

TABLE 5.2.1 Distribution of Fen Site Associations by biogeoclimatic zone

	BG PP	BWBS SWB	ESSF	ICH	IDF	MS	SBPS SBS	CDF	CWH	MH
Wf01 Water sedge – Beaked sedge		xx	x	xx	xxx	xxx	xxx		x ⁱ	
Wf02 Scrub birch – Water sedge		xxx	x	xx	xx	xx	xx			
Wf03 Water sedge – Peat-moss			xx				x			
Wf04 Barclay's willow – Water sedge – Glow mosses		x	xxx			x	x			
Wf05 Slender sedge – Common hook-moss		x		xx	xx	xx	xx			
Wf06 Slender sedge – Buckbean		x		x	x		x			
Wf07 Scrub birch – Buckbean – Shore sedge		x		x	x		x			
Wf08 Shore sedge – Buckbean – Hook-moss		x	x		x	x	x			
Wf09 Few-flowered spike-rush – Hook-moss			x			x	x			
Wf10 Hudson Bay clubrush – Red hook-moss							x			
Wf11 Tufted clubrush – Star moss		x	x	x		x	x			
Wf12 Narrow-leaved cotton-grass – Marsh-marigold			xxx							
Wf13 Narrow-leaved cotton-grass – Shore sedge			xx			x				
Wf50 Narrow-leaved cotton-grass – Peat-moss									x	xxx
Wf51 Sitka sedge – Peat-moss				x				xx	xx	
Wf52 Sweet gale – Sitka sedge								xx	xx ^s	
Wf53 Slender sedge – White beak-rush								x	xx ^s	

x = incidental; < 5% of wetlands

i = inland areas only

xx = minor; 5–25% of wetlands

s = southern subzones only

xxx = major; >25% of wetlands

TABLE 5.2.2 Fen Species Importance Table

Species		WF01	WF02	WF03	WF04	WF05	WF06	WF07	WF08
Shrubs	<i>Betula nana</i>								
	<i>Salix barclayi</i>								
	<i>Salix pedicellaris</i>								
	<i>Spiraea douglasii</i>								
	<i>Myrica gale</i>								
Herbs and Dwarf Shrubs	<i>Carex utriculata</i>								
	<i>Carex aquatilis</i>								
	<i>Comarum palustre</i>								
	<i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>								
	<i>Carex lasiocarpa</i>								
	<i>Menyanthes trifoliata</i>								
	<i>Carex limosa</i>								
	<i>Carex chordorrhiza</i>								
	<i>Eleocharis quinqueflora</i>								
	<i>Trichophorum alpinum</i>								
	<i>Trichophorum cespitosum</i>								
	<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>								
	<i>Caltha leptosepala</i>								
	<i>Carex anthoxanthea</i>								
	<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>								
	<i>Carex magellanica</i>								
	<i>Carex sitchensis</i>								
	<i>Rhynchospora alba</i>								
	<i>Carex livida</i>								
	<i>Eriophorum chamissonis</i>								
	<i>Vahlodea atropurpurea</i>								
	<i>Drosera anglica</i>								
	<i>Hypericum anagalloides</i>								
	<i>Triantha glutinosa</i>								
	<i>Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani</i>								
	<i>Fauria crista-galli</i>								
	<i>Senecio triangularis</i>								
	<i>Andromeda polifolia</i>								
	<i>Kalmia microphylla</i>								
	<i>Oxycoccus oxycoccus</i>								
	<i>Triglochin maritima</i>								
	<i>Drosera rotundifolia</i>								
	<i>Leptarrhena pyrolifolia</i>								
	<i>Platanthera dilatata</i>								
	<i>Sanguisorba canadensis</i>								
	<i>Utricularia intermedia</i>								
	<i>Viola palustris</i>								
Lichens and Mosses	<i>Sphagnum</i> Group I								
	<i>Aulaacomnium palustre</i>								
	<i>Drepanocladus</i> spp.								
	<i>Sphagnum</i> Group II								
	<i>Tomentypnum nitens</i>								
	<i>Philonotis fontana</i>								
	<i>Calliergon stramineum</i>								
	<i>Scorpidium</i> spp.								
	<i>Campyllum stellatum</i>								
	<i>Warnstorfia</i> spp.								
	<i>Meesia triquetra</i>								

Carex aquatilis – *Carex utriculata*

General Description

The Water sedge – Beaked sedge Fen Site Association is the most common and widespread Fen Site Association in the province. It occurs in all but the warmest and driest subzones from low to subalpine elevations on sites that are annually inundated by shallow, low-energy flood waters and that experience some late-season drawdown.

Wf01 fens are found in a wide variety of landscape positions but most commonly palustrine basins. They occupy wetter zones in larger peatland complexes but also form extensive pure “meadows.”



Species diversity is low; *Carex*

aquatilis and *Carex utriculata* cover is often continuous, with scattered forbs, aquatics, and mosses in the understorey. On sites that dry out at the surface, *Calamagrostis canadensis* or *C. stricta* can become prominent, species diversity increases, and sites become more meadow-like.

Peat depths range from 30 to > 300 cm. Common soil types include typic and terric Fibrisols and Mesisols. This Site Association tolerates variable hydrology.

Characteristic Vegetation

- Tree layer (0 - 0 - 0)
- Shrub layer (0 - 0 - 10)
- Herb layer (13 - 80 - 100)
- Carex aquatilis*, *C. utriculata*
- Moss layer (0 - 5 - 100)
- Drepanocladus aduncus*

Comments

Sites dominated by *C. utriculata* and *C. aquatilis* but with mineral or humic soils are described by the **Wm01**. Because **Wf01** and **Wm01** sites are species-poor and the two dominant sedge species have a wide ecological amplitude, the plant community poorly differentiates between sites on peat (**Wf01**) and those on mineral soil (**Wm01**). **Wf01** sites typically have less *C. utriculata* and fewer aquatics than **Wm01** sites. The **Wf01** develops from the **Wm01** in most circumstances.

Sites that are drier or at least have more pronounced microtopography than the **Wf01** are usually occupied by communities with low shrubs and high moss cover (most commonly, the **Wf02**). However, at higher elevations few shrubs occur and only moss cover increases (**Wf03**). Sites with greater waterflow are characterized by tall-shrub swamps dominated by willows or alders, and water sedges, and have mineral or humic peat soils.

Wetland Edatopic Grid

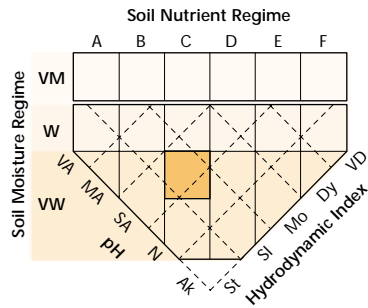


TABLE 5.3.1 Distribution of Marsh Site Associations by biogeoclimatic zone

	BG PP	BWBS SWB	ESSF	ICH	IDF	MS	SBPS SBS	CDF	CWH	MH
Wm01 Beaked sedge – Water sedge	x	xx	x	xxx	xxx	xx	xx		x	
Wm02 Swamp horsetail – Beaked sedge		x		x	x	x	xx			
Wm03 Awned sedge	x				x					
Wm04 Common spike-rush	x	x		xx	x	x	xx		x	
Wm05 Cattail	xxx	x		xx	xx	x	xx	xx	x ^s	
Wm06 Great bulrush	xxx	x		x	xx	xx	x	x	x	
Wm07 Baltic rush	x				xx					
Wm50 Sitka sedge – Hemlock-parsley								xx	xx	
Wm51 Three-way sedge				x				x	x	

x = incidental; < 5% of wetlands

xx = minor; 5–25% of wetlands

xxx = major; >25% of wetlands

s = southern subzones only

TABLE 5.3.2 Marsh Species Importance Table

Species		Wm01	Wm02	Wm03	Wm04	Wm05
Herbs and Dwarf Shrubs	<i>Carex utriculata</i>					
	<i>Carex aquatilis</i>					
	<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>					
	<i>Comarum palustre</i>					
	<i>Sium suave</i>					
	<i>Carex exsiccata</i>					
	<i>Carex atherodes</i>					
	<i>Polygonum amphibium</i>					
	<i>Eleocharis palustris</i>					
	<i>Potamogeton richardsonii</i>					
	<i>Typha latifolia</i>					
	<i>Schoenoplectus acutus</i>					
	<i>Menyanthes trifoliata</i>					
	<i>Utricularia macrorhiza</i>					
	<i>Juncus balticus</i>					
	<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>					
	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>					
	<i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>					
	<i>Cicuta douglasii</i>					
	<i>Lysichiton americanus</i>					
	<i>Oenanthe sarmentosa</i>					
	<i>Galium trifidum</i>					
	<i>Spiraea douglasii</i>					
	<i>Carex sitchensis</i>					
	<i>Nuphar lutea</i> ssp. <i>polysepala</i>					
	<i>Dulichium arundinaceum</i>					
Mosses	<i>Drepanocladus</i> spp.					
	<i>Wamstorfia</i> spp.					

Carex utriculata – *Carex aquatilis*

General Description

Beaked sedge – Water sedge marshes constitute the most common and widespread Marsh Site Association in the province. The **Wm01** occurs in all subzones from low to sub-alpine elevations on sites that are inundated by shallow,

low-energy floodwaters and that experience some late-season drawdown. These marshes are found in a wide variety of landscape positions including flooded beaver ponds, lake margins, floodplains, and palustrine basins.



Species diversity is low and plant cover is strongly dominated by *Carex utriculata* and *C. aquatilis* with scattered forbs, aquatics, and mosses. On sites experiencing significant surface drying, species diversity increases and sites become more meadow-like. Species such as *Calamagrostis canadensis*, *Geum macrophyllum*, or *Deschampsia cespitosa* can become prominent.

The **Wm01** occurs over a wide range of site conditions on mineral substrates with thin peat veneers. Common soil types include Gleysols and Terric Humisols.

Characteristic Vegetation

- Tree layer (0 - 0 - 0)
- Shrub layer (0 - 0 - 5)
- Herb layer (13 - 80 - 100)
- Carex aquatilis*, *C. utriculata*
- Moss layer (0 - 5 - 100)

Comments

The **Wf01** and **Wm01** have similar plant communities, but, because these units are species-poor and the two dominant sedge species have a wide ecological amplitude, the plant community poorly differentiates between sites on peat (**Wf01**) and those on mineral soil (**Wm01**). In general, the **Wm01** is more deeply flooded, has more dynamic hydrology, and has a higher cover of *C. utriculata*.

The **Wm02** is another similar community that occurs on more hydrologically dynamic locations such as lake margins or floodplains. In cooler climates the **Wm01** frequently develops into **Wf01** on sites with less dynamic hydrology.

Some **Wm01** sites have scattered tall shrubs; those sites supporting > 10% shrub cover are described by Swamp Site Associations (Section 5.4).

Wetland Edatopic Grid

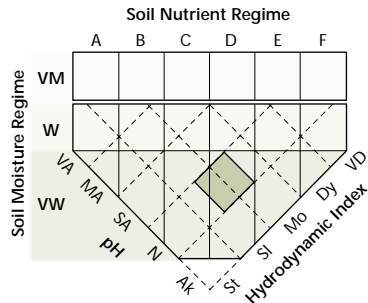


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Wf02 Scrub birch – Water sedge		xxx	x	xx	xx	xx	xx			
Wf03 Water sedge – Peat-moss			xx				x			
Wf04 Barclay's willow – Water sedge – Glow mosses		x	xxx			x	x			
Wf05 Slender sedge – Common hook-moss		x		xx	xx	xx	xx			
Wf06 Slender sedge – Buckbean		x		x	x		x			
Wf07 Scrub birch – Buckbean – Shore sedge		x		x	x		x			
Wf08 Shore sedge – Buckbean – Hook-moss		x	x		x	x	x			
Wf09 Few-flowered spike-rush – Hook-moss			x			x	x			
Wf10 Hudson Bay clubrush – Red hook-moss							x			
Wf11 Tufted clubrush – Star moss		x	x	x		x	x			
Wf12 Narrow-leaved cotton-grass – Marsh-marigold			xxx							
Wf13 Narrow-leaved cotton-grass – Shore sedge			xx			x				
Wf50 Narrow-leaved cotton-grass – Peat-moss									x	xxx
Wf51 Sitka sedge – Peat-moss				x				xx	xx	
Wf52 Sweet gale – Sitka sedge								xx	xx ^s	
Wf53 Slender sedge – White beak-rush								x	xx ^s	

x = incidental; < 5% of wetlands

i = inland areas only

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TABLE 5.2.2 Fen Species Importance Table

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	<i>Myrica gale</i>								
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Shrubs	<i>Carex lasiocarpa</i>								
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Shrubs	<i>Vahlodea atropurpurea</i>								
	<i>Drosera anglica</i>								
Shrubs	<i>Hypericum anagalloides</i>								
	<i>Triantha glutinosa</i>								
Shrubs	<i>Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani</i>								
	<i>Fauria crista-galli</i>								
Shrubs	<i>Senecio triangularis</i>								
	<i>Andromeda polifolia</i>								
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	<i>Oxycoccus oxycoccus</i>								
Shrubs	<i>Triglochin maritima</i>								
	<i>Drosera rotundifolia</i>								
Shrubs	<i>Leptarrhena pyrolifolia</i>								
	<i>Platanthera dilatata</i>								
Shrubs	<i>Sanguisorba canadensis</i>								
	<i>Utricularia intermedia</i>								
Shrubs	<i>Viola palustris</i>								
	<i>Sphagnum Group I</i>								
Lichens and Mosses	<i>Aulaconnium palustre</i>								
	<i>Drepanocladus spp.</i>								
Lichens and Mosses	<i>Sphagnum Group II</i>								
	<i>Tomentypnum nitens</i>								
Lichens and Mosses	<i>Philonotis fontana</i>								
	<i>Calliergon stramineum</i>								
Lichens and Mosses	<i>Scorpidium spp.</i>								
	<i>Campyllum stellatum</i>								
Lichens and Mosses	<i>Warnstorfia spp.</i>								
	<i>Meesia triquetra</i>								

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Wf04 Barclay's willow – Water sedge – Glow mosses		x	xxx			x	x			
Wf05 Slender sedge – Common hook-moss		x		xx	xx	xx	xx			
Wf06 Slender sedge – Buckbean		x		x	x		x			
Wf07 Scrub birch – Buckbean – Shore sedge		x		x	x		x			
Wf08 Shore sedge – Buckbean – Hook-moss		x	x		x	x	x			
Wf09 Few-flowered spike-rush – Hook-moss			x			x	x			
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Wf50 Narrow-leaved cotton-grass – Peat-moss									x	xxx
Wf51 Sitka sedge – Peat-moss				x				xx	xx	
Wf52 Sweet gale – Sitka sedge								xx	xx ^s	
Wf53 Slender sedge – White beak-rush								x	xx ^s	

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	<i>Campyllum stellatum</i>								
Lichens and Mosses	<i>Warnstorfia spp.</i>								
	<i>Meesia triquetra</i>								

Carex limosa – *Menyanthes trifoliata* – *Drepanocladus*

General Description

The Shore sedge – Buckbean – Hook-moss is an uncommon, rich Fen Site Association that occurs mainly at higher elevations throughout the Interior (700–1800 m) in colder subzones. These fens occur on pond-side floating mats or in flarks of patterned fens where there is prolonged shallow flooding to no more than several centimetres.

Carex limosa rooted in shallow water is the constant dominant on these sites. *Menyanthes trifoliata* occurs on most sites but can be very sparse or absent on some. A diversity of species tolerant of permanent saturation such as *Carex chordorrhiza*, *Equisetum fluviatile*, and *Andromeda polifolia* commonly occur with low cover.



Peat deposits are shallow (0.5 m) to very deep (> 6 m), fibric or mesic, and derived from fine sedges and brown mosses. Fibrisols are the most common soil type.

Characteristic Vegetation

Tree layer (0 - 0 - 0)
Shrub layer (0 - .5 - 10)
Herb layer (14 - 35 - 100)
C. limosa, *Menyanthes trifoliata*
Moss layer (1 - 85 - 100)
Drepanocladus spp.

Comments

This is the most common and dominant Site Association in patterned fens. In weakly patterned fens, the Wf08 occurs over ribs and flarks. Where there is a more pronounced rib/flark pattern, the Wf08 will typically occur in flarks and the floristically similar, shrubby Wf07 on elevated ribs.

The Wf06 occurs on wetter and more hydrologically dynamic sites than the Wf08. Similarly stagnant sites with acidic soil water are occupied by the Wb13. The Wf08 has similar hydrology to the Wf09 and Wf10, but with more mobile groundwater and greater degree of surface flooding. Wf08 sites may become Wb13 sites in some circumstances.

Peat deposits are often consistent throughout the profile, and peat core contents of fine sedge and brown mosses are readily identifiable. This suggests that these ecosystems can be stable and long-lived.

Wetland Edatopic Grid

