

Glossary

Arborist: A licensed professional who works with clients to assess the health and safety of shade and ornamental trees. They can recommend and perform treatments such as tree felling, tree removal, and pruning.

Aspect: The compass direction (north, south, east, or west) toward which a slope faces.

Aspen-birch cover type: A wooded area composed of quaking aspen (also known as poplar or popple) and paper birch. Both are pioneer species that invade disturbed areas but don't grow well in the shade. Other species, like pin cherry and red maple, often grow with aspen and birch.

Baler: A piece of equipment that compresses cut Christmas trees and bundles them in netting for easier shipping.

Blazed tree: A tree marked with an ax and painted to delineate a boundary line.

Branch collar: The swollen area of trunk tissue that forms around the base of a branch.

Canopy: The more or less continuous cover formed by tree crowns in a forest.

Conifer: A cone-bearing tree.

Cover: Protected places where animals can feel safe. For example, a red fox den in a rocky hillside.

Crop Tree: Trees favored by a landowner to enhance a stand's future timber value.

Deciduous: Trees that lose all their leaves annually. Trees such as maple, ash, cherry, and larch are deciduous.

Disturbance: A natural or man-made event that causes a change in forest cover. Common forest disturbances in New England include clearing for agriculture, windstorms, ice storms, fires, floods, logging, mining, and development.

Edge: The boundary between two ecological communities. For example, the transition from a field to a forest is an edge. Edges often provide valuable habitat for a variety of wildlife species.

Even-aged: A stand in which most of the trees originated at roughly the same time. Even-aged stands can result from clearcutting and planting, catastrophic wildfires, or the abandonment of cleared land.

Forest cover type or Forest type: An association of tree species that have similar ecological requirements. Some common forest types in Maine are spruce-fir, northern hardwood, pine-oak, and aspen-birch. Forest types are often simplified into the categories of hardwood, softwood, and mixed wood.

Forest floor: The home to small woodland flowers and bushes, tree seedlings, small mammals, ground-nesting birds, insects, amphibians, and many other kinds of life.

Gap: A canopy opening generally less than two acres in size. Gaps create habitat conditions that are often beneficial to certain wildlife species.

Habitat: The food, water, cover, and space required by wildlife.

Hardwood: A general term referring to deciduous trees with broad leaves and seeds enclosed in fruit.

Invasive: Non-native plants and animals that cause economic, environmental, and health problems when introduced to an area.

Leaf litter: Decaying wood and leaves on the forest floor. It is home to earthworms, beetles, and microscopic organisms that recycle rotting material into nutrient-rich soil.

Loam: Soil with a fairly even ratio of sand, silt, and clay mixed with organic matter. A preferred soil type for many agricultural purposes.

Low-impact timber harvesting method: Any technique or combination of techniques that reduces the negative impact of timber harvesting on soil, water, trees left to continue growing, and wildlife habitat.

Management plan: A written document based on a landowner's objectives and the resources on the ground. It guides future activities to care for the land and accomplish the landowner's objectives over the long term.

Mast trees and shrubs: Woody plants that produce fruits, nuts, or seeds eaten by wildlife.

Mineral soil: The non-organic component of soil composed of sand, silt, and clay.

Monoculture: Forest stands composed of one species and often established by planting.

Northern hardwood cover type: A cover type made up mostly of deciduous tree species that are also known as hardwoods. Colorful fall foliage usually indicates that a woodland is composed of a variety of hardwoods. Yellow birch, sugar maple, and American beech are the most common species in this cover type.

Open woods: Forested areas with numerous gaps or openings in the canopy.

Overstory: The part of the forest canopy formed by the crowns of the largest trees. The uppermost canopy layer.

Pine-oak cover type: Common to the southern part of Maine. This cover type primarily includes white pine and red oak. However, it may include red pine and a variety of other oaks.

Pioneer species: Sun-loving species that grow quickly in newly created openings.

Pure stand: A stand composed almost entirely of one tree species. They can occur naturally or as a result of thinning or tree planting. Pure stands of red pine, white pine, hemlock, and beech are common in some parts of the state.

Rain garden: Low-lying areas landscaped with perennial flowers and native vegetation to soak up water and manage storm runoff.

Riparian area: Areas directly adjacent to waterbodies and wetlands. They are important to more kinds of wildlife than any other habitat type in the state.

Shade-intolerant: Species that grow well in full sun but not well in shade. Pioneer species are most often shade-intolerant.

Shade-tolerant: Species capable of growing in the shade. They tend to be secondary species that follow pioneer species during the process of succession.

Site: The combination of biotic, climatic, topographic, and soil conditions of an area. It largely determines the character and productivity of forest stands.

Snag: Dead standing trees. Snags serve as perches and provide important food and cover for a wide variety of wildlife species.

Softwood: A general term referring to cone-bearing trees that have needles and retain them in the winter.

Soil map: A map that depicts the different kinds of soil in an area. They are available from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) or online using Web Soil Survey.

Space: The entire area that an animal requires to find food, water, and cover. Space needs vary from one species to the next and can also vary seasonally within the same species.

Spruce-fir cover type: A forest cover type that primarily consists of red spruce and balsam fir. It is the most common type in northern and eastern Maine.

Stand: A group of forest trees of sufficiently uniform species, age, and condition to be considered a homogeneous unit for management purposes.

Stumpage: A forestry term that means the income landowners receive from selling timber. The textbook definition is the value of standing trees in a forest.

Succession: The natural replacement of one plant community by another over time.

Thinning: A forestry treatment in which some trees are cut (or removed) from a stand to provide more room for the remaining trees to grow.

Topping: A harmful pruning practice where the vertical stem and primary upper branches on larger trees are cut back to stubs.

Topsoil (A horizon): A nutrient rich soil layer below the O horizon (organic layer) and above the B horizon (mineral layer).

Understory: The lower layers of vegetation in the forest.

Uneven-aged: A forested area with trees of three or more distinct age classes.

Vernal pool: An ephemeral body of water that fills in the spring, holds water for at least ten days, dries up by fall, and does not contain fish. Vernal pools are an extremely important habitat for a variety of amphibians and reptiles.