

BCN HABITAT CATEGORIES

Adapted from Chicago Wilderness Terrestrial Community Classification System

October 2010

A. Forest

A1. oak woodland

A1a. oak woodland with shrubs

A1b. oak woodland without shrubs

A2. upland non-oak (mesic) forest

A3. floodplain forest

A3a. mesic floodplain forest

A3b. wet floodplain forest

A4. conifers

A5. unassociated woody growth

B. Shrubland

B1. shrubland with grass/sedge ground cover

B1a. dry shrubland

B1b. moist shrubland

B2. shrub areas without grassy openings

B3. streamside thicket

C. Grassland

C1. savanna

C1a. savanna with shrubs

C1b. savanna without shrubs

C2. prairie

C2a. dry prairie

C2b. moist prairie

C3. meadow

C3a. dry meadow

C3b. moist meadow

D. Aquatic

D1. lake or pond

D2. marsh

D2a. marsh with shrubs

D2b. marsh without shrubs

D3. bog

E. Shoreline

F. Agricultural

G. Residential

G1. Urban (dense buildings, small lots)

G2. Suburban

G3. Park or cemetery

H. Commercial

H1. Dense development

H2. Landscaped Campus

H3. Brownfields/abandoned

A. FOREST

A1. oak woodland

Multi-layered with canopy dominated by oaks of 10-inch or greater DBH. Oak woodlands developed under 50-80% canopy cover, but overgrown woodlands may have even more. White oak dominated woodlands developed on well-drained soil; bur, red and white oak woodlands in mesic environments; and swamp white or pin oak woodlands in wetter conditions. Flatwoods, on level ground with a clay pan, were also dominated by swamp white oak, except for sand flatwoods, where pin oaks were dominant.

A1a. oak woodland with shrubs (native or non-native)

Indicator species: blue-winged warbler, eastern towhee, black-billed cuckoo, Cooper's hawk, yellow-billed cuckoo, eastern wood-pewee, cedar waxwing, yellow-throated vireo, blue-gray gnatcatcher, rose-breasted grosbeak, Baltimore oriole

A1b. oak woodland without shrubs

Indicator species: Cooper's hawk, yellow-billed cuckoo, red-headed woodpecker, great crested flycatcher, eastern wood-pewee, cedar waxwing, indigo bunting, yellow-throated vireo, blue-gray gnatcatcher, rose-breasted grosbeak, Baltimore oriole

A2. upland non-oak (dry or mesic) forest

Multi-layered with no oaks but with other trees of 10-inch or greater DBH, often dominated by sugar maples, basswood and ash. Upland non-oak forests developed under 80-100% canopy cover.

Indicator species: broad-winged hawk, hairy woodpecker, veery, wood thrush, rose-breasted grosbeak, scarlet tanager, ovenbird, red-eyed vireo

A3. floodplain forest

Along rivers and streams; 80-100% canopy cover.

Indicator species: barred owl, red-shouldered hawk, Acadian flycatcher, yellow-throated vireo, prothonotary warbler

A3a. mesic floodplain forest

Has less frequent flooding than wet floodplain forest, more well-developed understory. Typical trees include ash and elm.

A3b. wet floodplain forest

Frequently flooded, more open understory. Dominant trees are silver maple, eastern cottonwood, black willow.

A4. conifers

With a few possible exceptions, conifer stands are imported to our area.

Indicator species: chipping sparrow, black-throated green warbler

A5. UWG: unassociated woody growth

Covered with trees but with few or no oaks and no distinctive herbaceous species.

B. SHRUBLAND

B1. shrubland with grass/sedge ground cover

B1a. dry or mesic shrubland

Dominant plants: little bluestem, American hazelnut, poverty oat grass, wild plum, Iowa crab, scarlet oak, bur oak, prairie willow

Indicator species: loggerhead shrike, vesper sparrow, lark sparrow

B1b. moist shrubland

Dominant plants: blue joint grass, red-osier dogwood, Virginia wild rye, bur oak, blue-leaved and meadow willow, meadowsweet

Indicator species: American woodcock, willow flycatcher, brown thrasher, field sparrow, yellow warbler, common yellowthroat, yellow-breasted chat, Bell's vireo

B2. shrub areas without grassy openings

Shrubs with little grass and few trees.

Indicator species: black-billed cuckoo, eastern towhee, blue-winged warbler, yellow-breasted chat, American goldfinch, northern flicker, eastern kingbird, Baltimore oriole

B3. streamside thicket

Dense shrubs (often with scattered trees) along watercourses, typically dominated by willows and dogwoods.

Indicator species: black-crowned night-heron, willow flycatcher, warbling vireo, yellow warbler

C. GRASSLAND

C1. savanna

Multi-layered, dominated by oaks with grass/sedge ground cover. True oak savannas have 10-50% canopy but are now rare in our area. Dominant trees were bur oak, black oak, swamp white oak.

C1a. savanna with shrubs

Indicator species: black-billed cuckoo, eastern towhee, blue-winged warbler, yellow-breasted chat, American goldfinch, red-tailed hawk, barn owl, red-headed woodpecker, northern flicker, eastern kingbird, eastern bluebird, Baltimore oriole, orchard oriole

C1b. savanna without shrubs

Indicator species: red-tailed hawk, barn owl, red-headed woodpecker, northern flicker, eastern kingbird, Baltimore oriole

C2. prairie

Abundant native, non-aggressive grasses and wildflowers with no trees or shrubs.

C2a. dry prairie

Includes mesic prairie.

Dominant plants: little bluestem, big bluestem, Indian grass, prairie dropseed, Bicknell's sedge, porcupine grass

Indicator species: upland sandpiper, horned lark, grasshopper sparrow, western meadowlark

C2b. moist prairie

Includes sedge meadows, seeps and fens.

Dominant plants: blue joint grass, sedges, prairie cordgrass

Indicator species: American bittern, northern harrier, king rail, short-eared owl, sedge wren, savannah sparrow, Henslow's sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, dickcissel, eastern meadowlark, bobolink

C3. meadow

Eurasian grasses with few or no trees or shrubs, including hay meadows and old fields (abandoned cropland).

C3a. dry meadow

Indicator species: upland sandpiper, horned lark, grasshopper sparrow, western meadowlark

C3b. moist meadow

Indicator species: American bittern, northern harrier, king rail, short-eared owl, sedge wren, savannah sparrow, Henslow's sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, dickcissel, eastern meadowlark, bobolink

D. AQUATIC

D1. lake or pond

Permanent standing water with little or no emergent vegetation.

D2. marsh

Permanent or long-standing water with vegetation such as reeds, cattails, buttonbush and arrowhead.

D2a. marsh with shrubs

Indicator species: green heron, black-crowned night-heron, willow flycatcher

D2b. marsh without shrubs

Indicator species: pied-billed grebe, American bittern, least bittern, blue-winged teal, ruddy duck, Virginia rail, sora, common moorhen, American coot, black tern, Forster's tern, marsh wren, yellow-headed blackbird

D3. bog

Glacial relict wetlands in kettles.

Dominant plants: sedges, leatherleaf, marsh shield fern, sphagnum moss

Indicator species: willow flycatcher, yellow warbler

E. SHORELINE

Shores of Lake Michigan.

Dominant plants: marram grass, sand reed

Indicator species: piping plover, spotted sandpiper, common tern

F. AGRICULTURAL

G. RESIDENTIAL

G1. urban (dense buildings, small lots)

G2. suburban

G3. park or cemetery

H. COMMERCIAL

H1. dense development

H2. landscaped campus

H3. brownfields/abandoned