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Abstract: The article presents information on forests and woodlands of Canada. Forests and woodlands cover approximately 1,600,000 square miles of Canada, or about half the land surface of the country. More than half of this land is produces timber. Thus timber is a major natural and economic resource for Canada. Canadian woodlands stretch all the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. Canada is the largest producer of newsprint in the world. The province of British Columbia provides most of Canada's timber, followed by Ontario and Quebec. Ontario and Quebec are also the center of pulpwood production.

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Canadian Woodlands A Vast Resource

Forests and woodlands cover approximately 1,600,000 square miles of Canada, or about half the land surface of the country. More than half of this land is timber-producing. Thus timber is a major natural and economic resource for Canada. Canadian woodlands stretch all the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans.

Canada is the largest producer of newsprint (the paper on which newspapers are printed) in the world. Newsprint, of course, is a timber product. The province of British Columbia provides most of Canada's timber, followed by Ontario and Quebec. Ontario and Quebec are also the center of pulpwood (soft wood) production.

Economically, the most valuable trees, are the Douglas fir, Western hemlock, Western red cedar, and Sitka spruce. Woodlands are also important to the Canadian environment because they prevent erosion of farmland, provide homes for wildlife (of which they contain an amazing amount), and offer recreation and tourism opportunities.

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With so many geographic regions, it is not surprising that Canada has a vast range of plantlife. The interior plains of Canada are dominated by many types of flora.

Deciduous trees, such as sugar maples, red maples, yellow birch, and beech trees, are typical trees of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence regions. Balsam fir, cedar, tamarack, birch, and jack pine are also found in the eastern region.

The Pacific West contains tall, hard conifers. Western hemlock, Douglas fir, spruce, and white pine are a few examples of conifers. The Rocky Mountain region just east of the west coast, has alpine fir, spruce, lodgepole pine, and mountain hemlock, which are typical of subalpine forests.

In Canada's northern region, conifers dominate. Moving north of the tree line into the arctic, the conifers give way to low-growing grasses, and mosses.

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Illustration by John Grigni

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