

WVMN Class Description

Title:	TERRESTRIAL HABITATS
Objectives:	Survey the range of terrestrial habitats in West Virginia, with emphasis on forests
Class type:	Core curriculum
Time:	3 hours
Optimal season:	Any
Materials:	None
Expected outcomes:	The student will gain a basic understanding of <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the major types of terrestrial habitats in West Virginia2. their gross description and distribution in the state.3. their characteristic flora and fauna.4. the ecological processes that create and maintain them.

WVMN Class Outline

1. Forests
 - a. Extent and importance in West Virginia
 - b. Layers of vegetation
 - c. Environmental conditions affect forests and vice versa
 - d. Succession
 - e. "Old growth" in West Virginia
 - f. Deciduous forests
 - Fall coloration
 - Effects of seasonal leaf loss (input of dead organic matter to environment, increased light on forest floor, etc.)
 - Deciduous forest community types
 - g. Evergreen forests
 - Red Spruce forest
 - Other conifers Fir, Hemlock, Pines
 - h. Wildlife of the forests
 - i. Major threats to West Virginia forests (including insects, diseases, air pollution, exotic invasive plants)
2. Shale barrens and cedar glades
 - a. Distribution of shale barrens
 - b. Description of typical shale barrens
 - c. Shale barren flora
 - d. Factors that create and maintain shale barrens
 - e. Cedar glades
3. Grass balds
 - a. Definition and distribution
 - b. Origin
 - c. Flora of grass balds
4. Rock surface habitats
 - a. Physical characteristics of cliffs, ledges, talus
 - b. Flora and fauna
 - c. Ice Mountain algalic talus
 - d. River flat rock
5. Subterranean ecosystems caves
 - a. Formation and West Virginia distribution of limestone caves
 - b. Cave fauna
 - c. Cave ecology (food chains, etc.)
6. Human-created habitats
 - a. Cultivated and otherwise recently-disturbed areas
 - b. Pasture and roadside
 - c. Old fields
 - d. Barns, houses, and other structures