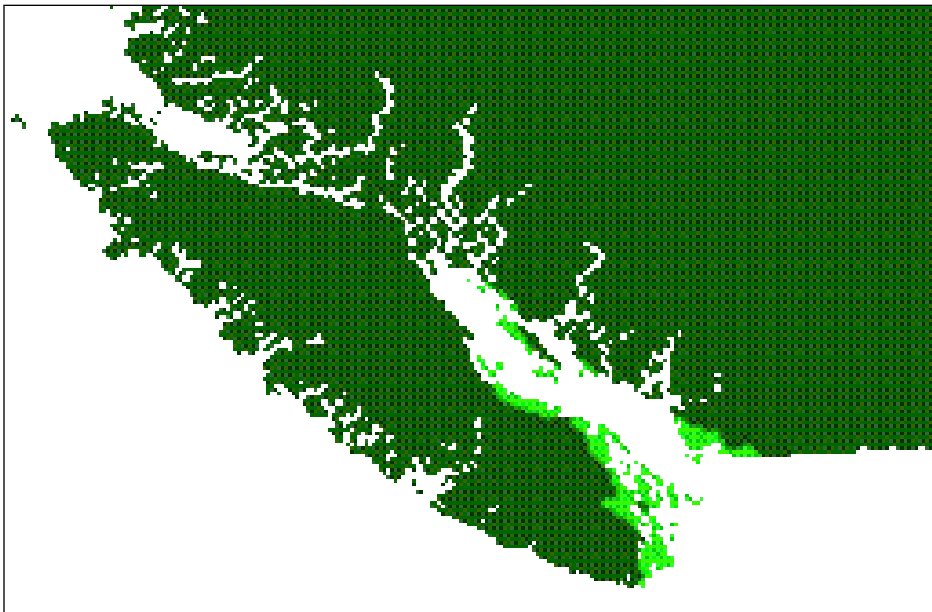


# COASTAL DOUGLAS-FIR BIOGEOCLIMATIC ZONE

## BIOGEOCLIMATIC ZONE: COASTAL DOUGLAS-FIR

The Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone is the smallest of the 16 biogeoclimatic zones in British Columbia and is also the least represented ecosystem within the parks and protected areas system. Only 4% is under protected area status.

Location of the Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone in British Columbia (shown in light green)



Courtesy: Capital Regional District website

### Importance

The Coastal Douglas-fir (or CDF) biogeoclimatic zone is the only area in Canada that supports Garry oak ecosystems, one of the most diverse and endangered ecosystems in British Columbia. Many species threatened with extinction reside in the Garry oak ecosystem. Some, such as the Lewis' Woodpecker and the island large marble butterfly, have already been extirpated (lost in one area but may still exist elsewhere). Garry oak ecosystems are also home to many rare plants and the largest diversity of wintering birds within Canada.



Garry oak meadow  
Courtesy: BC Ministry of Environment

### Threats

The biggest threat to the CDF zone is development. Major urban centres including Victoria, Nanaimo and Powell River that are located within this zone have resulted in residential and industrial land development that has contributed to a great deal of the CDF zone being lost. Approximately 10% of the original area of Garry oak ecosystem now remains, often in isolated fragments and unconnected to other Garry oak areas. Such fragmentation compromises the ecological integrity of these ecosystems.



Scotch broom invading a Garry oak meadow  
Courtesy: BC Ministry of Environment

Furthermore, Garry oak ecosystems are often dominated by invasive, exotic plant and animal species including Scotch broom, gorse pose, bullfrogs, European starlings and grey squirrels. As a result, less than 5% of the original ecosystem remains in its natural condition.

With the present state of fragmentation and domination of exotic species, immediate action is required to conserve and protect the remaining intact ecosystems of the CDF zone.

For more information on Garry oak ecosystems, visit the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team website: <http://www.goert.ca/>