

Jung Hemlock-Beech Forest SNA

Location and Directions: Shawano County. T27N-R14E, Section 23 E¹/₂NW¹/₄.

From the intersection of County Highways A and G in Gresham, go south on A about 2 miles, then south on County U for 1 mile, then east on Winkle Road for 0.3 miles to a tiny parking area south of the road well-marked with a SNA sign. No marked trails lead into the site, but an old trail can be found and followed for a little way.

Size: 80 acres with 63 acres of old-growth

Forest Type: Northern mesic forest – hemlock-hardwoods with beech

Age of the oldest-known trees: 230 years

Status: Jung Hemlock-Beech Forest is owned by the DNR and was designated a State Natural Area in 1976. Jung Hemlock-Beech Forest is a rare remnant of the once extensive northern hemlock-hardwood forest that covered millions of acres in northeastern Wisconsin. The forest contains old-growth hemlock, American beech, and sugar maple, with some yellow birch and some large (36" dbh), but scattered white pine – most of the pines were almost certainly high-graded out long ago. Beech is near the western limit of its range here, but is common throughout the stand and reproducing well. However, many of the larger beech appear to be on their last legs. Hemlock is also reproducing to a minor extent, but better in comparison to most sites where young hemlocks are rare due to browsing deer. A recent blowdown snapped off or uprooted quite a few larger trees.

The site is bordered entirely by agricultural fields, and depending on the season and time of day, the sound of tractors is a constant. The lack of a forest buffer to lessen the probability of windthrow is a major concern.

Characteristic understory species including beech-drops, a root parasite of beech trees. Common nesting birds include the wood thrush, whose beautiful song resonates all the more richly in the large trees.

