

Schoodic Peninsula

Winter Harbor, Gouldsboro

Description:

The Schoodic Peninsula Focus Area encompasses most of the land south of Rte 186 and a smaller area north of Rte. 186, including a sizable freshwater wetland north of Birch Harbor Pond.

One of the most outstanding ecological features of the Schoodic Peninsula is the jack pine woodland natural community that occurs here. This community type is an open to semi-open woodland dominated by jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) found on dry, acidic sites with that are shallow to bedrock. Jack pine woodlands are considered rare in Maine, with only a handful of stands known statewide. The Schoodic Peninsula includes one of the most outstanding assemblages of jack pine woodlands in Maine. To date two of these woodlands have been documented (at Schoodic Point and on the east slopes of Schoodic Head), together encompassing approximately 150 acres. However, recent aerial photo analysis (and in some cases subsequent field checking) has revealed that the jack pine community type is more widespread on the peninsula and found both inside and outside of the boundaries of Acadia National Park.



Jack Pine Woodland

Little Moose Island is another area of particular ecological significance as it hosts several rare plants and one rare natural community type. Populations of blinks (*Montia fontana*), marsh felwort (*Lomatogonium rotatum*), and salt-marsh sedge (*Carex recta*) are all found on Little Moose Island. An extensive and diverse example of a Downeast Maritime Shrubland community is also found here, with in-shore areas dominated by bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*) and black crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*). This natural community is intermixed with open headlands that consist primarily of bare rock with pockets of rosy stonecrop (*Sedum rosea*), beachhead iris (*Iris setosa*), and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*).

Several important wildlife habitats mapped by MDIFW fall within the Schoodic Peninsula Focus Area. Rolling Island is an Essential Habitat for nesting bald eagles. A sizable freshwater Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat straddles Rte 186 and includes Birch Harbor Pond. The majority of the coastline is mapped as tidal Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat, and a substantial Shorebird Feeding and Roosting Area is mapped between Pond Island and the remainder of the peninsula.

Rare Species and Exemplary Natural Community Table for Schoodic Peninsula

Common Name	Latin Name	S-RANK	G-RANK	State Status
<i>Exemplary Natural Communities</i>				
Jack Pine Woodland		S3	G3G5	N/A
Downeast Maritime Shrubland		S3	N/A	N/A
Open Headland		S4	N/A	N/A
<i>Rare Plants</i>				
Pickering's Reed Bent-grass	<i>Calamagrostis pickeringii</i>	S1	G4	T
Screwstem	<i>Bartonia paniculata</i>	S1	G5	T
Fragrant Cliff Wood-fern	<i>Dryopteris fragrans</i>	S2	G5	SC
Marsh Felwort	<i>Lomatogonium rotatum</i>	S2	G5	T
Blinks	<i>Montia fontana</i>	S2	G5	SC
Sea-beach Sedge	<i>Carex silicea</i>	S3	G5	E
Salt-marsh Sedge (<i>specific location not known</i>)	<i>Carex recta</i>	S1	G4	T
Dwarf rattlesnake root (<i>historic</i>)	<i>Prenanthes nana</i>	S1	G5	E
<i>Rare Animals</i>				
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	S4	G4	T

Other Habitats Mapped by MDIFW:

Bald Eagle Essential Habitat
 Shorebird Feeding and Roosting Area
 Tidal Waterfowl / Wading Bird Habitat
 Freshwater Waterfowl / Wading Bird Habitat

Conservation Considerations:

- All areas mapped as exemplary natural communities and nearly all known populations of rare plants are contained within existing conservation lands, but the focus area also includes large areas or private lands which have yet to be surveyed for these features. These include a large tract north of the Park property that was heavily harvested within the last few decades; this parcel may support additional jack pine woodlands.
- The natural disturbance regimes that maintain jack pine woodlands (i.e. fire and/or windthrow) may require managed burns or managed harvesting to promote jack pine regeneration.
- In July 2002 the U.S. Navy de-commissioned its base on Schoodic Peninsula, and the land was transferred to the National Park Service. The Park Service is in the process of determining a long term plan for these lands and facilities, which may include research and education facilities and associated housing.

Protection Status:

Approximately half of this focus area is protected as part of Acadia National Park.