

# Terrestrial & Palustrine Plant Communities Of Pennsylvania

By Jean Fike

## Red-cedar - redbud shrubland

This community type occurs in areas of calcareous parent material, where conditions are dry enough to prevent forest development (may also occur successional on calcareous sites that are less extreme). *Juniperus virginiana* (red-cedar) and *Cercis canadensis* (redbud) are both characteristic of these sites. Other shrubs commonly present include *Ostrya virginiana* (hop-hornbeam), *Amelanchier* spp. (shadbush), *Rhus aromatica* (fragrant sumac), and *Cornus florida* (flowering dogwood). Characteristic herbaceous species include *Bouteloua curtipendula*<sup>S</sup> (tall gramma), *Andropogon gerardii* (big bluestem), *Panicum virgatum* (switch grass), *Sorghastrum nutans* (Indian grass), *Aster oblongifolius* (aromatic aster), *Lithospermum latifolium*<sup>S</sup> (American gromwell), and *Aquilegia canadensis* (wild columbine).

**Related types:** This community type is closely related to both the "Yellow oak - redbud woodland" type and the "Side-oats gramma calcareous grassland" type. The three types are easily distinguished from each other on the basis of physiognomy. All three may occur together on some sites.

**Range:** Allegheny Mountain, Piedmont, Pittsburgh Plateau, Ridge and Valley.

**Selected references:** PNDI field surveys.

**[Crosswalk:** Smith's "Northern Appalachian Calcareous Rocky Summit Community," TNC's *Juniperus virginiana* - *Fraxinus americana* Woodland Alliance, *Juniperus virginiana* - *Ostrya virginiana* - *Bouteloua curtipendula* Community and *Quercus muhlenbergii* Woodland Alliance, *Quercus muhlenbergii* - *Cercis canadensis* / *Senecio obovatus* - *Lithospermum canadense* Community.]