

COUCHVILLE CEDAR GLADE
CLASS II NATURAL-SCIENTIFIC STATE NATURAL AREA

COUNTY:	Davidson, Wilson	ACREAGE:	122
7.5'QUADRANGLE:	LaVergne	OWNERSHIP:	State of Tennessee
PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:	Central Basin	YEAR DESIGNATED:	1995

DESCRIPTION:

Couchville Cedar Glade is a 122-acre natural area in Davidson and Wilson Counties and is contiguous with the east boundary of Long Hunter State Park. Couchville supports one of the largest known and best quality populations of the federally endangered Tennessee coneflower (*Echinacea tennesseensis*). Couchville also provides one of the finest examples of a glade-barrens complex and protects many rare plant species. The glades are distributed where limestone outcropping and shallow soils limit growth of perennial plants and support annual species like leavenworthia, sporobolus, and sedum. The barrens species, that also includes Tennessee coneflower, occur where soils increase and grasses like little bluestem and side oats grama become dominant. The glades and barrens interface forming a complex. There are small woodland patches surrounding the glade-barrens complex with some shrubby vegetation present in the barrens. There are also some seasonal wet areas where small sedge openings occur and where an ephemeral stream habitat supports a small colony of the federally listed endangered leafy prairie clover (*Dalea foliosa*).

Another interesting habitat occurs along the west boundary of Couchville adjacent to Long Hunter State Park. This area supports a mature oak-hickory forest of, which includes large shagbark hickories and impressive large oaks such as chinkapin, Shumard's, white, and post oak. The forest is in a karst area where there are sink depressions and limestone formations that support a solid layer of moss, sedum, shooting star, and columbine. This feature appears as a natural rock garden when conditions are moist in the spring.

The protection of Couchville began in 1994 with an initiative by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) of Tennessee to acquire 43 acres through corporate sponsorship provided by American Airlines, Cracker Barrel, and Bell South. The State acquired this property from TNC and designated it as a state natural area in 1995. Additional acreage has been obtained by the State since 1994 including land to protect more Tennessee coneflower through grant assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

SITE MANAGEMENT:

Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), Bureau of State Parks, Long Hunter State Park, 2910 Hobson Pike, Hermitage, TN 37076 phone (615) 885-2422; TDEC, Division of Natural Areas, 401 Church Street, 7th Floor L&C Annex, Nashville, TN 37243 phone (615) 532-0431.

PUBLIC ACCESS:

Public access allowed; parking and hiking trails are provided.

DIRECTIONS:

From I-40 exit on Highway 171 and go south on Mount Juliet Rd. for about six miles then bear left onto South Mt Juliet Rd. The parking area is one half mile on the right. From I-24, exit at Old Hickory (southeast Nashville near Hickory Hollow Mall) and proceed east for approximately 12 miles. Turn right at South Mt Juliet Rd about one and one half miles past the Long Hunter State Park entrance. The parking area is one half-mile on the right.