

HISTORIC VEGETATION OF THE FLORIDA PARISHES

BY PARISH

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East Baton Rouge

A parish historically supporting complex transitions from longleaf pine to the northeast and spruce pine-hardwood flatwoods in the east, to upland hardwood forest (Southern Mesophytic Forest and Prairie Terrace Loess Forest) in the northwest and west, with wet hardwood flatwoods common on poorly drained flats outside of floodplains in many parts of the parish.

Historic Large-Scale Vegetation Types:

Primary:

Prairie Terrace Loess Forest (an Upland Hardwood Forest) - dominated gently rolling uplands of central and western part of parish.

Wet Hardwood Flatwoods - dominated broad, poorly drained flats in the central and western part of parish.

Spruce Pine-Hardwood Flatwoods - occupied large areas mainly in eastern part of parish.

Secondary:

Southern Mesophytic Forest - on slopes and in ravines in the northwest part of the parish.

Bottomland Hardwood Forest - mainly within the floodplain of the Mississippi River, but also along other larger streams (e.g., the lower Amite River).

Bald Cypress Swamp - mainly within the floodplain of the Mississippi River, but also along other larger streams (e.g., the lower Amite River).

Small Stream Forest - along all perennial streams; "above" bottomland hardwood forest.

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest - occupied hills in the northeast part of parish.

Historic Small-Scale Vegetation types:

Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Pine Forest - on fire-protected slopes and in "second bottoms" of intermediate streams, mainly in the northeastern part of the parish.

Saline Prairie - (Buhler's Plain) on high-sodium silt loams in northwest part of parish.

Live Oak Forest - Within Bottomland Hardwood Forest along Mississippi River in southwest part of parish.

Hardwood Slope Forest - steep slopes in the far northeast part of the parish.

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest - upper and mid-slopes in the longleaf country in the far northeast part of the parish.

Currently Rare Types:

Prairie Terrace Loess Forest

Southern Mesophytic Forest

Spruce Pine-Hardwood Flatwoods

"Saline Prairie" - now extirpated

Live Oak Forest

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest - apparently extirpated

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest

Old-growth examples of any forested community

East Feliciana

A transitional parish from the major longleaf pine vegetational types to the east and the non-longleaf mixed hardwood-pine and upland hardwood forest types to the west.

Historic Large-Scale Vegetation Types:

Primary:

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest - dominated the rolling hills in the central and western part of the parish; occupied upper and mid-slopes and "finger" ridges in the longleaf country.

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest - occupied majority of rolling hills in eastern part of parish, especially ridgetops.

Secondary:

Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Pine Forest - on fire-protected slopes and in "second bottoms" of intermediate streams; possibly in fire protected hills.

Small Stream Forest - Along all perennial streams; "above" bottomland hardwood forest.

Historic Small-Scale Vegetation types:

"Saline Prairie" - may have occurred on high-sodium silt loams in far southwest part of parish.

Hardwood Slope Forest - steep slopes.

Bottomland Hardwood Forest - mainly along parts of the Amite River.

Bald Cypress Swamp - in very poorly drained areas near larger streams.

Bayhead Swamp - may have been scattered in depressions in second bottoms of permanent streams in the east part of the parish.

Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs - may have been scattered on "plateaus" on the gently rolling terrain in the far southeast of the parish.

Gum Swamp - sloughs near permanent streams.

Currently Rare Types:

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest - apparently extirpated

Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs - apparently extirpated, if they ever existed.

Saline Prairie - apparently extirpated, if they ever existed.

Bayhead Swamp

Hardwood Slope Forest

Old-growth examples of any forested community

Livingston

A transitional parish from the major longleaf pine vegetational types to the east and the non-longleaf mixed hardwood-pine forest types to the west.

Historic Large-Scale Vegetation Types:

Primary:

- Spruce Pine-Hardwood Flatwoods* - occupied large areas in flatwoods of central, western and southern part of parish.
- Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs* - dominated flatwoods region in eastern part of parish.
- Bald Cypress Swamp* - Mainly in swamps in far south end of parish, fringing Lake Maurepas and Amite River.

Secondary:

- Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Pine Forest* - on broad high flats partially protected from fire in the southern part of the parish, on lower fire-protected slopes, in "second bottoms" of intermediate streams, and on "islands" in cypress swamps.
- Upland Longleaf Pine Forest* - occupied gently rolling hills in northern and eastern part of parish.
- Bottomland Hardwood Forest* - Along lower reaches of rivers feeding Lake Maurepas.
- Small Stream Forest* - Along all perennial streams; "above" bottomland hardwood forest.

Historic Small-Scale Vegetation types:

- "Saline Prairie"* - on high-sodium silt loams in central and southern part of parish.
- Bayhead Swamp* - Uncommon along poorly defined drainages and in deeper depressions in the flatwoods region.
- Hardwood Slope Forest* - steep slopes.
- Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest* - upper and mid-slopes in the longleaf country in the northern/eastern part of the parish.
- Gum Swamp* - sloughs near permanent streams.

Currently Rare Types:

- Spruce Pine-Hardwood Flatwoods*
- "Saline Prairie"* - now extirpated
- Upland Longleaf Pine Forest* - apparently extirpated
- Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs* - apparently extirpated
- Bayhead Swamp*
- Hardwood Slope Forest*
- Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest*
- Old-growth examples of any forested community

St. Helena

Historic Large-Scale Vegetation Types:

Primary:

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest - occupied vast majority of rolling hills in parish.

Secondary:

Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Pine Forest - on lower fire-protected slopes and in "second bottoms" of intermediate streams.

Small Stream Forest - Along all perennial streams; "above" bottomland hardwood forest.

Historic Small-Scale Vegetation types:

Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs - scattered on "plateaus" on the gently rolling terrain in the far south of the parish.

Bayhead Swamp - Scattered in depressions in second bottoms of permanent streams.

Hardwood Slope Forest - steep slopes.

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest - upper and mid-slopes and on "finger" ridges.

Bottomland Hardwood Forest - mainly along parts of the Amite River.

Bald Cypress Swamp - in very poorly drained areas near larger streams.

Gum Swamp - sloughs near permanent streams.

Currently Rare Types:

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest

Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs - apparently extirpated

Bayhead Swamp

Hardwood Slope Forest

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest

Old-growth examples of any forested community

St. Tammany

Historic Large-Scale Vegetation Types:

Primary:

- Upland Longleaf Pine Forest* - occupied great majority of rolling hills in parish.
- Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs* - greatly dominated flatwoods region in southern part of parish and along western flank of Pearl River.

Secondary:

- Bottomland Hardwood Forest* - Mainly along Pearl River and lower Bogue Chitto River.
- Fresh Marsh* - At lower end of Pearl River and Tchefuncte River.
- Brackish/Intermediate Marsh* - Fringing Lake Pontchartrain.
- Slash Pine-Pond Cypress/ Hardwood Forest* - In broad depressional flatwood settings somewhat exposed to fire. Historically more common east of Abita Springs.
- Pond Cypress/Blackgum Swamp* - In very poorly drained areas near the Pearl River and in swamps on northshore of Lake Pontchartrain.
- Bald Cypress Swamp* - Mainly in places along the Pearl River and along lower end of streams feeding Lake Pontchartrain.
- Small Stream Forest* - Along all perennial streams; "above" bottomland hardwood forest.
- Bayhead Swamp* - Very common along poorly defined drainages and in deeper depressions in the flatwoods region.
- Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Pine Forest* - on lower fire-protected slopes and in "second bottoms" of intermediate streams.

Historic Small-Scale Vegetation types:

- Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Pine Forest* - on lower fire-protected slopes and in "second bottoms" of intermediate streams.
- Hardwood Slope Forest* - steep slopes.
- Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest* - mid-slopes and on "finger" ridges in hills.
- Forested Seep* - lower and mid-slopes in sandy uplands secluded from fire.
- Hillside Seepage Bog* - lower slopes in fire-prone sandy upland longleaf forest.
- Gum Swamp* - sloughs near permanent streams.
- Submergent Estuarine Grass Beds* - In shallow water along northshore of Lake Pontchartrain.

Currently Rare Types:

- Upland Longleaf Pine Forest*
- Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs*
- Slash Pine-Pond Cypress/ Hardwood Forest*
- Hardwood Slope Forest*
- Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest*
- Hillside Seepage Bog*
- Submergent Estuarine Grass Beds*
- Old-growth examples of any forested community

Tangipahoa

Historic Large-Scale Vegetation Types:

Primary:

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest - occupied great majority of rolling hills in parish.

Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs - greatly dominated flatwoods region in southern part of parish.

Bald Cypress Swamp - Mainly in swamps in far south end of parish, fringing Lake Pontchartrain.

Secondary:

Pond Cypress/Blackgum Swamp - In swamps on northshore of Lake Pontchartrain.

Bottomland Hardwood Forest - Mainly along lower Tangipahoa and Natalbany Rivers.

Fresh Marsh - At far south end of parish, in cypress swamps and fringing Lake Pontchartrain.

Small Stream Forest - Along all perennial streams; "above" bottomland hardwood forest.

Bayhead Swamp - Common along poorly defined drainages and in deeper depressions in the flatwoods region.

Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Pine Forest - on lower fire-protected slopes and in "second bottoms" of intermediate streams.

Historic Small-Scale Vegetation types:

Hardwood Slope Forest - steep slopes.

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest - mid-slopes and on "finger" ridges in hills.

Forested Seep - lower and mid-slopes in sandy uplands secluded from fire.

Hillside Seepage Bog - lower slopes in fire-prone sandy upland longleaf forest.

Gum Swamp - sloughs near permanent streams.

Currently Rare Types:

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest

Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs

Hardwood Slope Forest

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest

Hillside Seepage Bog

Old-growth examples of any forested community

Washington Parish

Historic Large-Scale Vegetation Types:

Primary:

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest - occupied more than 80% of parish; in rolling hills.

Secondary:

Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs - bands flanking Pearl River and Bogue Chitto River.

Bottomland Hardwood Forest - Along Pearl River and lower Bogue Chitto River.

Bald Cypress Swamp - Mainly in places along the Pearl River.

Small Stream Forest - Along all perennial streams; "above" bottomland hardwood forest.

Bayhead Swamp - Some large bodies of this type in broad wet depressions along the Bogue Chitto River.

Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Pine Forest - on lower fire-protected slopes and in "second bottoms" of intermediate streams.

Historic Small-Scale Vegetation types:

Hardwood Slope Forest - steep slopes

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest - mid-slopes and on "finger" ridges in hills.

Forested Seep - lower and mid-slopes in sandy uplands secluded from fire

Hillside Seepage Bog - lower slopes in fire-prone sandy upland longleaf forest.

Gum Swamp - sloughs near permanent streams.

Currently Rare Types:

Upland Longleaf Pine Forest

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest

Hardwood Slope Forest

Longleaf Pine Flatwoods/Savannahs

Hillside Seepage Bog

Old-growth examples of any forested community

West Feliciana

A transitional parish from the mixed hardwood-pine vegetational types (mainly Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest) to the east and the upland hardwood forest type (Southern Mesophytic Forest of the Tunica Hills) to the west.

Historic Large-Scale Vegetation Types:

Primary:

Southern Mesophytic Forest (Upland Hardwood Forest) - dominated the high, dissected hills ("Tunica Hills") of the western 3/4 of the parish.

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest - Prominent in the rolling hills in the northeastern part of the parish.

Bottomland Hardwood Forest - dominated the alluvial plain of the Mississippi River in the western part of the parish.

Secondary:

Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Pine Forest - on fire-protected slopes and in "second bottoms" of intermediate streams in the central and eastern part of the parish; possibly in fire protected hills in the eastern part of the parish.

Small Stream Forest - Along all perennial streams; "above" bottomland hardwood forest.

Bald Cypress Swamp - Large bodies mainly located in the deeper parts of the Mississippi River alluvial plain in the west of the parish, especially Cat Island Swamp (= "Tunica Swamp").

Historic Small-Scale Vegetation types:

Hardwood Slope Forest - steep slopes in the far northeast of the parish.

Gum Swamp - sloughs near permanent streams in the northeast of the parish.

Currently Rare Types:

Shortleaf Pine/Oak-Hickory Forest

Hardwood Slope Forest

Gum Swamp

Old-growth examples of any forested community