

## Endangered Species and Spaces

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### 10.0 Plant Communities

Plant Communities are among the most endangered ecosystems both in the province and in the Columbia Basin. The table below presents the Rare Plant Community Tracking List for the Columbia Basin.

**Table 10: Rare Plant Communities of the Columbia Basin**

Common Name	Scientific name	Provincial Rank	Provincial List
Western Anemone - Black Alpine Sedge	<i>Anemone Occidentalis</i> - <i>Carex Nigricans</i>	S2	RED
Scrub Birch - Horsetail	<i>Betula Glandulosa</i> - <i>Equisetum</i>	S3	BLUE
Saltgrass - Foxtail Barley	<i>Distichlis Stricta</i> - <i>Hordeum Jubatum</i>	S1	RED
Bluebunch Wheatgrass - Junegrass	<i>Elymus Spicatus</i> - <i>Koeleria</i>	S2	RED
Idaho Fescue - Snowberry	<i>Festuca Idahoensis</i> - <i>Symphoricarpos Occidentalis</i>	S3	BLUE
Hybrid White Spruce - Gooseberry - Sarsaparilla	<i>Piscea Englemanni</i> x <i>glauca</i> - <i>Ribes Lacustra</i> - <i>Aralia Nudicaulis</i>	S3	BLUE
Ponderosa Pine - Bluebunch Wheatgrass - Junegrass	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> - <i>Elymus spicatus</i> - <i>Lupinus</i>	S2	RED
Ponderosa Pine/Trembling Aspen - Rose - Solomon's Seal	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> <i>Populus tremuloides</i> - <i>Rosa woodsii</i>	S3	BLUE
Black Cottonwood - Dogwood - Nootka Rose	<i>Populus balsamifera</i> ssp <i>trichocarpa</i> - <i>Cornus stolonifera</i> - <i>Rosa nutkana</i>	S1S2	RED
Douglas Fir - Snowberry - Balsamroot	<i>Pseudotsuga Menziesii</i> - <i>Symphoricarpos Albus</i> - <i>Balsamorhiza Sagittata</i>	S2	RED
Douglas Fir - Ponderosa Pine - Bluebunch Wheatgrass - Balsamroot	<i>Pseudotsuga Menziesii</i> - <i>Pinus Ponderosa</i> - <i>Elymus spicatus</i> - <i>Balsamorhiza Sagittata</i>	S3	BLUE
Antelope Brush - Bluebunch Wheatgrass	<i>Purshia Tridentata</i> - <i>Elymus Spicatus</i>	S3?	BLUE
Western Red Cedar/Hybrid White Spruce - Devil's Club - Horsetail	<i>Thuja Plicata</i> - <i>Oplopanax Horridus</i> - <i>Equisetum arvense</i>	S3	BLUE
Subalpine Fir - Black Huckleberry - Bear grass	<i>Thuja Plicata</i> - <i>Vaccinium membranaceum</i> - <i>Xerophyllum Tenax</i>	S3?	BLUE
Douglas Fir/Ponderosa Pine - Oregon Grape - Parsley Fern	<i>Pseudotsuga Menziesii</i> / <i>Pinus Ponderosa</i> - <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> - <i>Cryptogramma</i>	S3	BLUE

Source: BC Cons. Data Centre - Rare Plant Community Forest District Tracking Lists

It should be noted that the status and distribution of rare species and plant communities is regularly reviewed and updated. Therefore, many of these plant communities may, over time, be deleted if they are found to be more common than expected, or upgraded if their status becomes more imperiled. Additional communities will doubtless be added as more research and surveys are conducted.

Wetlands and native grasslands are some of the most threatened plant communities in the Columbia Basin (Heather Stewart - pers. comm.). British Columbia grasslands are unique in Canada because they represent the northern limit of bunchgrass vegetation in North America and because

they are dominated by species that occur only rarely east of the Rocky Mountains such as bunchgrass, and bluebunch wheatgrass (Pitt and Hooper, 1994). Grasslands occur in the dry interior regions of the province, most typically in the Bunchgrass and Ponderosa Pine biogeoclimatic zones. Annual precipitation is generally less than 500 mm and can be less than 250 mm in the driest parts. Bluebunch wheatgrass is the dominant species in the Bunchgrass zone, but often includes balsamroot, needle and thread grass, bluegrass and numerous other forbs (herbaceous plants other than grass) (Pitt and Hooper, 1994).

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