

upland deciduous forest



CHARACTERISTICS

Upland deciduous forests are areas not subject to flooding and with canopied trees that lose their leaves in the fall. The loss of leaves helps to minimize water loss during the poor growing conditions in winter. Growth of plants in this forest type is restricted to spring, summer and early fall. The soil is rich with minerals and organic matter and a great variety of species live in or use this forest when migrating. In Illinois, there are nearly 3.6 million acres of deciduous forest, comprising nearly 88 percent of all forested Illinois land. Upland deciduous forests may be found in all Illinois counties.

WHAT LIVES HERE?

More than one-half of Illinois' native flora and one-half of the threatened or endangered flora are found in Illinois' forests. More than 75 percent of the wildlife habitat in the state is in the forests. Beech, oaks, hickories and maples are common trees in the canopy of the upland deciduous forest. The understory is composed of small trees and shrubs, while fungi, ferns, mosses, wildflowers and vines grow on the ground. White-tailed deer, squirrels, chipmunks, opossums, raccoons, owls, woodpeckers, reptiles, insects, spiders and many other animals live in or migrate through this diverse habitat.

RECREATION

hiking, hunting, cross-country skiing, camping, horseback riding, picnicking, bicycling, wildlife watching, photography

WHERE IS IT FOUND?

Upland deciduous forests may be found in every Illinois county. Edward L. Ryerson Conservation Area near Deerfield, Castle Rock State Park near Oregon, Weldon Springs State Recreation Area near Clinton, Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area near Chandlerville, Pere Marquette State Park near Grafton, Beall Woods State Park and Nature Preserve near Mt. Carmel and Giant City State Park near Carbondale are just a few examples of places where an upland deciduous forest may be easily accessed and visited in Illinois.