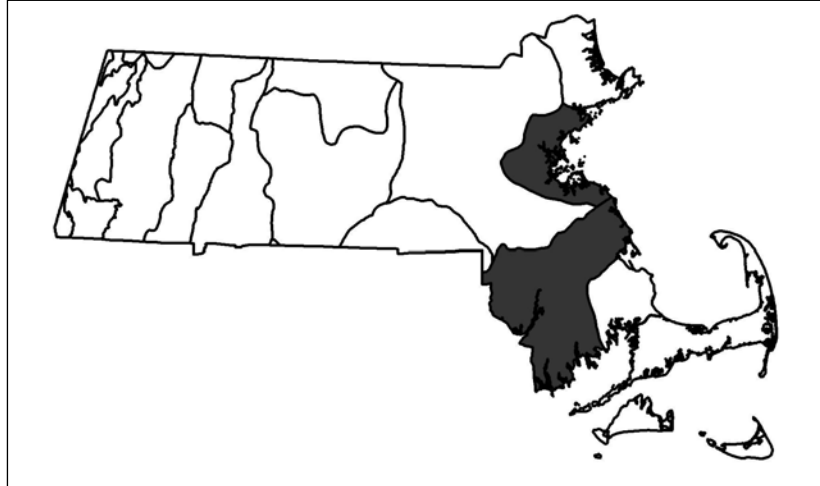


**Community Name:** Sugar Maple - Oak - Hickory Forest  
**Community Code:** CT1C2A1000  
**SRANK:** S2



**Concept:** A species rich forest that combines aspects of Rich, Mesic Forest of the Northern Hardwoods with rich Oak-Hickory Forests of the Central Hardwoods occurring in a matrix of oak forests.

**Environmental Setting:** In the eastern part of Massachusetts, most occurrences are associated with outcrops of circumneutral rocks that provide more nutrients than are available in the surrounding forest. occurrences are usually best defined at the base of or between outcrops and often include seepage areas. The known occurrences are small patches within oak dominated matrix forests with which many species are shared.

**Vegetation Description:** Like Rich, Mesic Forests, Sugar Maple - Oak - Hickory Forests are dominated by Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) and Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) with White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*), Bitternut Hickory (*Carya cordiformis*), and Basswood (*Tilia americana*) which occurs consistently as very scattered individuals. However, Black and White Oaks (*Q. velutina* and *Q. alba*) and Shagbark and Pignut Hickories (*C. ovata* and *C. glabra*) are also regular in the canopy. The sparse subcanopy includes Hop Hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), Red Maple (*A. rubra*) and canopy species. Alternate-leaved Dogwood (*Swida alternifolia*) contributes to a usually sparse tall shrub layer. Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) occurs, usually at transitions to surrounding forest types. The shorter shrubs are dominated by Maple-leaf Viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*). The herbaceous layer varies from sparse to intermittent, with some spring ephemerals including Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) and Blunt-lobed Hepatica (*Anemone americana*). There are fewer individuals and species of spring ephemerals than in true Rich, Mesic Forest. Later occurring herbaceous species include Wild Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*), Herb Robert (*G. robertianum*), Wild Oats (*Uvularia sessilifolia*), False Solomon's Seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*), Wild Licorice (*Galium circaeazans*), and large amounts of White Wood Aster (*Eurybia divaricata*). Broad-leaved, semi-evergreen sedges in the Laxiflorae are common.

**Habitat Values for Associated Fauna:** Very few animal species are strongly associated with Sugar Maple-Oak-Hickory Forests to the exclusion of other community types. Birds of forests that breed in forests include: Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*), Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*), Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), Louisiana Waterthrush (*S. motacilla*), Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga rubra*), and Barred Owls (*Strix varia*). Species that breed in vernal pools are often found in surrounding forests, for example species of mole salamanders (*Ambystoma* spp.), and spotted turtles (*Clemmys guttata*). Most of the small mammals of forests occur in rich forests, although some are limited to their geographical distribution. Southern flying squirrels (*Glaucomys volans*), grey squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*), woodland jumping mouse (*Napaeozapus insignis*), masked shrew (*Sorex cinereus*), and red-backed vole (*Clethrionomys gapperi*) are among the widespread species whose habitat includes rich forests. Large mammals include rich forests as parts of their habitat, but are usually more dependent on size of undisturbed forest than on the precise type.

