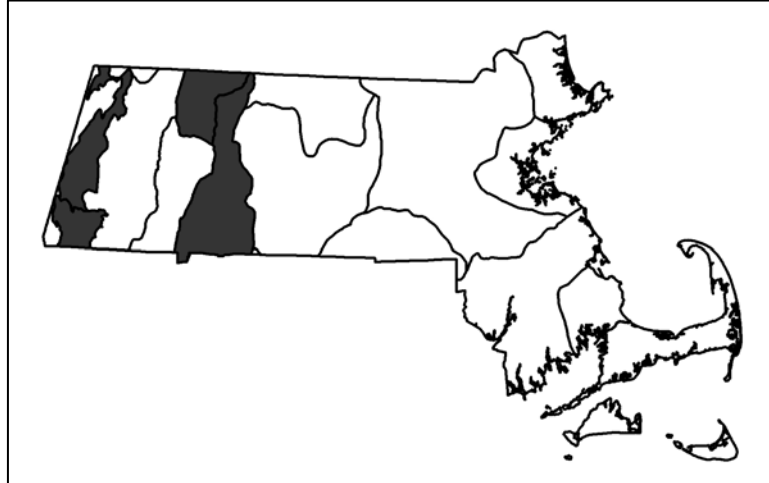


**Community Name:** BLACK ASH-RED MAPLE-TAMARACK CALCAREOUS SEEPAGE SWAMP  
**Community ELCODE:** CP1B2B0000  
**SRANK:** S2



**Concept:** Mixed deciduous-coniferous forested swamps with a sparse canopy occurring in areas where there is calcareous groundwater seepage. The species-rich herbaceous layer is characterized by calcium-loving species. Calcareous seepage swamps can also be called forested fens.

**Environmental Setting** The occurrence of calcium rich groundwater seepage defines this community. The more calcareous the seepage, the more rare plant species are likely to be found. Soils are mineral but with a thin layer of peat accumulation at the surface. More information is needed on the physical characteristics of this community.

**Vegetation Description** A variable mixture of deciduous and coniferous trees forms the sparse canopy, but black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*), tamarack (*Larix laricina*), and red maple (*Acer rubrum*) are most common. Other associated tree species at low elevations (< 1,000 ft.) are bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), white pine (*Pinus strobus*), and hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*). At higher elevations, red spruce (*Picea rubens*), balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*), and Canada yew (*Taxus canadensis*) can also occur. Ironwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*) is characteristic of the subcanopy. The shrub layer can be dense, and characteristic species are poison sumac (*Toxicodendron vernix*) and alder-leaf buckthorn (*Rhamnus alnifolia*), mixed with speckled alder (*Alnus rugosa*), gray dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*), winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), meadowsweet (*Spiraea latifolia*), and highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*). Shrubby cinquefoil (*Dasiphora floribunda*) often occurs in open areas. The herbaceous layer is diverse with many calciphilic (calcium-loving) species mixed in with other common wetland plants. Characteristic calciphiles are delicate sedge (*Carex leptalea*), brome-like sedge (*Carex bromoides*), long-stalked sedge (*Carex pedunculata*), rough-leaved goldenrod (*Solidago patula*), and golden ragwort (*Senecio aureus*). Other typical species in the herbaceous layer are skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*), sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), and naked mitrewort (*Mitella nuda*). This community type also has a concentration of state-protected rare plant species (see list below).

**Habitat values** Calcareous seepage swamps can function as vernal pool habitat if water remains standing for 2-3 months and they lack fish; these areas provide important amphibian breeding habitat.  
**Associated Fauna:**

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Associated rare plants:**

CAREX SCHWEINITZII	SCHWEINITZ'S SEDGE	E
CONIOSELINUM CHINENSE	HEMLOCK PARSLEY	SC
CYPRIPEDIUM REGINAE	SHOWY LADY'S-SLIPPER	E
MALAXIS MONOPHYLLOS ssp. BRACHYPODA	WHITE ADDER'S-MOUTH	E
PYROLA ASARIFOLIA ssp. ASARIFOLIA	PINK PYROLA	SH
QUERCUS MACROCARPA	MOSSY-CUP OAK	SC
RIBES TRISTE	SWAMP RED CURRANT	WL

**Associated rare animals:**

AMBYSTOMA JEFFERSONIANUM	JEFFERSON SALAMANDER	SC
CLEMMYS INSCULPTA	WOOD TURTLE	SC
WILLIAMSONIA FLETCHERI	EBONY BOGHAUNTER	E

**Examples with Public Access:** most examples occur in Berkshire County

**Threats:** Logging, nutrient inputs such as road salts, damming by beavers, and alterations of water levels threaten this community. Water level disturbance can lead to the invasion by non-native plants, including the aggressive exotics purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Tatarian honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*), and Morrow's honeysuckle (*Lonicera morrowii*). Phragmites (*Phragmites australis*) is also an aggressive exotic in disturbed forested fens.

**Management Needs** Removal/control of non-native plant species, especially Phragmites.

**Synonyms:**

**USNVC/NatureServe** Fraxinus nigra - Acer rubrum Saturated Forest Alliance -- Fraxinus nigra-Acer rubrum-(Larix laricina)/Rhamnus alnifolia forest [CEGL006009];

**MA (old name):** SNE Calcareous Seepage Swamp [CP3B1A0000]

**ME:** Not described.

**VT:** Tamarack-red maple forested fen

**NH:** Calcareous/circumneutral hardwood seepage swamp; Hardwood-conifer seepage swamp

**NY:** Rich hemlock-hardwood peat swamp; Red maple-tamarack peat swamp

**CT:** Similar to Acer rubrum-Fraxinus nigra/Ranunculus hispidus var. caricetorum community; Acer rubrum/Lindera benzoin community

**RI:** Not described.

**Golet & Larson,** Deciduous wooded swamp (WS-1); Evergreen wooded swamp (WS-2)

**Other:** Forested fen community (Weatherbee 1996); Rich forested swamp (Motzkin 1995)

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