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The Glacial Outwash Plains and Glacial Lakebeds Area is 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.



Photo courtesy Wisconsin DNR



**Bear Bluff**  
**Jackson & Wood Counties**  
**32,000 Acres**

### Ecology & Significance

Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderate
Irreplaceable Features – Mod High
Diversity of Natural Features – Mod High
Rare Species – Several
Conservation Concern Species – Mod High
Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Mod High
Conservation Status – Half
This site has promising conservation opportunities.

Bear Bluff is situated within an extensive, wetland complex that occupies a significant portion of the bed of the extinct Glacial Lake Wisconsin. It is the last significant remnant of the "Great Swamp of Central Wisconsin", much of which has been altered for cranberry cultivation. Of note is the presence of a forested community dominated by white pine and red maple, which occupies a landscape position between wet, acid forested wetlands of black spruce and tamarack, and dry forests comprised of pine and oak. This community type is uncommon in the state with a high percentage occurring in and around the bed of Glacial Lake Wisconsin. A public/private landowner project is needed.

### Flora and Fauna

Common understory shrubs are alder, winterberry, dewberry, and poison sumac. Ground flora includes skunk cabbage, cinnamon fern, and three-leaved gold thread. Portions of the site contain open wetland. These poor fens that are common within this landscape, although places have deep peat dominated by sphagnum mosses, leather-leaf, blueberry species, few-seeded sedge, northern yellow lake sedge, blue-joint grass, and bog birch. Other characteristic species include cotton-grass, pond sedge, manna grass, bog rosemary, bog laurel, and black chokeberry.



Photo courtesy Wikipedia.com

Birds breeding here and within the surrounding environs include American bittern, sharp-shinned hawk, yellow-bellied flycatcher, least flycatcher, eastern wood-pewee, sedge wren, golden-winged warbler, Nashville warbler, pine warbler, Canada warbler, red-breasted grosbeak, purple finch, clay-colored sparrow, Lincoln's sparrow, and LeConte's sparrow (see above). Several species of boreal butterflies are commonly found in the more forested areas. Mammal species are typical for central Wisconsin, although elk have been introduced.