

# Ragged Mountain and Bald Mountain Focus Area

Camden, Rockport

## *Description:*

At over 1200 feet in elevation, Ragged Mountain and Bald Mountain are imposing peaks in the western part of Camden. Both summits are capped by exposed bedrock, and the side slopes of both mountains are largely undeveloped. Together these peaks form the core of a 5,500-acre block of largely undeveloped lands.



*Ragged Mountain*

*MNAP photo, Lisa Windhausen*

Ragged Mountain straddles the Rockport and Camden town lines. The Town of Camden operates a ski area on the northeast slopes of the mountain, and a communications tower is located on the summit above the ski slopes. A new hiking trail, completed in the fall of 1997, traverses the ridgeline. Much of the ridgetop is exposed bedrock that supports a ~40 acre acidic rocky summit plant community. The bedrock outcrops are interspersed with spruce/fir forest, and further to the north, a 150+ year old but recently ice-damaged oak forest. A small population of the rare smooth sandwort (*Minuartia glabra*) grows near an exposed section of the hiking trail. The west-facing slopes of Ragged Mountain are ~30 acres of steep acidic cliffs with talus slopes at the bottom. The forest beneath the cliffs contains patches of mature oak forest in the upper ravines.

The exposed southern face of Bald Mountain is similar to that described above, with characteristic plants including juniper (*Juniperus communis*), bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), and low-bush blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*).

***Rare Species/Natural Community Table for the Ragged Mountain/Bald Mountain Area:***

Common Name	Latin Name	Status	S-Rank	G-Rank
<b>Exemplary Natural Communities</b>				
Acidic Rocky Summit		n/a	S4	not ranked
<b>Rare Plants</b>				
Crawe's sedge	<i>Carex crawei</i>	E	S1	G5
Smooth sandwort	<i>Minuartia glabra</i>	SC	S2	G4

***Other Resources Mapped by MDIFW:***

One Deer Wintering Area is mapped on the northern side of Ragged Mountain, and another is mapped on the south side of Bald Mountain.

***Conservation Considerations:***

- The Coastal Mountains have experienced rapid growth in the last decade (Krohn 1997), and many of the upland areas are under increasing threat. Growth and sprawl in rural areas contribute to habitat fragmentation, water quality degradation, and expansion of invasive plant species.
- Many of the higher elevation oak forests in this region -- particularly stands facing the east and southeast -- were heavily damaged by the January 1998 ice storm. In light of this damage, some landowners have undertaken heavy salvage cuts to offset possible economic loss. Woodlot owners considering such options should be encouraged to develop a long-term forest management plan with the guidance of a licensed forester.
- Old forests (e.g., greater than 100 years old) are becoming scarce in Maine. Retention of old forest stands and characteristics, such as coarse woody debris and standing snags, may augment habitat diversity and value.
- Particular attention should be given to protecting large parcels adjacent to already protected lands. (Most of Bald Mountain lies within a few large parcels.) Furthermore, conservation priorities within this focus area should also be influenced by the development threat of each tract. The development potential of several areas is limited by steep slopes, restricted access due to adjacent conservation lands, or both.
- The biggest threat to the summit peaks may be from two sources (1) the further development of communication towers and associated facilities, and (2) uncontrolled recreational use. Recreational use should be limited to existing trails.
- Crawe's sedge (*Carex crawei*), a small plant with only one other known site in the state, grows near the summit of the open ski slope in a gravelly seep. All previously documented Maine sites for this species have been in Aroostook County. This small population appears to be surviving in spite of the maintenance of the ski slope. It typically prefers moist open soils, and it probably occurred historically in other naturally open seeps in the area.

***Protection Status:***

The Town of Camden owns several parcels on Ragged Mountain, totaling over 280 acres (the east side is a ski area). The Coastal Mountains Land Trust owns 28 acres. The Consumer's Water District owns several hundred acres around Mirror Lake.