and other sedges, *Osmunda cinnamomea* (cinnamon fern), and *Smilacina trifolia* (false Solomon's seal). The bryophyte layer is usually well developed and dominated by sphagnum.

Related types: This type is closely related to the "Red spruce palustrine forest" type, which may accompany it. The distinction between the two is the percent canopy cover; the forested type typically has greater than 60% cover by trees, the woodland type less.

Range: Glaciated NE, Pocono Plateau.

Selected references: Sneddon, Anderson, and Metzler 1996.

[Crosswalk: Smith's "Boreal Conifer Swamp" (in part), TNC's (Southeast Region) *Picea rubens* Saturated Woodland Alliance, SAF's Red spruce (32).]