Southern Ridge and Valley / Cumberland Dry Calcareous Forest

Macrogroup: Central Oak-Pine

Description:
A hardwood forest of dry to dry-mesic calcareous substrates dominated by combinations of oaks (white, red, black, post, chinkapin), hickories, sugar maple, black maple, white ash, and sometimes pine and/or red-cedar. Tulip poplar and black locust are common trees in logged stands. Understory and herb layers vary from lush to sparse. These forests are the matrix vegetation type under natural conditions. Much of this system is currently composed of successional forests that have arisen after repeated cutting, clearing, and cultivation of the original forests. Endemic to the southern part of the Ridge and Valley province, it reaches only into the south-western part of our region.

Ecological Setting and Natural Processes:
Occurs on a variety of landscape positions including ridgetops and upper and midslopes, but on deeper soils than glade systems in the same area. Its range is primarily underlain by circumneutral substrates (limestone, dolomite, calcareous sandstones and shales), which influence the vegetation composition. Fire frequency and intensity are factors determining the relative mixture of hardwood and evergreen trees in this system.

Similar Habitat Types:
Southern Ridge and Valley Calcareous Glade and Woodland is a similar and overlapping system, but occurs as small patches of low canopy cover, on shallower soils at lower land positions. Allegheny-Cumberland Dry Oak Forest and Woodland is often on more acidic ridges upslope; Southern Appalachian Oak Forest and Southern and Central Appalachian Cove Forest are often below.

Crosswalk to State Name Examples:
Appalachian Sugar Maple - Chinkapin Oak Dry Calcareous Forest (VA), Calcareous Forests And Woodlands (WV)

State Distribution: VA, WV

Total Habitat Acreage: 914,360
Percent Conserved: 9.5%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>State Habitat %</th>
<th>State Acreage (acres)</th>
<th>GAP 1&amp;2 (acres)</th>
<th>GAP 3 (acres)</th>
<th>Unsecured (acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>882,509</td>
<td>11,153</td>
<td>70,795</td>
<td>800,561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>31,851</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>4,659</td>
<td>26,925</td>
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</tbody>
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Crosswalk to State Wildlife Action Plans:
Forest Habitat - Deciduous Forest (VA), Calcareous Forests and Woodlands (WV)
Places to Visit this Habitat:
Blue Ridge Parkway National Park | VA
Falls Ridge Preserve | VA
George Washington and Jefferson National Forest | VA
Natural Tunnel State Park | VA

Associated Species:  *Appendix lists scientific names*

**BIRDS:** cerulean warbler, ovenbird, red-bellied woodpecker, scarlet tanager, summer tanager

**HERPTILES:** black kingsnake, coal skink, common map turtle, loggerhead musk turtle, spiny softshell

**PLANTS:** chinkapin oak (*Quercus muhlenbergii*), common eastern shooting-star (*Dodecatheon meadia*), hoary puccoon (*Lithospermum canescens*), mountain death-camas (*Zigadenus elegans*), northern leatherflower (*Clematis viorna*), purple sedge (*Carex purpurfera*), robin’s-plantain (*Erigeron pulchellus*), round-leaved ragwort (*Senecio obovatus*), slender muhly (*Muhlenbergia tenuiflora*), small-headed sunflower (*Helianthus microcephalus*), stiff-haired sunflower (*Helianthus hirsutus*)

**BIRDS:** appalachian Bewick’s wren, black vulture

**MAMMALS:** allegheny woodrat, eastern small-footed myotis, gray myotis, indiana myotis, virginia big-eared bat

**HERPTILES:** hellbender, pinesnake, southern zigzag salamander

**INSECTS:** over 75 species of rare cave invertebrates, northern metalmark, cherokee clubtail

**PLANTS:** Addison’s leatherflower (*Clematis addisonii*), appalachian bugbane (*Actaea rubifolia*), blue ridge ragwort (*Packera millefolia*), butternut (*Juglans cinerea*), Canby’s mountain-lover (*Paxistima canbyi*), carey’s saxifrage (*Saxifraga careyana*), carolina saxifrage (*Saxifraga caroliniana*), cedar sedge (*Carex juniperorum*), Cooper’s milk-vetch (*Astragalus neglectus*), flat-stemmed spikerush (*Eleocharis compressa*)

Species of Concern (G1-G4):  *Appendix lists scientific names*

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