

Southern Michigan Succession

Tolerant Tree Community

The Tolerant Tree Community is characterized by large trees, dense canopy, and open midlevel and floor level. The trees are tolerant of or able to grow in shade. These trees can grow under trees of the same kind. Because of this rapid replacement, there is a continuation of this tree community generation after generation. It is thus the Climax Community on lands with good soils.

This community is usually found on heavier, more fertile soils. When the trees of this community are cut, the soil left behind makes the best farmland of all the communities.

The canopy is very thick and the highest trunks with few limbs. Trees grow large, eliminating weaker ones and leaving a distance of all the stages. Most lower limbs of trees die and drop off, leaving large, straight, clean 15 to 40 feet between trees. Sugar maple, beech, and basswood are the characteristic trees of this stage in Michigan. Many insects live in the canopy and provide a food source for high-flying, insect eating birds.

The floor of this community has very few species of plants. Most live close to the ground in areas receiving a minimal amount of sunlight. Many of these plants flower in the spring and then produce leaves during the summer, a reverse of the usual pattern of flowering plants. There are hundreds of species of animals on the floor and in the soil. Most of these are saprophytes that help to decay and recycle dead plant and animal material.

This community has a large water holding capacity. Streams and small creeks develop as this stage continues.

The plants and animals that are examples of this community in Southern Tuscola County include:

PLANTS	ANIMALS
Adder's tongue, <i>Erythronium</i> sp.	Acadian flycatcher, <i>Empidonax virescens</i>
Basswood, <i>Tilia Americana</i>	Pileated woodpecker, <i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>
Beech, <i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	Rd shouldered hawk, <i>Buteo lineatus</i>
Blue cohosh, <i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i>	Wood thrush, <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>
Hemlock, <i>Tsuga Canadensis</i>	
Hornbeam, <i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	
Indian pipe, <i>Monotropa uniflora</i>	
Running strawberry, <i>Euonymus obovatus</i>	
Spring beauty, <i>Claytonia</i> sp.	
Sugar maple, <i>Acer saccharum</i>	
Violet, <i>Viola canadensis</i>	
Violet, <i>Viola hustata</i>	
Violet, <i>Viola tripartite</i>	