

NORTHERN BUR OAK OPENING

Site Characteristics: Stands occur on rolling to moderately sloping sites on glacial till or outwash. The soils range from clay loam to sandy loam.

Vegetation Characteristics: This community is characterized by scattered mature trees in a graminoid-dominated matrix. Bur Oak is the most abundant tree; the herbaceous layer is dominated by Big Bluestem, Indiangrass, and Prairie Dropseed. Little Bluestem and Porcupinegrass are often found in drier areas and Switchgrass can be common in wetter patches. The shrub layer is variable.

Range: Western Iowa

Conservation Status: G1 - Critically Imperiled

Management Considerations: Quaking Aspen can be a common invader. Many occurrences have been lost to agriculture, or degraded by heavy grazing. Frequent fires (every 2-10 years) associated with the dominant prairie matrix maintained a very open-canopy structure in this type. Type may also originate through more catastrophic fires in oak forests and woodlands during drought years (Grimm 1984). In the absence of fires, Quaking Aspen or Green Ash may invade and stands may develop into Bur Oak - Quaking Aspen / Hazelnut spp. Woodland (CEGL002139).

Iowa NRCS Plant Community Description

This community description is a compilation of the Community Association and its over-riding Community Alliance descriptions as provided by NatureServe (www.natureserve.org/explorer). Where necessary, community descriptions were adapted as recommended by Iowa plant community experts.

10/17/2011

OPENING, NORTHERN BUR OAK						
SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STRATA	FUNCTIONAL GROUP	IA CofC	SEEDS/LB	STATE STATUS
Amelanchier spp.	Service Berries	Shrub Layer	SHRUB			
Amorpha canescens	Lead plant	Shrub Layer	SUB-SHRUB, LEGUME	8	256000	
Andropogon gerardii	Big bluestem	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	4	160000	
Antennaria neglecta	Pussytoes	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	2	3360000	
Antennaria plantaginifolia	Ladies'-tobacco	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	2	4400000	
Calamagrostis canadensis	Bluejoint	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	5	4480000	
Carex spp.	True Sedges	Herbaceous Layer	SEDGE, COOL SEASON			
Cornus foemina	Gray dogwood	Shrub Layer	SHRUB	1	17718	
Corylus americana	Hazelnut	Shrub Layer, Dominant	SHRUB	3	480	
Hesperostipa spartea	Porcupine grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	6	10880	
Lespedeza capitata	Round-headed bush clover	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB, LEGUME	3	128000	
Panicum virgatum	Switchgrass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	5	224000	
Prunus virginiana	Choke cherry	Shrub Layer	SHRUB	2	4971	
Quercus alba	White oak	Canopy, Associate	TREE	6	128	
Quercus bicolor	Swamp white oak	Canopy, Associate	TREE	8	112	
Quercus macrocarpa	Bur oak	Canopy, Dominant	TREE	4	64	
Quercus stellata	Post oak	Canopy, Associate	TREE	4	380	
Ratibida pinnata	Gray-headed coneflower	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	672000	
Rosa spp.	Wild rose	Shrub Layer	SUB-SHRUB			
Rubus allegheniensis	Blackberry	Shrub Layer	SUB-SHRUB	2	262000	
Salix humilis	Prairie willow	Shrub Layer	SHRUB	8	2817344	
Schizachyrium scoparium	Little bluestem	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	5	240000	
Silphium laciniatum	Compass plant	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	7	19200	
Sorghastrum nutans	Indian grass	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	4	192000	
Sporobolus heterolepis	Prairie dropseed	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	9	256000	
Symphoricarpos occidentalis	Wolfberry, buckbrush	Shrub Layer	SHRUB	0	75033	
Zizia aurea	Golden Alexander's	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	6	176000	

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