



There are fourteen natural divisions in the state of Illinois, and the fifteenth, though not in the state itself, does affect the ecosystem.

1. The Wisconsin Driftless Natural Division. Bordered by the Mississippi bottomlands to the west, and is made up of rugged terrain and forests.

2. The Rock River Hill Country Natural Division. A forested area drained by the Rock River. Rock is mostly dolomite and limestone. Wildflower patches are abundant.

3. The Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. Made up of abundant marshes, natural lakes, and bogs with a biodiversity of plants and wildlife. A common flower seen there is the blue-eyed grass, and a popular tree is the black savannah oak. Common terns are often seen flying overhead.
4. The Grand Prairie Natural Division. A poorly drained area that was once prairieland but is now made up of marshes and potholes. Mostly flat, with rolling hills formed by glaciers.
5. The Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River Bottomlands Natural Division. Floodplains of the Mississippi River. Many of the large rivers are located within this division.
6. The Illinois River and Mississippi River Sand Areas Natural Division. Sand areas and dunes located within the Illinois and Mississippi bottomlands.
7. The Western Forest-Prairie Natural Division. The forests and prairies of this land were once abundant, but agriculture is now more prominent.
8. The Middle Mississippi Border Natural Division. Rugged terrain of river bluffs bordering the Mississippi River floodplain. Cliffs are prominently limestone, and there are many forests.
9. The Southern Till Plain Natural Division. Prominent forests of post oak grow in this region. The bedrock of this area is composed of sandstone, limestone, coal, and shale.
10. The Wabash Border Natural Division. Bottomlands of the Wabash River in which oak, beech, and tulip tree forests are plentiful. Some State Parks to visit are Beall Woods State Park, Middle Fork State Fish and Wildlife Area, and Kickapoo State Recreation Area.
11. The Ozark Natural Division. Topography is a plateau with bluffs along the Mississippi River. Notable and rare plants found here are the Chinquapin tree, Ozark corn salad wildflower, mock orange, and low prickly pear cactus. Animals include armadillos, scarlet tanagers, and graybelly salamanders.
12. The Lower Mississippi River Bottomlands Natural Division. Includes the Mississippi River floodplain, filled with prairies, marshes, and forests.
13. The Shawnee Hills Natural Division. An east-west escarpment runs through this region, with cliffs of sandstone. The area is heavily forested. The area includes Shawnee Hills Natural Division State Park.
14. The Coastal Plain Natural Division. The bottomlands of the floodplain of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers is made up of swampy forests of bald cypress-tupelo trees.
15. Lake Michigan. The water of the lake provides a healthy ecosystem for fish of all kinds.

There are three major geographical regions in Illinois: The Northern, the Central, and the Southern. The Northern region is commonly referred to as Upstate Illinois or Chicagoland. The Central and Southern regions are referred to as Downstate Illinois.

Information gathered from: [Natural Divisions - Natural Areas](#)