

Department of Conservation, Bureau of Geology, Natural Areas, and Coastal Resources

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Unpatterned Fen Ecosystem

State Rank: [S5](#)

Fens are peatlands in which groundwater or water from adjacent uplands moves through the area. As a result, plants are exposed to more nutrients, and the vegetation is typically different and more diverse than that of bogs. Peat is moderately- to well-decomposed and of variable thickness. The vegetation consists predominantly of sedges, grasses, reeds, and *Sphagnum* mosses. Bog communities, dominated by heath shrubs, may be present; but though fen and bog vegetation may co-occur, in a fen ecosystem the former is more extensive. This type is broadly defined geographically: in very few locations in southern Maine one may find an [Atlantic White Cedar Bog](#) community as a constituent, but far more common statewide would be the [Northern White Cedar Woodland Fen](#) community.

Natural Communities Associated with Unpatterned Fen Ecosystem

- [Atlantic White Cedar Bog](#)
- [Bog Moss Lawn](#)
- [Huckleberry - Crowberry Bog](#)
- [Leatherleaf Boggy Fen](#)
- [Low Sedge - Buckbean Fen Lawn](#)
- [Mixed Tall Sedge Fen](#)
- [Mountain Holly - Alder Woodland Fen](#)
- [Northern White Cedar Woodland Fen](#)
- [Red Maple Wooded Fen](#)
- [Sedge - Leatherleaf Fen Lawn](#)
- [Sheep Laurel Dwarf Shrub Bog](#)
- [Shrubby Cinquefoil - Sedge Circumneutral Fen](#)
- [Spruce - Larch Wooded Bog](#)
- [Sweetgale Mixed Shrub Fen](#)

Credits

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