5.0 SITE SERIES OF THE VANCOUVER FOREST REGION

This section presents all site series currently recognized in the Vancouver Forest Region. Site series are organized into **general sites** and **special sites**, and are presented according to biogeoclimatic subzone or variant. For each biogeoclimatic unit, the site series are portrayed on an edatopic grid (modified grids for special sites), which is accompanied by a vegetation summary table of selected species thought to best characterize the site series. The vegetation tables are derived from sample plot data used to develop the classification. Site series based on limited data (fewer than four plots) are footnoted. The information presented here can be used for identifying site series by following the environmental and vegetation analysis described in Section 3.0. A list of the edatopic grids is shown in Table 21

5.1 Site Classification

5.1.1 General sites

Site series are displayed on two-dimensional edatopic grids that show the relationship to soil moisture and nutrient regime classes. A blank space on a grid indicates that that site series has not been sampled and recognized for that combination of SMR and SNR. The divisions between site series usually fall on boundaries between SMR and SNR classes, but occasionally a boundary between two site series occurs in the middle of a class (e.g., grid no. 9, site series 01 and 11). This indicates some overlap between the site series in relation to that class (e.g., on Grid No. 9 site series 01 ranges from 4-5 SMR, and site series 11 ranges from 5-6).

It is important to recognize that the classification system cannot cover all possible sites that occur in the landscape. Users are bound to encounter sites that do not appear to "fit" well on the edatopic grid. For these sites, describe the vegetation and environmental features, including climate, soil moisture, and soil nutrients. An understanding of these factors, silvics of tree species, and the ecological effects of management practices is necessary for developing prescriptions.

5.1.2 Special sites

Special sites are shown on modified "grids" that reflect the unique environmental features of the site. For example, floodplain sites are characterized by *bench heights*, strongly fluctuating water table sites are characterized by *summer and winter water regimes*, and shoreline/ocean spray sites are characterized by *coastal landforms and moisture regime*.

FLOODPLAIN SITES

Floodplain sites border streams and rivers, and are formed from sediments deposited during flooding events. These sites are still under the influence of periodic flooding, that distinguishes them from inactive fluvial deposits that are no longer flooded because of downcutting of the river. They are flat benches varying in width from narrow strips along streams to broad floodplains along major rivers. Three types of floodplain sites are recognized, based on the relative bench height:

High bench sites

- The highest and most infrequently flooded (>5 year return interval) portion of a floodplain. Growing season flooding is of short duration.
- Soils are sorted silts, sandy loams, or sands, usually coarser at depth.
 A surface capping of finer sediments is often present. Forest floor is present with developing horizons, but generally only a few centimetres thick
- Mature stands dominated by conifers that are sometimes restricted to elevated microsites (look for Cw or Ss stumps in logged areas).
 Successional stands are dominated by red alder, cottonwood, or bigleaf maple.

Medium bench sites

- The intermediate height, frequently flooded (at least every 5 years, often annually) portion of a floodplain. Duration of growing season flooding significantly longer than on high bench sites.
- Soils are mainly sorted silts and sands, with coarser gravels at depth.
 Forest floor is thin and poorly developed, often comprised of just litter. Evidence of recent mineral and organic deposits present.

 Mature stands are dominated by deciduous species. Conifers are absent or restricted to elevated microsites.

Low bench sites

- The lowest height, annually flooded portion of a floodplain. Flooding is of long duration during the growing season.
- Soils can be coarse gravels and sands adjacent to high-energy streams, or deep saturated loams and silts adjacent to low-energy streams. Forest floors are absent or comprised of fresh litter.
- Stands are dominated by cottonwood and alder, and typically include willows

SITES WITH STRONGLY FLUCTUATING WATER TABLE

The soil moisture regime at these sites varies significantly over the year because of a strongly fluctuating water table. Soils are saturated during the winter months due to a combination of flat topography, dense, poorly drained soil layers, and fine textures. During the growing season, the water table drops, leaving an aerated rooting zone of varying depth.

Some of their characteristics are:

- Occur on flat, fine-textured marine deposits (e.g., on east Vancouver Island).
- Soils have an obvious gleyed layer.
- Microtopography is often strongly mounded; the depth of aerated soil can vary over a relatively short distance.
- After logging, these sites are dominated by red alder with small amounts of cottonwood, bigleaf maple, trembling aspen, and sporadic conifer regeneration.

The depth to gleying in the soil, and thus the degree of wetness during the winter and summer months determine the three sites recognized in the CWHxm and CWHdm subzones:

Cw - Salmonberry (summer fresh / winter very moist)

- gleying > 35 cm deep
- salmonberry and swordfern abundant; red-osier dogwood, black twinberry, and slough sedge rare.

Cw - Black twinberry (summer moist / winter wet)

- gleying 20-35 cm deep
- red-osier dogwood, black twinberry present but not abundant; slough sedge dominated depressions present but not extensive; Pacific crab apple rare.

Cw - Slough sedge (summer very moist / winter very wet)

- gleying < 20 cm deep
- slough sedge dominated depressions extensive; red-osier dogwood and Pacific crab apple abundant; vanilla-leaf and bracken fern rare.

SHORELINE AND OCEAN SPRAY SITES

These sites are strongly influenced by blowing ocean spray because of their proximity to the ocean in areas of high winds. They are recognized on the outer coast of Vancouver Island, the mainland, and the Queen Charlotte Islands (CWHvh, CWHwh subzones). Sitka spruce dominates these sites because of its tolerance of salt spray.

Recognized shoreline and ocean spray sites include:

<u>Rocky headland</u> - rock outcrops with shallow, discontinuous soil, exposed to the sea and affected by ocean spray.

<u>Old beachplain</u> - sites bordering the ocean, formed of sediments deposited by wave action, which are usually sorted and consist of sand or gravel.

<u>Marine terrace and scarp</u> - flat terraces and associated steep erosional scarps adjacent to the sea, formed by ancient wave action during deglaciation.

<u>Fluctuating brackish water</u> - estuaries and tidal sloughs where brackish water influences vegetation composition.

5.2 Site Classification Grids and Vegetation Summary Tables

TABLE 21. Index of site classification grids

Grid	Site category	Biogeoclimatic unit
no.		
1	General	CDFmm
2	General	CWHdm
3	General	CWHds1
4	General	CWHds2
5	General	CWHmm1
6	General	CWHmm2
7	General	CWHms1
8	General	CWHms2
9	General	CWHvh1
10	General	CWHvh2
11	General	CWHvm1
12	General	CWHvm2
13	General	CWHwh1
14	General	CWHwh2
15	General	CWHws2
16	General	CWHxm
17	General	ESSFmw
18	General	IDFww
19	General	MHmm1
20	General	MHmm2
21	General	MHwh
22	Special - Floodplains	CDFmm
23	Special - Floodplains	CWHdm,CWHds1,CWHxm
24	Special - Floodplains	CWHds2
25	Special - Floodplains	CWHmm1
26	Special - Floodplains	CWHms1,CWHms2
27	Special - Floodplains	CWHwh1
28	Special - Floodplains	CWHvh1,CWHvh2
29	Special - Floodplains	CWHvm1
30	Special - Floodplains	CWHws2
31	Special - Fluctuat water table	CDFmm
32	Special - Fluctuat. water table	CWHdm, CWHxm
33	Special - Shoreline/ocean spray	CWHwh,CWHvh

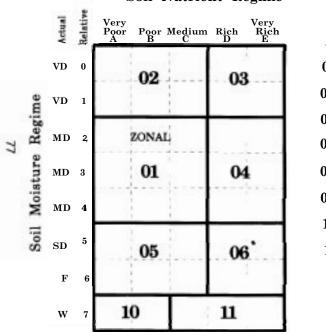
Grid No:

CDFmm

VEGETATION TABLE

GENERAL

SITE



Site Series

01 Fd - Salal

02 FdPl - Arbutus

03 Fd - Oniongrass

04 FdBg - Oregon grape

05 CwFd - Kindbergia

06 CwBg - Foamflower

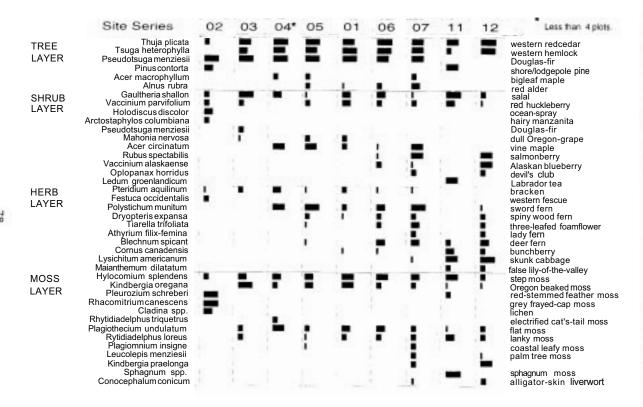
10 Pl - Sphagnum

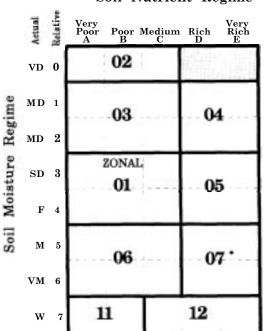
Cw - Skunk cabbage

DFmm

Moist Maritime No. 1

See grid #22 for site series 07 - 09.





-		_	_		_			
*	See	grid	#23	for	site	series	08-10.	

Site	Series
DILE	Derres

01 Hw - Flat moss

FdPl - Cladina

03 FdHw - Salal

04 Fd - Sword fern

Cw - Sword fern

HwCw - Deer fern

Cw - Foamflower

Pl - Sphagnum

CwSs - Skunk cabbage

WHdm

No. 2

Maritime

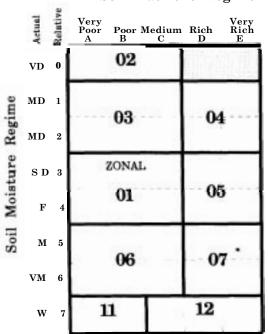
Grid No:

ω

CWHds1

VEGETATION TABLE

GENERAL



See grid #23 for site series 08-10

Site Series

01 HwFd - Cat's-tail moss

02 FdPl - Kinnikinnick

FdHw - Falsebox

04 Fd • Fairybells

05 Cw - Solomon's-seal

06 Hw - Queen's cup

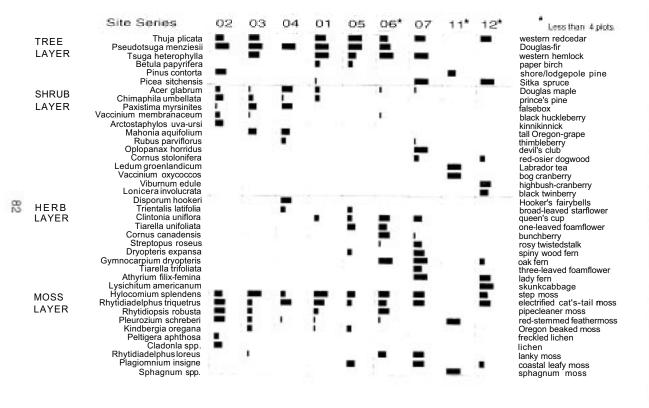
Cw - Devil's club

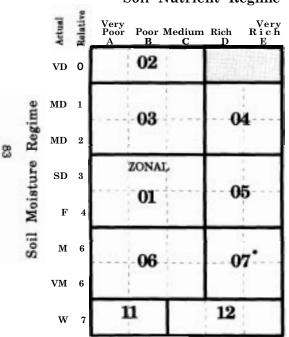
11 Pl - Sphagnum

12 CwSs - Skunk cabbage

No. 3

Submaritime





See grid #23 for site series 08-10.

Site Series

01 HwFd - Cat's-tail moss

02 FdPl - Kinnikinnick

03 FdHw - Falsebox

04 Fd - Fairybells

05 Cw - Solomon's-seal

06 Hw - Queen's cup

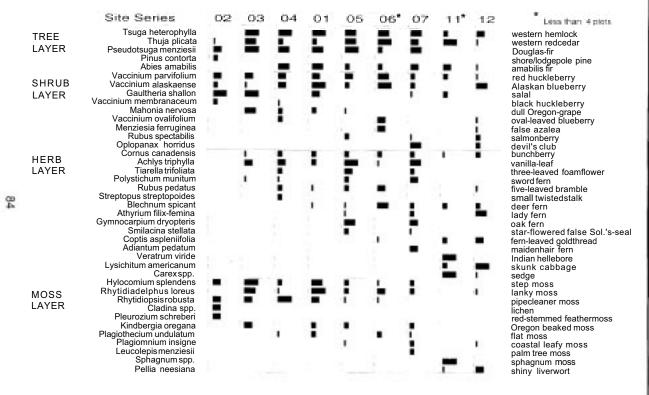
07 Cw - Devil's club

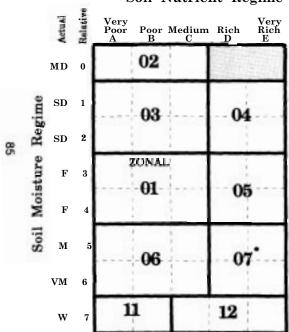
11 Pl - Sphagnum

12 CwSs - Skunk cabbage

Grid No. 4 CWHds2

Central Dry Submaritime CWH Variant





See grid #25 for site series 08 - 10.

Site Series

01 HwBa - Pipecleaner moss

02 FdHw - Salal

03 HwCw - Salal

04 CwHw - Sword ferm

05 BaCw - Foamflower

HwBa - Deer fern

BaCw - Salmonberry

11 Pl - Sphagnum

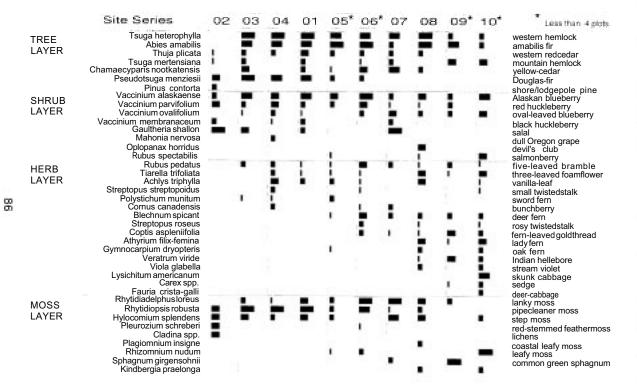
CwSs - Skunk cabbage

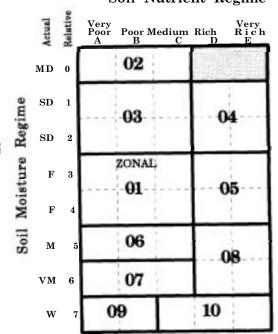
Grid No. 5 VHmml

Moist

Maritime

mi





Site Series

01 HwBa - Pipecleaner moss

02 FdHw - Salal

03 HwCw - Salal

04 CwHw - Sword fern

05 BaCw - Foamflower

06 HwBa - Deer fern

07 CwYc- Goldthread

08 BaCw - Salmonberry

09 Pl - Sphagnum

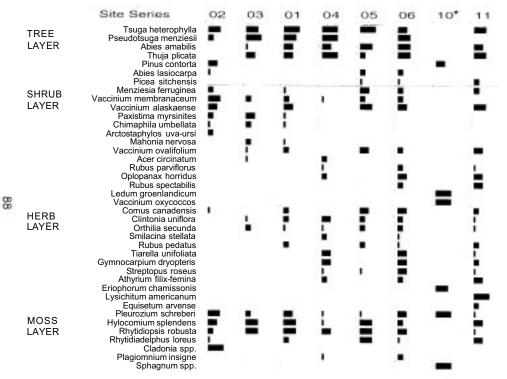
10 CwSs - Skunk cabbage

WHmm2

No.

Montane Moist CWH Variant

Maritime



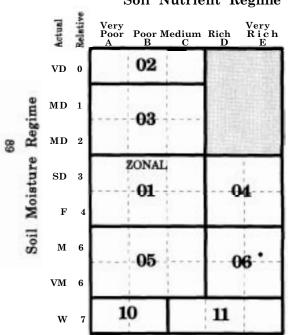
western hemlock Douglas-fir amabilis fir western redcedar shore/lodgepole pine subalpine fir Sitka spruce false azalea black huckleberry Alaskan blueberry falsebox prince's pine kinnikinnick dull Oregon-grape oval-leaved blueberry vine maple thimbleberry devil's club salmonberry Labrador tea bog cranberry bunchberry queen's cup one-sided wintergreen star-flowered false Sol.'s-seal five-leaved bramble one-leaved foamflower oak fern rosv twistedstalk ladv fern Chamisso's cotton-grass skunk cabbage common horsetail red-stemmed feathermoss step moss pipecleaner moss lanky moss

lichens

coastal leafy moss

sphagnum moss

Less than 4 plots.



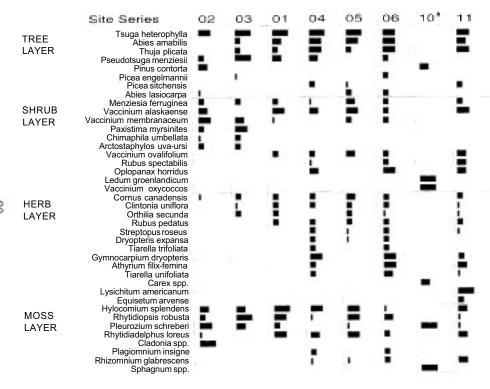
See grid #126 for site series 07 - 09.

Site Series

- 01 HwBa Step moss
- 02 FdPl Kinnikinnick
- **03** FdHw Falsebox
- 04 BaCw Oak fern
- 05 HwBa Queen's cup
- 06 BaCw Devil's club
- 10 Pl Sphagnum
- 11 CwSs Skunk cabbage

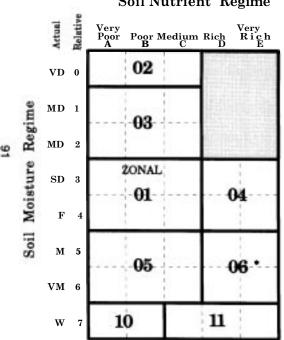
Moist

Submaritime



western hemlock amabilis fir westem redcedar Douglas-fir shore/lodgepole pine Engelmann spruce Sitka spruce subalpine fir false azalea Alaskan blueberry black huckleberry falsebox prince's pine kinnikinnick oval-leaved blueberry salmonberry devil's club Labrador tea bog cranberry bunchberry queen's cup one-sided wintergreen five-leaved bramble rosy twistedstalk spiny wood fern three-leaved foamflower oak fern lady fern one-leaved foamflower sedge skunk cabbage common horsetail step moss pipecleaner moss red-stemmed feathermoss lanky moss lichen coastal leafy moss large leafy moss sphagnum moss

Less than 4 plots.



See grid # 26 for site series 07 - 09

Site Series

01 HwBa - Step moss

02 FdPl - Kinnikinnick

03 FdHw - Falsebox

04 BaCw - Oak fern

05 HwBa - Queen's cup

06 BaCw - Devil's club

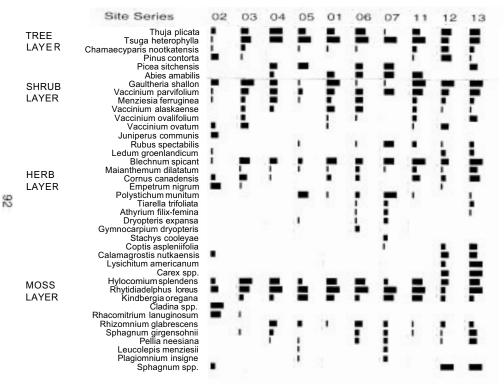
10 Pl - Sphagnum

11 CwSs - Skunk cabbage

rid No. 8

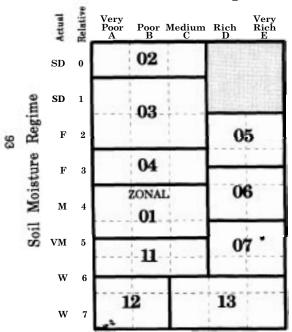
Central Moist S CWH Variant

Moist Submaritime



western redcedar western hemlock vellow-cedar shore/lodgepole pine Sitka spruce amabilis fir salal red huckleberry false azalea Alaskan blueberry oval-leaved blueberry evergreen huckleberry common juniper salmonbérry Labrador tea deer fern false lily-of-the-valley bunchberry crowberry sword fern three-leaved foamflower lady fern spiny wood fern oak fern Cooley's hedge-nettle fern-leaved goldthread Pacific reedgrass skunk cabbage sedge step moss lanky moss Oregon beaked moss lichens hoary rock moss large leafy moss common green sphagnum shiny liverwort palm tree moss coastal leafy moss

sphagnum moss



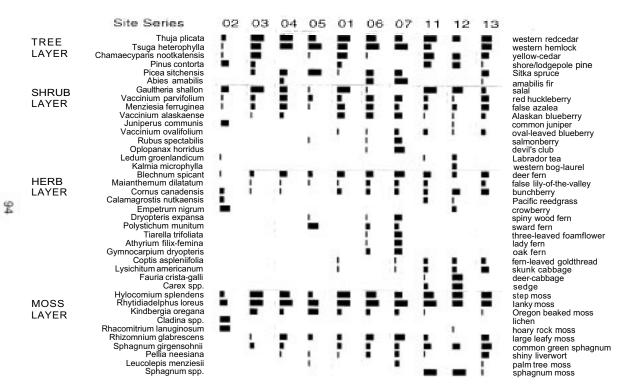
See grid #28 for site series 08-10.

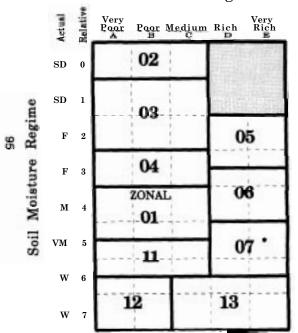
Site Series

- 01 CwHw Salal
- 02 PlYc Rhacomitrium
- 03 CwYc Salal
- **04** HwSs Lanky moss (steep slopes)
- **05** CwSs Sword fern (steep slopes)
- 06 CwSs Foamflower
- 07 CwSs Devil's club
- 11 CwYc Goldthread
- 12 PlYc Sphagnum
- 13 CwSs Skunk cabbage

CWHvhl

Southern Very Wet Hypermaritime CWH \ Grid No. 9





^{*} See grid # 28 for site series 08-10.

Site Series

CwHw - Salal

02PlYc - Rhacomitrium

03 CwYc - Salal

04 HwSs - Lanky moss (steep slopes)

05 CwSs - Sword fern (steep slopes)

06 CwSs - Foamflower

07 CwSs - Devil's club

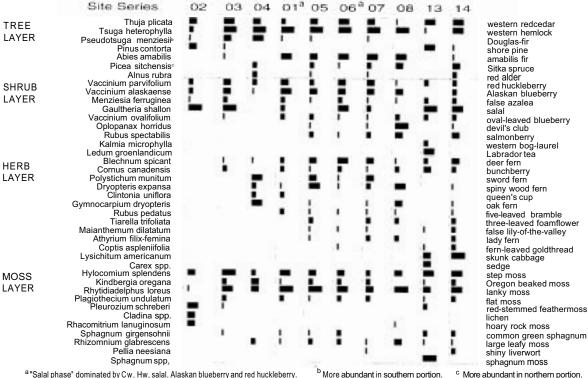
11 CwYc - Goldthread

12 PlYc - Sphagnum

13 CwSs - Skunk cabbage WHvh2

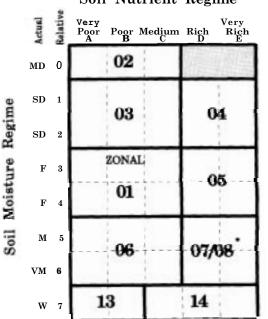
No. 10

Wet



^b More abundant in southern portion.

^c More abundant in northern portion.



* See grid #29 for site series 09 - 11; Site series 08 in northern portion of variant; 12 rare in region.

Site Series

01 HwBa - Blueberry

HwPl - Cladina

HwCw - Salal

**

CwHw - Swordfern

05 BaCw - Foamflower

HwBa - Deer fern

BaCw - Salmonberry

BaSs - Devil's club

Pl - Sphagnum

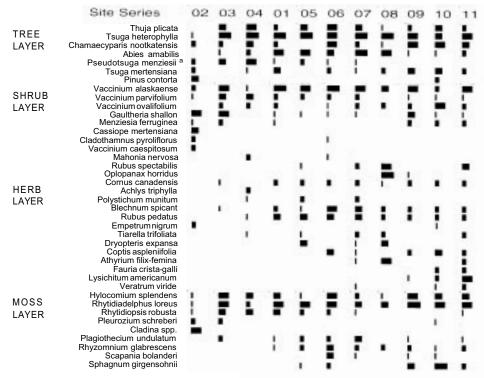
14 CwSs - Skunk cabbage

A nutrient-very poor to poor "salal phase" of site series 01 and 06 occurs in subdued terrain on the west coast and north end of Vancouver Island. It is denoted with an "s" modifier to the site series number (e.g. 01s).

 w_{Hvm}

No. 11

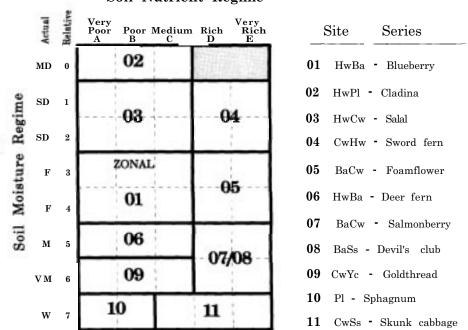
Submontane Maritime CV ariant Wet



western redcedar western hemlock vellow-cedar amabilis fir Douglas-fir mountain hemlock shore pine Alaskan blueberry red huckleberry oval-leaved blueberry salal false azalea white mountain-heather copperbush dwarf blueberry dull Oregon-grape salmonberry devil's club bunchberry vanilla leaf sword fern deer fern five-leaved bramble crowberry three-leaved foamflower spiny wood fern fern-leaved goldthread lady fern deer-cabbage skunk cabbage Indian hellebore step moss lankv moss pipecleaner moss red-stemmed feathermoss lichen flat moss large leafy moss scapania common green sphagnum

98

a More abundant in southern portion.

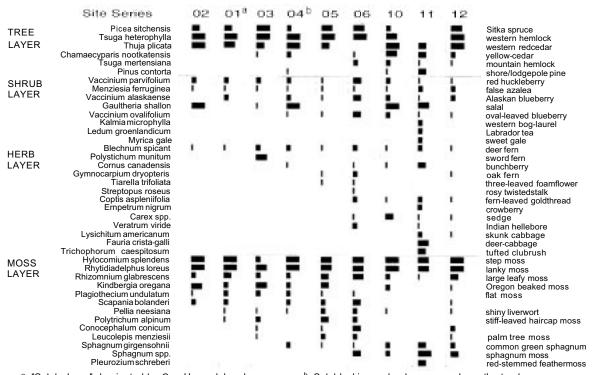


WHvm2

o.

12

Montane Maritime Wet Variant



a "Salal phase" dominated by Cw, Hw, salal and mosses. b Salal lacking under dense second-growth stands.

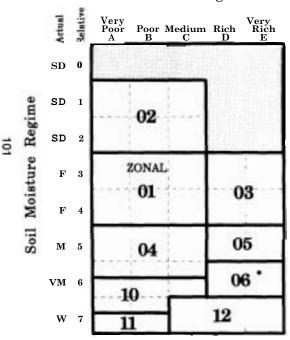
No. 13

Submontane CWH Varia

Hypermaritime

Variant

Soil Nutrient Regime



5	Site Series
**	
01	HwSs - Lanky moss
02	CwSs - Salal
03	CwSs - Sword fern
04	CwHw - Salal
05	CwSs - Foamflower
06	CwSs - Conocephalum
10	CwYc - Goldthread
11	PlYc - Sphagnum
12	CwSs - Skunk cabbage

Anutrient-very poor to poor "salal phase" of site series 01 occurs in subdued terrain on the Queen Charlotte Lowlands and the eastern Skidegate Plateau. It is denoted with an "s"

modifier to the site series number (e.g. 01s).

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GENERAL