

Northern Piedmont Region-Maryland

The northern piedmont region is located on the east coast. It passes through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. This paper will focus on the piedmont region in Maryland

The piedmont plateau is divided into a west and an east side by the Parr Ridge. It is defined by the blue ridge mountains to the west and a steep drop in altitude to the east.

On the west side of the plateau, due to a bed of limestone under the soil, the drinking water is hard. However, since there is no limestone under the soil on the east side of the plateau, the drinking water on this side is soft. There are many aquifers underneath the piedmont plateau since in many places, the last layer of soil is impermeable. As well as these aquifers, there are many perennial streams and lakes in this region.

The climate of the northern piedmont plateau is subtropical. It has four distinct seasons and frequent rains.

There are three main types of soil in the northern piedmont region; Ochrepts, Udalfs, and Ultisols. Ochrepts are classified as a layer of brownish-gray loam, followed by a layer of calcareous (calcium carbonate rich) pale brown loam, all atop a layer of shale. Udalfs, a subdivision of Alfisols, are characterized by a layer of silty loam or of silty clay followed by fragipan (non-permeable soil). The last type of soil is known as Ultisols. This soil is only clay and has no distinct layers because many years of farming has incorporated the top two layers of soil together.

Most of the rocks in the northern piedmont region are metamorphic or igneous, but there are a few sedimentary rocks that contain fossils. The most common types of rocks are schist, gneiss, and granite. In the past, the region was rich with coal and gold, but now most of it has been mined.

Most of the uncultivated land in the Piedmont Plateau is covered in deciduous forests. The older forests have little or no ground cover. When they do, it is in the form of May apples, ferns, and jack in the pulpits. However, in the younger forests, ground cover is quite common and normally consists of poison ivy and multiflora rose.

There is a very diverse population of animals in the northern piedmont region. In the Maryland section of the plateau, there are at least 5,233 species of animals including birds, reptiles, fish, amphibians, mammals, and insects.

Before Europeans came to America, the piedmont plateau was inhabited by the Iroquis, Sioux, and Algonquian people. The first European settlers to come to America were Spanish and English. In the 1700's, French Hugonots, Germans, Swiss, and Scottish settlers also came to America. The current population is a mix of all of these and other ethnic groups who came later.

Points of Interest:

Gunpowder Falls State Park

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/central/gunpowder.aspx>

Hampton National Historic Site

<https://www.nps.gov/hamp/index.htm>

North Point State Battlefield

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/central/northpointbattlefield.asp>

[X](#)

Rocks State Park

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/central/rocks.aspx>

References:

bplant.org : [Northern Piedmont - bplant.org](http://bplant.org)

California Soil Research Lab: https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD_Docs/C/CUTHAND.html

Chesapeake Bays Programme: <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/discover/ecosystem/geology>

Foragable Community: <https://foragablecommunity.com/2020/07/european-colonization-land-history-series>

Inaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/places/maryland-piedmont>

New Mexico State University: <https://edit.jornada.nmsu.edu/catalogs/esd/148X/F148XY027PA>

The Biology of Virginia: <http://geology.blogs.wm.edu/piedmont/>

University of Iowa: <https://www.uidaho.edu/cals/soil-orders/alfisols>

U.S National Parks Service: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/piedmontprovince.htm>