

Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund Project #03-L06W

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Posters of the Illinois Natural Areas Divisions

These posters have been scanned to disk. An original of them is in the Photos and Slides album for the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund.

Illinois' Natural Divisions



What Are Natural Divisions?

Scientists have divided the terrestrial part of the earth into large ecological regions called biomes. Examples of worldwide biomes include tropical rainforest, Asian steppe, African savanna, and a host of others. The North American continent also has biomes, such as the Arctic tundra, boreal forest, and Appalachian forest.

Illinois has the diversity of landscapes that can be described by differences in topography, glacial history, bedrock, soils, and the distribution of native plants and animals. Using these natural features, Illinois can be divided into 14 natural divisions. The natural divisions of Illinois were defined in 1973 in a technical report written by their own biologist John Schweigman and colleagues. According to Schweigman, "Natural divisions are geographic regions of a larger entity like a state or a continent. A division contains similar landscapes, climates, and natural biomes. The landscape and soils that support native vegetation and wildlife over the division are... natural divisions help conservationists identify local biomes and the growing natural diversity."

These 14 divisions were further partitioned into 23 subdivisions. Over the years, Illinois' natural divisions have passed many studies by the natural area preservation movement within the state. They have helped biologists categorize and prioritize Illinois' natural features for preservation efforts. Illinois was one of the first states to have its natural divisions defined and this classification system has guided the development of the state's natural resource agency, the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory and the Illinois Natural Area Plan.



1

Wisconsin Driftless Division

The area of Illinois called the "driftless" extends to areas of the Mississippi and the Illinois river valleys. These two rivers are the only ones that have not been covered by glacial drift. The Wisconsin Driftless is a unique natural area characterized by rugged terrain. The area is also the only one in Illinois that has a high level of limestone. The area is also the only one in Illinois that has a high level of limestone. The area is also the only one in Illinois that has a high level of limestone. The area is also the only one in Illinois that has a high level of limestone.



2

Rock River Hill Country Division

The region of rolling, grassed uplands is known as the Rock River. The area of the Rock River is one of the most beautiful in the state. The area is also the only one in Illinois that has a high level of limestone. The area is also the only one in Illinois that has a high level of limestone. The area is also the only one in Illinois that has a high level of limestone.



3

Northwestern Mixedwood Division

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4

The Grand Prairie Division

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5

Western Forest Prairie Division

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6

Mississippi River and Mississippi River Sand Area Division

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7

Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River Bottomlands Division



The Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River Bottomlands Division is located in the northern part of Illinois. It is characterized by its extensive wetlands and floodplains. The region is home to a variety of plant and animal life, including the American Baldpate, which is shown in the adjacent image.



8

Middle Mississippi River Border Division



The Middle Mississippi River Border Division is located in the central part of Illinois. It is characterized by its extensive floodplains and wetlands. The region is home to a variety of plant and animal life, including the American Baldpate, which is shown in the adjacent image.



9

Lower Mississippi River Bottomlands Division



The Lower Mississippi River Bottomlands Division is located in the southern part of Illinois. It is characterized by its extensive wetlands and floodplains. The region is home to a variety of plant and animal life, including the American Baldpate, which is shown in the adjacent image.



10

Southern T19 Plain Division



The Southern T19 Plain Division is located in the southern part of Illinois. It is characterized by its extensive grasslands and prairies. The region is home to a variety of plant and animal life, including the American Baldpate, which is shown in the adjacent image.

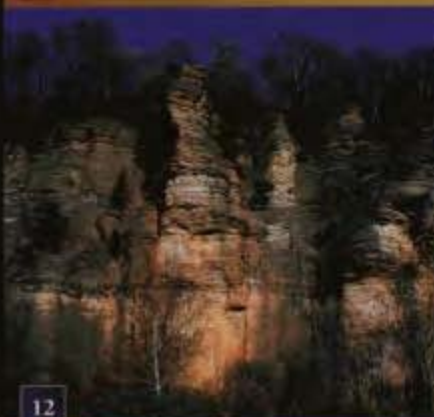


11

Western Border Division



The Western Border Division is located in the western part of Illinois. It is characterized by its extensive forests and woodlands. The region is home to a variety of plant and animal life, including the American Baldpate, which is shown in the adjacent image.



12

Dark Division



The Dark Division is located in the western part of Illinois. It is characterized by its extensive forests and woodlands. The region is home to a variety of plant and animal life, including the American Baldpate, which is shown in the adjacent image.



13

Memphis Hill Division



The Memphis Hill Division is located in the western part of Illinois. It is characterized by its extensive forests and woodlands. The region is home to a variety of plant and animal life, including the American Baldpate, which is shown in the adjacent image.



14

Coastal Plain Division



The Coastal Plain Division is located in the western part of Illinois. It is characterized by its extensive forests and woodlands. The region is home to a variety of plant and animal life, including the American Baldpate, which is shown in the adjacent image.