



Robinson Creek Barrens
Jackson County
13,000 Acres

The Glacial Outwash Plains and Glacial Lakebeds Area is a concentrated in four distinct areas. The deep glacially-ground sand and gravel soils provide the base for natural community development. Many rare species are limited to this landscape.

Glacial Outwash Plains and Glacial Lakebeds Area Important Natural Features—Xeric Pine-Oak Forests, Pine-Oak Barrens, and Vast Peatlands. Pine Barrens are global important, and Wisconsin has a vast majority of the pine barrens on earth. We are uniquely responsible.

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Ecology & Significance

Wisconsin Responsibility – High
 Irreplaceable Features – Mod High
 Diversity of Natural Features – Mod High
 Rare Species – Several
 Conservation Concern Species – Mod High
 Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Mod Low
 Conservation Status – Half

This site has promising conservation opportunities.

Robinson Creek Barrens features a Pine Barrens community that is part of a formerly large, open landscape located on a gently rolling pitted glacial outwash plain. The site was similar in composition to presettlement barrens with broad sweeping prairie vistas and a distinctive panorama punctuated with buttes sculptured by Glacial Lake Wisconsin. This area is dominated by boons sand, the most nutrient-poor soils in the state. Excessive drainage in most of the area leads to extreme droughty conditions, whereas clay pans in other areas hold water well into mid-summer. A Jackson County/private landowner project is needed.



Photo courtesy Wisconsin DNR

Flora and Fauna

Patches still maintained in barrens conditions have dominant vegetation consisting of grasses and sedges, and a well-developed shrub layer is present including blueberry, hazel, prairie willow, and New Jersey tea. Herbaceous plants include little bluestem, poverty oat grass, wintergreen, wild lupine, and hawkweeds. The area also harbors a diverse and unusual lichen flora.

Butterfly species abound with great populations of several rare species. The rare Karner blue butterfly has been observed on site (see below).



Photo courtesy Wikipedia.com

Robinson Creek runs east to west through the barrens adding to the overall site diversity. Originally the site was much more open hosting a few species no longer present, such as sharp-tailed grouse and upland sandpiper. Common barren birds including the eastern bluebird, eastern towhee, vesper, field, and clay-colored sparrow are still present. Amphibians readily utilize the wet swales and reptiles, including the state-threatened slender glass lizard have been seen in the area. Mammal species are typical for central Wisconsin.