

USGS-NPS Vegetation Mapping Program
Congaree Swamp National Monument

Planera aquatica Forest

COMMON NAME Planertree Forest

SYNONYM

PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS Forest (I.)

PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS Deciduous forest (I.B.)

PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP Cold-deciduous forest (I.B.2.)

PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP Natural/Semi-natural (I.B.2.N.)

FORMATION Seasonally flooded cold-deciduous forest (I.B.2.N.e.)

ALLIANCE *Planera aquatica* Seasonally Flooded Forest Alliance

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 1

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM Palustrine

RANGE

Globally

Planera aquatica Forest is distributed throughout the southeastern Coastal Plain from North Carolina south to Georgia and possibly Florida; in the lower Gulf Coastal Plain from panhandle Florida west possibly to Texas; and in the Mississippi River Alluvial Plain north to Kentucky, southern Illinois, and southern Missouri.

Congaree Swamp National Monument

This community occurs relatively close to the Congaree River, probably throughout the park.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

Globally

Planera aquatica Forest occurs most commonly in backswamps and other quiet waters. At least some occurrences arise in backswamps and sloughs formerly dominated by *Taxodium distichum*, *Nyssa biflora*, *Fraxinus pennsylvanica*, and other bottomland species that, due to rapid siltation, experience severe hydrologic modification resulting in shifts in dominance.

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This type occurs in the Monument in sloughs. Soils are seasonally flooded, and probability of annual flooding is 100 percent. At least one occurrence is within a slough that is experiencing rapid siltation and shifting species dominance as described above.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Globally

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Tree canopy	<i>Planera aquatica</i>

Congaree Swamp National Monument

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Tree canopy	<i>Planera aquatica</i> , <i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i> , <i>Populus heterophylla</i>

DIAGNOSTIC SPECIES

Globally

Planera aquatica

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Planera aquatica, Fraxinus pennsylvanica, Populus heterophylla

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Globally

These short-statured forests are dominated by *Planera aquatica*. They sometimes have an essentially monospecific canopy and a scattered, emergent canopy of *Taxodium ascendens*, *Taxodium distichum*, *Nyssa biflora*, *Populus heterophylla*, *Acer negundo*, *Fraxinus caroliniana*, *Liquidambar styraciflua*, *Platanus occidentalis*, *Carya aquatica*, and *Fraxinus pennsylvanica*, among others. The herbaceous layer in these forests is sparse and can include *Saururus cernuus*, *Boehmeria cylindrica*, *Berchemia scandens*, *Vitis rotundifolia*, and others.

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Planera aquatica Forest is dominated by a canopy of *Planera aquatica* (60 to 100 percent coverage) with a scattered, emergent canopy of *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* and *Populus heterophylla* and a subcanopy of *Fraxinus caroliniana*. Other typical species of the canopy and subcanopy are *Carya aquatica*, *Celtis laevigata*, *Nyssa aquatica*, and *Platanus occidentalis*. The herbaceous and vine/liana strata are sparse, and common species include *Polygonum hydropiperoides*, *Pluchea camphorata*, *Senecio glabellus*, *Ampelopsis arborea*, *Campsis radicans*, *Toxicodendron radicans*, *Vitis rotundifolia*, and *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

CONSERVATION RANK G4?

RANK JUSTIFICATION

Planera aquatica Forest is likely relatively common across its range, but additional rank evaluation is needed.

DATABASE CODE CEGL007394

COMMENTS

REFERENCES