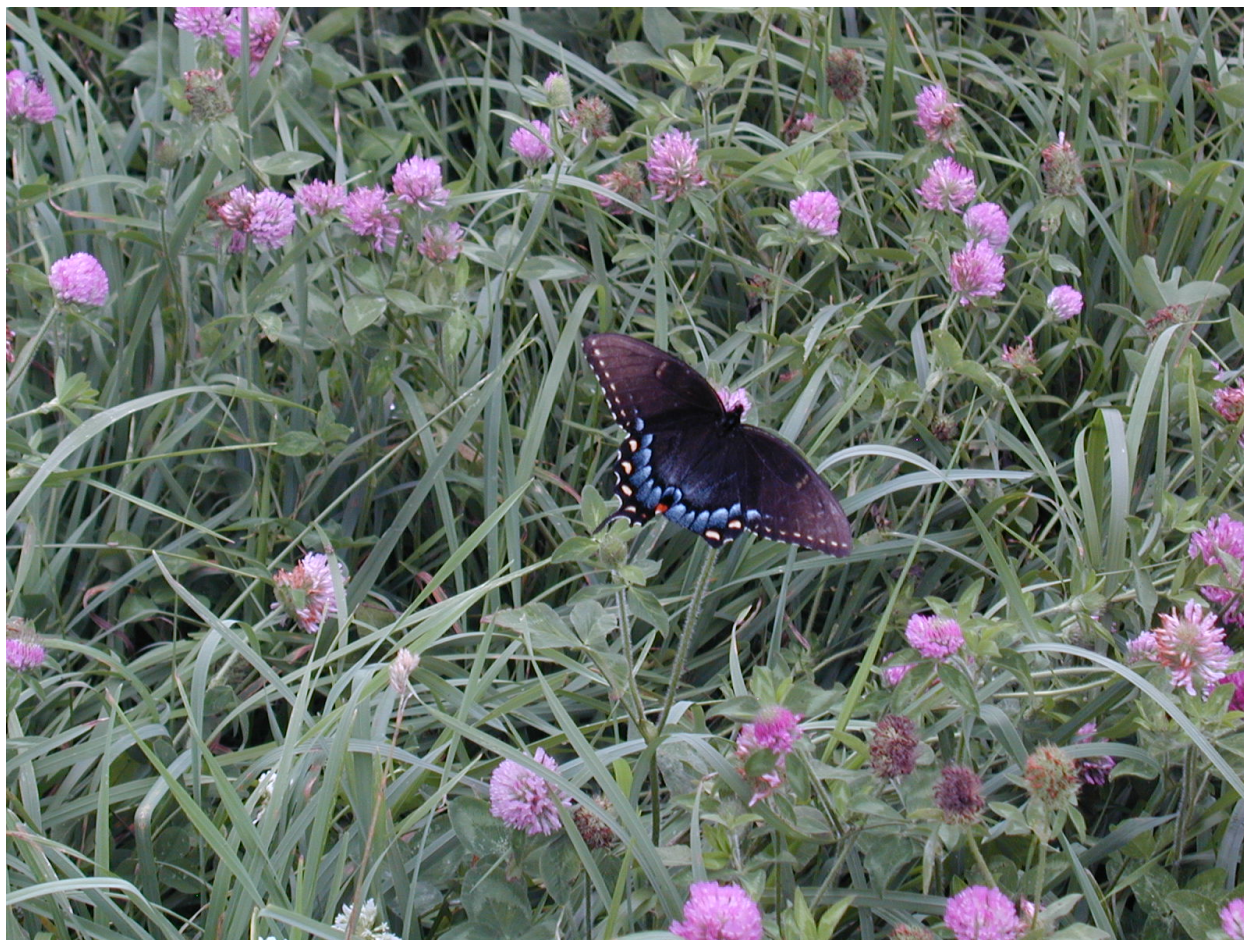


Pasture Plants of the Northeastern United States

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Temperate humid grazing lands are an important component of the landscape of the northeastern United States, as well as of the economy of this region, yet unlike their European counterparts, little is known about their basic ecology. During an eight-year survey of 44 farms across the northeastern United States, we sampled 136 modified Whittaker plots on pastureland, some multiple times (482 plots sampled across all years), and found 326 identifiable plant species. These pastures were highly diverse, with a mean of 9 species per 1 m², and as many as 32 in 1 m² and 73 in the whole 1000 m² area sampled. Although most agronomic species have been introduced to the region, nearly half of the species we identified were native.

Figure 1. Locations of farms sampled for this survey.

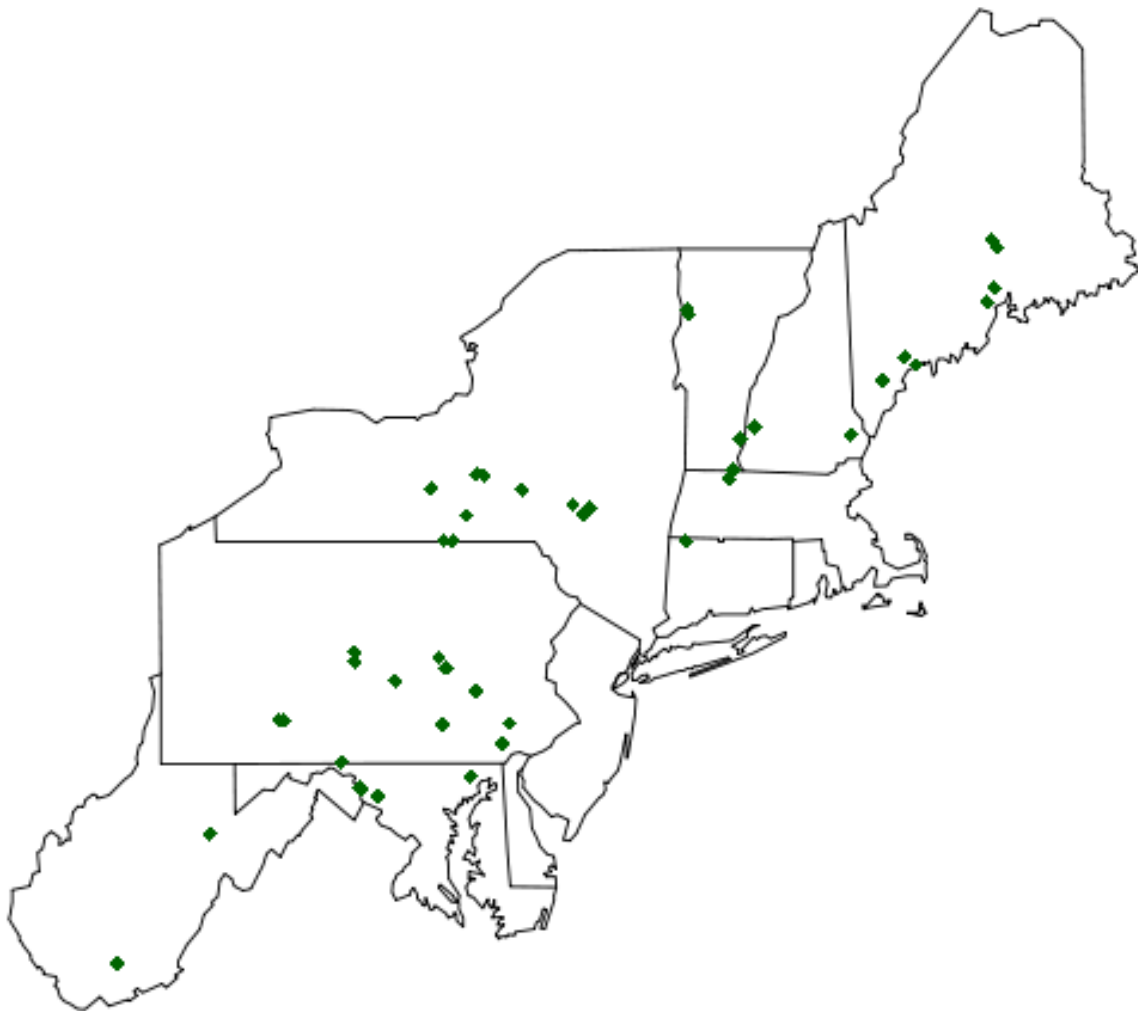


Table 1. Species richness by life history type and functional group.

	Introduced	Native	TOTAL
Annual forbs	38	27	65
Biennial forbs	15	2	17
Perennial forbs	51	73	124
ALL FORBS	104	102	206
Annual legumes	4	0	4
Perennial legumes	11	2	13
ALL LEGUMES	15	2	17
Annual grasses	18	4	22
Perennial grasses	25	15	40
ALL GRASSES	43	19	62
Annual vines	2	1	3
Perennial vines	3	2	5
ALL VINES	5	3	8
Woody perennials	9	24	33
TOTAL	176	150	326

Table 2. Species found on the highest percentage of farms.

	Frequency
Kentucky bluegrass	100.0
dandelion	100.0
white clover	100.0
orchardgrass	97.7
timothy	97.7
common plantain	97.7
red clover	97.7
yellow wood sorrel	90.9
quackgrass	88.6
tall fescue	88.6

Table 3. Most abundant species by mean percent cover across all samples.

	Cover (%)
Kentucky bluegrass	16.4
tall fescue	13.5
orchardgrass	11.7
white clover	10.2
dandelion	5.0
perennial ryegrass	4.3
timothy	3.6
quackgrass	3.0
common plantain	2.1
red clover	2.1

