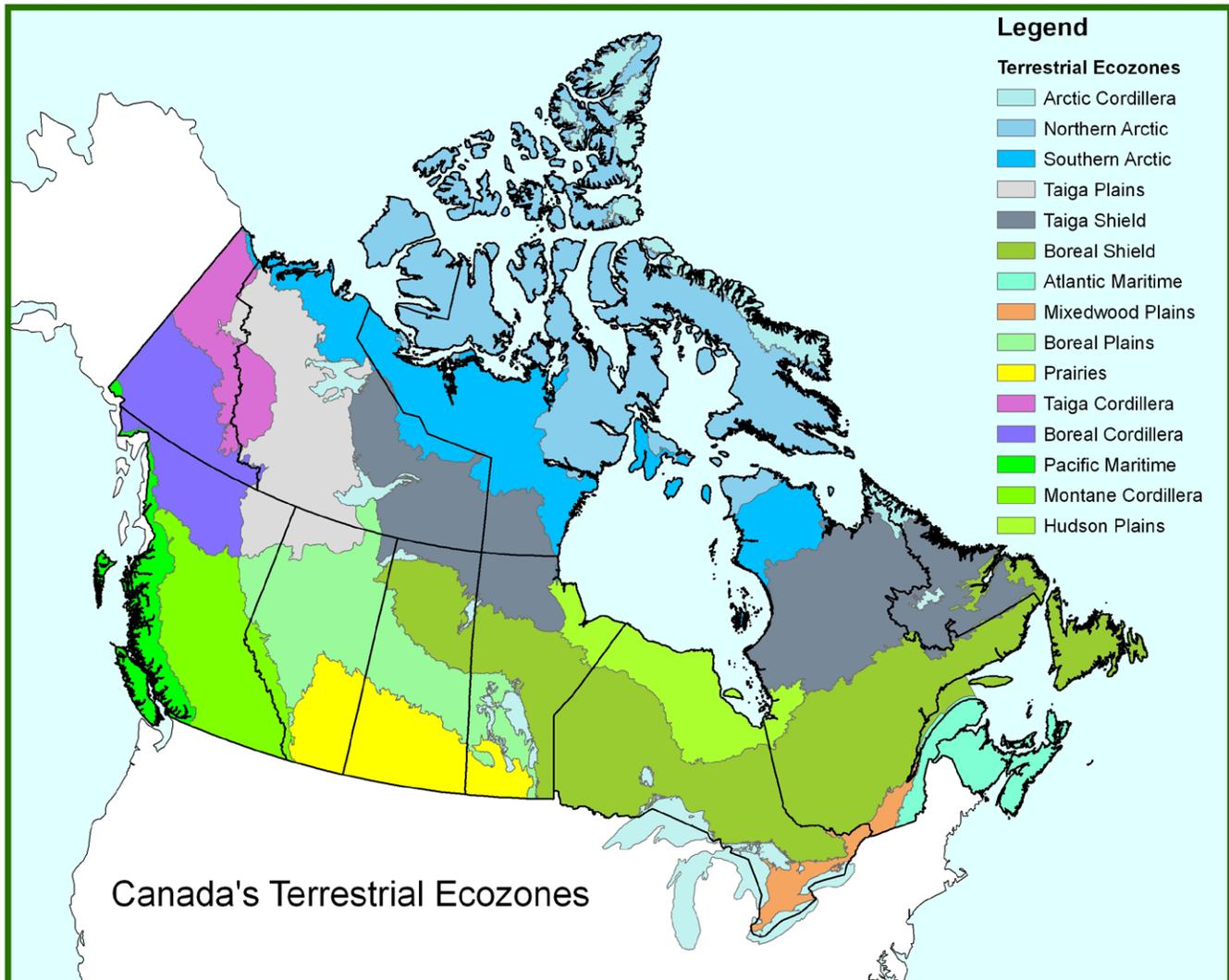


ECOZONES



- The **Arctic cordillera** is mountainous and has a cold dry climate. What little plant life exists in this harsh environment can be found in small sheltered areas. Examples of typical vegetation include purple saxifrage, bilberry, and mountain sorrel, as well as lichens.
- In the **northern Arctic**, winters are very harsh and snow covers the ground much of the year. Typical plant life would include hardy species of moss and lichen, with some flowering plants such as Arctic poppy, moss campion, and mountain avens. This ecozone is above the treeline but there are some stunted shrubs.
- The **southern Arctic** is slightly milder, but the presence of permafrost means that it doesn't sustain tree growth. Winters are long, but there is a short period of summer. Examples of typical vegetation include lichens, sedges and low shrubs, such as Labrador tea and dwarf birch.
- In the **taiga shield** ecozone we begin to encounter forests. However, due to the cold temperatures and pockets of permafrost, trees don't grow very tall. Some examples of tree species include black spruce, Jack pine and some trembling aspen and white birch.
- Farther west is the **taiga plain**, where you would find the Mackenzie River and the Peace-Athabasca Delta, an important wetland habitat. In this region, winters are long and cold and permafrost is still present. Some

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examples of tree species include black spruce, Jack pine, tamarack and paper birch. There are several shrub species, such as Labrador tea, cranberries, blueberries and willows. And as with the Arctic ecozones, there are plenty of lichens and mosses.

- The **taiga cordillera** covers the border between the Yukon and the Northwest Territories and has a wide range of plant species. Its mountainous regions are home to lichens and sedges, and its northern alpine tundra has stunted shrubs. There are wetlands in the northwest and woodlands in the south, with such tree species as spruce and birch.
- In the **boreal cordillera**, the vegetation is much the same as in the taiga, with shrubs, moss and lichens making up the majority of plant life. In the lowlands, you would find tree species such as white spruce, as well as some pines and aspens.
- The **Hudson plain** ecozone runs along the southern coast of Hudson Bay. The wetlands support sedges, mosses and lichens, and the further south you go the more likely you are to encounter tree species such as willow, tamarack and black spruce. Beyond the wet areas, there are also shrubs such as crowberry and blueberry.
- The **boreal plain** has cold winters but relatively warm summers. This allows for forests with species such as spruce, balsam fir, Jack pine, aspens and poplar.
- The largest ecozone in Canada is the **boreal shield**. It is mostly covered by forests composed of species such as spruce, balsam fir, Jack pine, poplar, trembling aspen and paper birch. Among the forests there are lots of swamps and wetlands.
- The **montane cordillera** ecozone is diverse. It has grasslands, coniferous forests and tundra. In the B.C. Interior, there is sagebrush, rabbitbrush and some grasslands. On hillsides and in more humid areas, there are forests of western yellow pine, lodgepole pine, western hemlock and red cedar. In the mountains, spruce and fir trees dominate. At higher altitudes, typical alpine vegetation such as lichens, herbs and shrubs are found.
- The **prairie** ecozone is integral to the economy of Canada because much of it has been transformed for agricultural, which unfortunately means a large percentage of the natural ecosystems has been lost. The remaining uncultivated grasslands are a mix of different types of prairie grass. Typical vegetation includes spear and blue grama grass, and sagebrush. Farther north, there are boreal forests with trembling aspens and balsam poplars, as well as a multitude of small wetland areas.
- In the **Atlantic maritime**, the Atlantic Ocean creates a cool and moist climate. Much of this ecozone is forested, containing a mix of deciduous and coniferous species, such as maple, beech, birch, spruce and balsam fir. Common shrub species include, blueberries, willow and pin cherry. Typical wildflowers are lady slipper, starflower and wild lupine.
- Canada's most populated urban areas are located in the **mixedwood plain** ecozone. This area has fertile plains, rolling hills, and a mild climate. The ideal climate of this ecozone means that unfortunately much of the original forests have been cut down for agriculture and urban development. The remaining forests are some of Canada's most diverse and include tree species such as white and red pine, oak, elm, maple and birch.
- Finally, the **Pacific maritime** is one of Canada's most distinctive ecozones. The landscape is varied and ranges from mountains and fiords to valleys and rugged coastlines. The climate is warm and very wet, which allows for a diversity of ecosystems. Along the coastal areas there are temperate rainforests, with species such as western hemlock, red cedar, Sitka spruce and Douglas fir. In the mountains, the forests are composed mainly of mountain hemlock.