

Morella pensylvanica - *Empetrum nigrum* Shrubland

COMMON NAME Northern Bayberry - Black Crowberry Shrubland
SYNONYM Crowberry - Bayberry Maritime Shrubland
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS Dwarf-shrubland (IV)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS Evergreen dwarf-shrubland (IV.A)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP Needle-leaved or microphyllous evergreen dwarf-shrubland (IV.A.1)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP Natural/Semi-natural (IV.A.1.N)
FORMATION Creeping or matted needle-leaved or microphyllous evergreen dwarf-shrubland (IV.A.1.N.b)
ALLIANCE EMPETRUM NIGRUM DWARF-SHRUBLAND ALLIANCE
CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 2
USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM Terrestrial

RANGE

Acadia National Park

This association has been observed on Little Moose Island.

Globally

This association occurs in Maine and possibly Nova Scotia.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

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Extremely exposed headlands, with vegetation carpeting the bedrock. Typically with very little slope, and with pockets of peaty soli developing in sheltered rock hollows. Salt spray, fog, and wind are nearly constant elements.

Globally

This boreal dwarf-shrubland community of coastal headlands occurs on acidic rock substrate with little to no soil development.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Acadia National Park

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Dwarf Shrub	<i>Empetrum nigrum</i> , <i>Myrica pensylvanica</i> , <i>Rubus hispidus</i> , <i>Vaccinium macrocarpon</i> , <i>Juniperus communis</i> , <i>Photinia melanocarpa</i>
Herbaceous	<i>Sibbaldiopsis tridentata</i> , <i>Carex nigra</i> , <i>Prenanthes trifoliata</i>
Non-vascular	<i>Cladina sylvatica</i>

Globally

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Short Shrub	<i>Myrica pensylvanica</i>
Dwarf Shrub	<i>Empetrum nigrum</i>
Herbaceous	<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i> , <i>Juncus greenei</i> , <i>Trisetum spicatum</i> , <i>Danthonia compressa</i> , <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> , <i>Plantago maritima</i> , <i>Ligusticum scoticum</i> , <i>Sibbaldiopsis tridentata</i> , <i>Carex nigra</i>

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

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Empetrum nigrum, *Sibbaldiopsis tridentata*

Globally

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

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Mat-forming vegetation on exposed headlands. Most of the cover is shrubs 30 cm or less in height (*Empetrum nigrum* and *Myrica pensylvanica* dominant), punctuated by islands of taller shrubs (some *Myrica*) or stunted trees (most commonly *Picea mariana*). The dwarf shrub layer often forms an almost continuous carpet: *Rubus hispidus*, *Vaccinium macrocarpon*, *V. angustifolia*, *Juniperus communis*, and *Photinia melanocarpa* are common associates of the *Empetrum* - *Myrica* dominants. Herbs are patchy among the shrub mats. *Sibbaldiopsis tridentata*, *Carex nigra*, and *Prenanthes trifoliolata* are typical; *Oclobena nemoralis*, *Triadenum fraseri*, *Iris versicolor*, and certain woodland species such as *Trientalis borealis* and *Maianthemum canadense* are found in some locations. The bryoid layer is minor, but typically features *Cladina* lichens.

Globally

The dominant shrub is *Empetrum nigrum* which forms a thick mat. *Myrica pensylvanica* is codominant or a frequent associate, with other shrubs including *Vaccinium macrocarpon*, *Vaccinium vitis-idaea*, *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*, *Rubus hispidus*, *Juniperus communis*, and *Aronia melanocarpa*. Herbaceous species may include *Campanula rotundifolia*, *Juncus greenei*, *Agrostis*

USGS-NPS Vegetation Mapping Program
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hyemalis, *Trisetum spicatum*, *Danthonia compressa*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Plantago maritima*, *Ligusticum scothicum*, *Solidago simplex* var. *randii*, *Sibbaldiopsis tridentata*, *Carex nigra*, and *Prenanthes trifoliolata*.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

CONSERVATION RANK G?.

DATABASE CODE CEGL006510

COMMENTS

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Herb composition varies but the shrub dominants are fairly constant. Islands of full-grown trees may occur within expanses of this type.

Northern Maritime Rocky Headland (*Solidago sempervirens* - (*Rhodiola rosea*) - *Juniperus horizontalis* Sparse Vegetation), also on exposed headlands, shares many species with this type but is sparse vegetation, not dwarf-shrub mats as this is. Other vegetation types featuring *Empetrum nigrum* are either peatland vegetation types, or alpine.

Globally