

Lake Plain Prairie

This grassland community is at the eastern edge of its range in the Lake Erie Allegheny region. It is found on the Lake Plain on level, sandy glacial outwash and deposits of dune sand and silty/clayey slumps. The vegetation of this community is dominated by tallgrass species typically three to six feet high, such as big bluestem, Indian grass, and prairie cordgrass. Other species include little bluestem, switchgrass, prairie dock, dense blazing-star, Sullivan's milkweed, Ohio goldenrod, Riddell's goldenrod, and Ohio spiderwort. Trees and shrubs are rare.

Small hillside prairies are widely scattered on slumping valley walls within the Cuyahoga River and Grand River valleys. Some floodplain meadows on the Black, Cuyahoga, and Grand rivers are locally dominated by prairie grasses. The Castalia Prairie, once covering more than 3,000 acres in western Erie County, OH, is the largest in the region.

Prairie communities include the state-endangered eastern massasauga rattlesnake, as well as deer mouse, meadow vole, black racer snake, and western chorus frog. Birds include American kestrel, savannah sparrow, and short-eared owl.

Where to Go

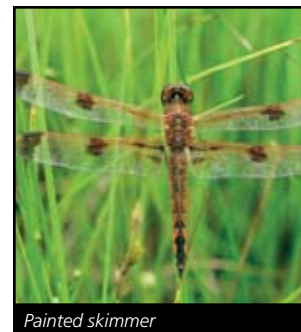
- Black River Reservation, Lorain Metro Parks (Lorain County, OH)
- Brecksville Reservation prairie demonstration site, Cleveland Metroparks (Cuyahoga County, OH)
- Castalia Prairie, Resthaven Wildlife Area (Erie County, OH)
- Riverview Park, Lake Metroparks (Lake County, OH)
- Stumpy Basin, Cuyahoga Valley National Park (Summit County, OH)



Eastern massasauga rattlesnake



Short-eared owl



Painted skimmer



Prairie white-fringed orchid



White lady's slipper



Indian grass



Castalia Prairie, Resthaven Wildlife Area (Erie County, OH)