

the north and west the Plateau interdigitates into other Areas. Elevation 1000 ft. on the east to 3000 on the west. Rainfall: 14-34 in.; droughts are frequent. The overstory consists of live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), shinnery oak (*Q. barvardii*), juniper (*Juniperus ashei*), and mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*); the understory is tall- or mid-grass.

8. Rolling Plains

This Area is part of the Great Plains Region of the central United States. Topography: gently rolling to moderately rough. Elevation: 800-3000 ft. Rainfall: 22 in. in the west to 30 in. in the east; there is a summer dry period with high temperatures and high evaporation rates. The original prairie vegetation was tall- and mid-grasses. Mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) is a common invader.

9. High Plains

This Area (also known as the Staked Plains or Llano Estacado) is likewise part of the Great Plains. Areas 8 and 9 form the Texan Panhandle. Topography: a relatively level high plateau separated from the Rolling Plains by the Cap Rock Escarpment. Elevation: 3500-4000 ft. Rainfall: 15-21 in.; extended droughts have occurred. The vegetation is mixed-prairie or short-grass prairie. Characteristically this Area is free from brush and trees, but there have been some invasions.

10. Trans-Pecos, Mountains and Basins

This is not really a Vegetational Area but a group of areas that ecologists allegedly could not classify, varying from desert valleys and plateaus to wooded mountain slopes and summits. Elevation: 2500 to more than 8500 ft. Rainfall: 8-16 in., increases with elevation.

Most of the Area is Chihuahuan Desert, which is one of the major subdivisions of the North American Hot Desert. The best plant indicators are creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), lechuguilla (*Agave lechuguilla*), narrow-leaved sotol (*Dasylirion wheeleri*), barrel cactus (*Echinocactus wislizenii*), and ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*). Honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) is common on dunes and in low flats and slopes.

Three isolated areas of semidesert coniferous forest are represented by the Guadalupe, Davis, and Chisos Mountains. Characteristic trees are western yellow pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), pinyon (*P. edulis*), Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*), mountain white oak (*Quercus grisea*), and mountain maple (*Acer grandidentatum*).

ECOLOGICAL SUMMARY

We have prepared lists of the ant species recorded from each Vegetational Area of the state as adapted from Gould 1975. It would require too much space to publish the lists, but the numbers are given below.

1. Pineywoods	39	6. South Texas Plains	80
2. Gulf Prairies	66	7. Edwards Plateau	100
3. Post Oak Savannah	72	8. Rolling plains	51
4. Blackland Prairies	103	9. High Plains	44
5. Cross Timbers and Prairies	89	10. Trans-Pecos, Mountains and Basins	97

THE FUTURE

When we moved to Texas in 1980 a colleague asked us (tongue-in-cheek), "Are you planning to write a book on the ants of Texas?" We replied (in the vernacular of the day), NO WAY! Why not? We can think of at least two good reasons. In *The Ants of North Dakota* we devoted 273 pages to 83 species. The Texas fauna, of 210 species, by the same devotion, would require 690 pages.