

River Bulrush Marsh

Site Characteristics: This community is found along large rivers and lakeshores. Stands occur on wetland sites that are flooded for most or all of the growing season, but are particularly found in areas subject to seasonal flooding that typically draws down by late summer. Soils can be largely mineral or contain significant organic matter.

Vegetation Characteristics: This community often occurs as dense stands with interspersed channels or pools of open water. The diagnostic dominant is River Bulrush, which often forms near mono-dominant patches. Other marsh associates include Broad-leaved Cattail, Narrow-leaved Cattail, Softstem Bulrush, Common Bur Reed, Heavy-leaved Lake Sedge (especially in the shallower parts of the community), Duckweed spp., and Common Bladderwort. Softstem Bulrush can be codominant in places. Floating-leaved and submergent plants have low cover (Harris et al. 1996).

Range: This community may be extensive along major rivers and dependence on flooding may make it a good indicator of natural flooding regimes.

Conservation Status: G4 – Apparently Secure

Management Considerations: In Mississippi River floodplains, extensive stands once occurred, but they are now subject to very altered hydrologic regimes (since the 1930s) (E. Epstein pers. comm. 1999). In the northern tallgrass prairie and Mississippi River floodplains, these marshes can be heavily degraded due to heavy siltation, nutrient enrichment, and plowed floodplains (R. Dana, E. Epstein pers. comm. 1999)



Iowa NRCS Plant Community Description

This community description is a compilation of the Community Association and it's 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.

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