







## General Characteristics of Major Wetland Habitat Types in Montgomery County, Maryland & Surrounding Areas

	Type	Plant Community	Water Permanence	Water Source	Other Notes
	<b>Pond</b>	Mostly soft-bodied vegetation surrounding and within (emergent & submergent); may also host floating plants	Generally permanent	Mix — precipitation or runoff, groundwater, and sometimes surface water (e.g., streams); may have beaver activity	May have predatory fish; excellent habitat for bullfrogs
	<b>Swamp</b>	Woody vegetation (trees, shrubs) dominant; bottom often covered in fallen leaves and detritus; Resembles a flooded forest	Variable, fluctuating	Variable — precipitation or runoff, surface water (floodplain), groundwater; often found along rivers; may have beaver activity	Highly utilized by amphibians
	<b>Marsh</b>	Emergent, soft-stemmed vegetation	Frequently (or continuously) covered	Influenced by surface and groundwater inputs; often found along rivers, lakes and ponds; may have beaver activity	May be coastal or inland; tidal, brackish or fresh
	<b>Wet Meadow</b>	Primarily grassy and open in appearance; changes seasonally; may host wildflowers	Variable, fluctuating	Groundwater and subsurface flow, ephemeral streams	Most often seen in low-lying farmland and city parks
	<b>Seasonal Pool</b>	Variable; Most often a depression filled with water and hosting obligate species of woody and soft-bodied vegetation.	Fluctuating water levels; May be temporary annually or in drier years only	Precipitation and/or runoff; some may have groundwater influences & subsurface flow; isolated from surface water (e.g., streams, rivers)	Small & shallow; Free of predatory fish; Breeding habitat for obligate amphibians; difficult to detect in summer and early fall
	<b>Ditch</b>	Typically lacking plants; may have cattails & surrounding grasses	Fluctuating, often temporary & will dry completely in summer months	Variable, but typically precipitation or runoff	Variable in depth & permanence; look along roadsides, railroad tracks, park paths and ag fields (irrigation, tire ruts)