

USGS-NPS Vegetation Mapping Program

Isle Royale National Park

Taxus canadensis - Viburnum edule - Cornus sericea - Alnus viride - Oplopanax horridus Shrubland [Provisional]

COMMON NAME	Canada Yew - Squashberry - Red-osier Dogwood - Mountain Alder - Devil's-club Shrubland
SYNONYM	Balsam Fir / Canada Yew Woodland
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Shrubland (III)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Mixed evergreen-deciduous shrubland (III.C)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Mixed evergreen - cold-deciduous shrubland (III.C.2)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (III.C.2.N)
FORMATION	Mixed evergreen - cold-deciduous shrubland (III.C.2.N.a)
ALLIANCE	TAXUS CANADENSIS - MIXED DECIDUOUS SHRUBLAND ALLIANCE [PROVISIONAL]

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 3

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM TERRESTRIAL

RANGE

Isle Royale National Park

This is a rare community restricted in the park to Passage Island.

Globally

This association is found in Michigan and Ontario.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

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This community occupies gentle to somewhat steep slopes facing southeast, at elevations ranging from 613 to 650 feet. Soils are usually sandy loams. The variant occupies gentle, south-facing slopes at elevations of about 630 feet.

Globally

This association has only been described at Isle Royale NP. The global description is the same as the local description until more examples can be examined.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Isle Royale National Park

Stratum

Tree canopy

Short shrub

Forb

Fern

Species

Thuja occidentalis, *Abies balsamea*, *Sorbus decora*

Taxus canadensis, *Oplopanax horridus*, *Viburnum edule*, *Alnus viridis*

Cornus canadensis

Lycopodium annotinum

Globally

Stratum

Tree canopy

Short shrub

Forb

Fern

Species

Thuja occidentalis, *Abies balsamea*, *Sorbus decora*

Taxus canadensis, *Oplopanax horridus*, *Viburnum edule*, *Alnus viridis*

Cornus canadensis

Lycopodium annotinum

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Isle Royale National Park

Taxus canadensis, *Oplopanax horridus*, *Viburnum edule*, *Alnus viridis*, *Cornus sericea*

Globally

Taxus canadensis, *Oplopanax horridus*, *Viburnum edule*, *Alnus viridis*, *Cornus sericea*

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

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This Canada yew - squashberry mixed shrubland is a mixture of evergreen and deciduous shrubs that form a dense, nearly impenetrable thicket. There may be a sparse cover (0 to 10%) of trees over 5 m tall including *Thuja occidentalis*, *Abies balsamea*, or *Sorbus decora*. Cover of tall shrubs varies from 5 to 50%, the most abundant tall shrubs are *Abies*

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balsamea, *Sorbus decora*, and *Alnus viridis* (each usually 1 to 5% cover). Cover of short shrubs varies from 40 to 90%; the most abundant short shrubs are *Taxus canadensis* (5 to 50% cover, average is 26%), *Viburnum edule* (5 to 25% cover), *Oplopanax horridus* (5 to 25% cover), *Prunus pensylvanica* (5 to 25%), *Cornus sericea* (1 to 5%), and *Chamaedaphne calyculata* (1 to 5%). Cover of dwarf-shrubs varies from 0 to 70%, the most abundant dwarf-shrubs are *Diervilla lonicera* and *Empetrum nigrum* (each with 5 to 25% cover). Cover of herbs varies from 10 to 70%; the most abundant herbs are *Lycopodium annotinum*, *Cornus canadensis*, *Dryopteris expansa*, and *Clintonia borealis* (each usually 5 to 25% cover). Cover of nonvascular plants is usually less than 10%; the most abundant nonvascular plants are foliose and crustose lichens, *Pleurozium schreberi*, and *Dicranum polysetum*.

There is an uncommon variant of this association. The *Abies balsamea* / *Taxus canadensis* Woodland variant is an open canopy, evergreen woodland that is a rare variant of the Canada yew - squashberry mixed shrubland. Canopy cover of trees over 5 m tall is about 50%; *Abies balsamea* is the single most abundant tree (25 to 50% cover). The shrub layer is a dense thicket with about 70% cover; *Taxus canadensis* is the most abundant shrub (over 50 to 75% cover), other characteristic shrubs mixed with the *Taxus* include *Oplopanax horridus*, *Alnus viridis*, *Sorbus decora*, and *Viburnum edule*. Cover of herbs is about 20%; the most abundant herbs are *Dryopteris expansa*, *Cornus canadensis*, and *Lycopodium annotinum*. This variant is only known from ridges on Passage Island; it may also occur in other areas in the northeastern end of the park.

Globally

This association has only been described at Isle Royale NP. The global description is the same as the local description until more examples can be examined.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

Isle Royale National Park

Information not available

CONSERVATION RANK G?

DATABASE CODE CEG005254

MAP UNITS 35, 22

COMMENTS

REFERENCES