

WEST GULF COASTAL PLAIN WET LONGLEAF PINE SAVANNA AND FLATWOODS (NOT MAPPED)

Nature Serve ID: CES203.191

Geology: This system is associated with Lissie and upper Beaumont Formations (including the Montgomery, Irene, and Bentley terraces).

Landform: Mesic to seasonally saturated low areas and flats, on level to gently rolling uplands. Microtopographic variation is provided by the presence of swales and pimple mounds.

Soils: Sandy loams to silty loams that are strongly acid, nutrient poor, and low in organic constituents. Typically these soils are hydric, with seasonal fluctuations between saturation and droughtiness.

Description: This system may be characterized as having a sparse canopy (under natural fire cycles) dominated by *Pinus palustris* (longleaf pine). Other species in the canopy include *Quercus stellata* (post oak), *Quercus marilandica* (blackjack oak), *Nyssa sylvatica* (blackgum), *Quercus laurifolia* (laurel oak), *Quercus falcata* (southern red oak), and *Liquidambar styraciflua* (sweetgum). Shrubs are typically limited in distribution within the system to local topographic highs and include species such as *Morella cerifera* (wax-myrtle), *Ilex vomitoria* (yaupon), *Symplocos tinctoria* (common sweetleaf), *Cyrilla racemiflora* (leatherwood), and others. The herbaceous layer may be highly diverse. Drier sites may be dominated by *Schizachyrium scoparium* (little bluestem), *Schizachyrium tenerum* (slender bluestem), *Eupatorium rotundifolium* (roundleaf eupatorium), and others. Wetter sites may not have species showing a clear dominance. Species such as *Liatris* spp. (gay-feathers), *Xyris* spp. (yellow-eyed grasses), *Rhexia* spp. (meadowbeauties), *Rhynchospora* spp. (beaksedges), *Fuirena* spp. (umbrellasedges), *Marshallia graminifolia* (grassleaf Barbara's buttons), *Aletris aurea* (golden colicroot), and many other species may share dominance in this system. Suppression of fire in this system has lead to increased woody dominance. *Pinus taeda* (loblolly pine), *Pinus elliottii* (slash pine), *Liquidambar styraciflua* (sweetgum), *Nyssa sylvatica* (blackgum), and *Acer rubrum* (red maple) may now dominate the canopy of these sites, with a thick understory dominated by *Ilex vomitoria* (yaupon) and *Morella cerifera* (wax-myrtle). Due in part to the difficulty in distinguishing *Pinus palustris* (longleaf pine) dominated sites from sites dominated by other pines, occurrences of this system may be mapped within the system West Gulf Coastal Plain Pine – Hardwood Flatwoods.