STATE OF OHIO
Ted Strickland, Governor

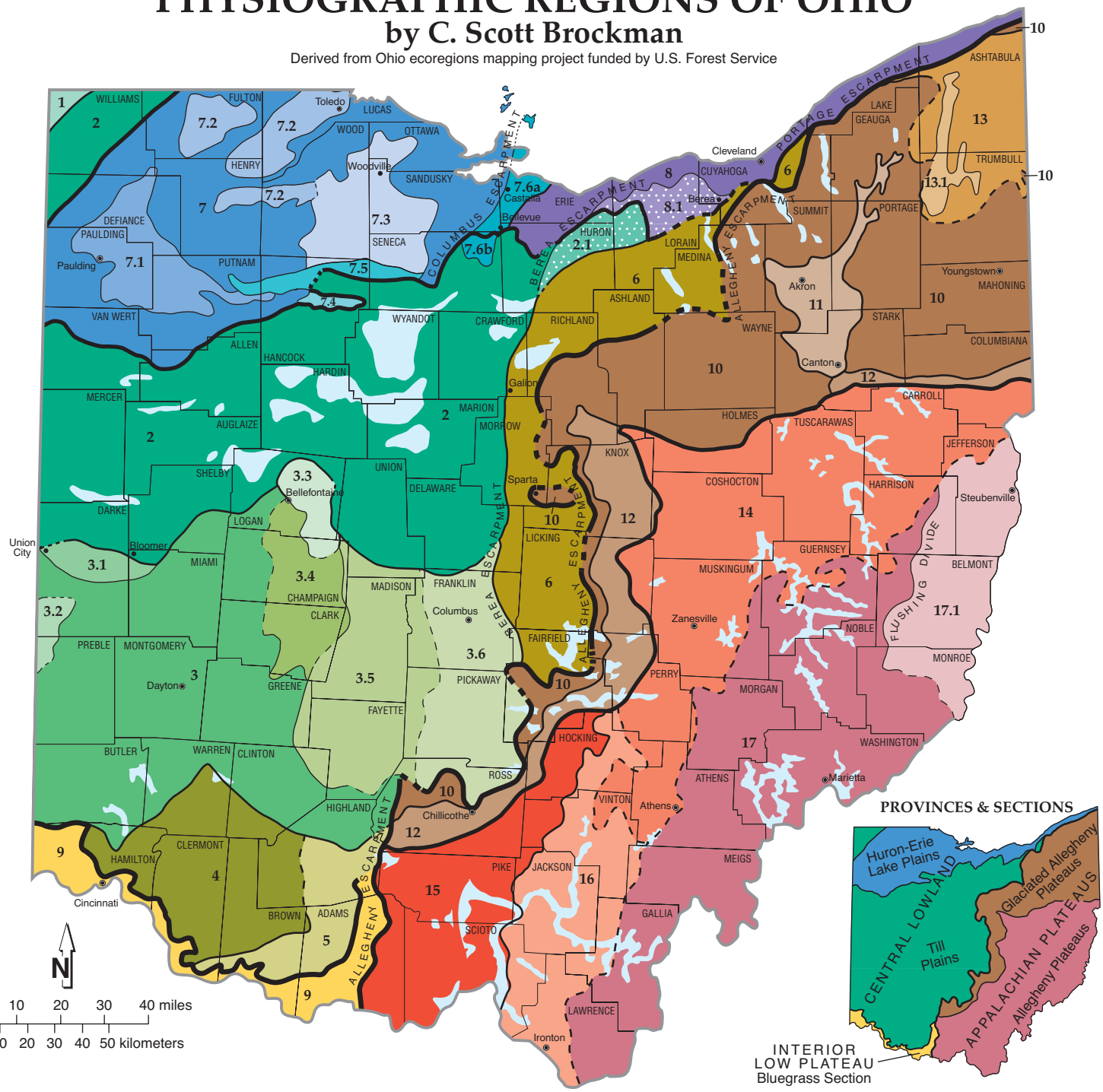
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Sean D. Logan, Director

DIVISION OF GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
Lawrence H. Wickstrom, Chief

PHYSIOGRAPHIC REGIONS OF OHIO

by C. Scott Brockman

Derived from Ohio ecoregions mapping project funded by U.S. Forest Service



Till Plains

- 1. Steuben Till Plain
- 2. Central Ohio Clayey Till Plain
  - 2.1. Berea Headlands of the Till Plain
- 3. Southern Ohio Loamy Till Plain
  - 3.1. Union City-Bloomer Transitional Terrain
  - 3.2. Whitewater Interlobate Plain
  - 3.3. Bellefontaine Upland
  - 3.4. Mad River Interlobate Plain
  - 3.5. Darby Plain
  - 3.6. Columbus Lowland
- 4. Illinoian Till Plain
- 5. Dissected Illinoian Till Plain
- 6. Galion Glaciated Low Plateau

Transitional boundary

Lake basin/deposits outside Huron-Erie Lake Plains

Huron-Erie Lake Plains

- 7. Maumee Lake Plains
  - 7.1. Paulding Clay Basin
  - 7.2. Maumee Sand Plains
  - 7.3. Woodville Lake-Plain Reefs
  - 7.4. Findlay Embayment
  - 7.5. Fostoria Lake-Plain Shoals
  - 7.6a and 7.6b. Bellevue-Castalia Karst Plain
- 8. Erie Lake Plain
  - 8.1. Berea Headlands of the Erie Lake Plain

Bluegrass Section

- 9. Outer Bluegrass Region

Glaciated Allegheny Plateaus

- 10. Killbuck-Glaciated Pittsburgh Plateau
- 11. Akron-Canton Interlobate Plateau
- 12. Illinoian Glaciated Allegheny Plateau
- 13. Grand River Low Plateau
  - 13.1 Grand River Finger-Lake Plain

Allegheny Plateaus

- 14. Muskingum-Pittsburgh Plateau
- 15. Shawnee-Mississippian Plateau
- 16. Ironton Plateau
- 17. Marietta Plateau
  - 17.1. Little Switzerland Plateau

4/98

PHYSIOGRAPHIC REGIONS OF OHIO

Major Divisions	Provinces	Sections *	DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF REGIONS & DISTRICTS	GEOLOGY	BOUNDARIES
INTERIOR PLAINS	CENTRAL LOWLAND	Till Plains	**1. Steuben Till Plain.** Hummocky terrain with rolling hills, interspersed flats and closed depressions; wetlands, few streams, deranged drainage; only a small part of the region is in Ohio; elevation 950'-1100', moderately low relief (60')	Wisconsinan-age (latest Ice-Age) loamy till from a northern source (Saginaw glacial lobe) over Mississippian-age Coldwater Shale	Southeast: edge of Wabash Moraine
			2. Central Ohio Clayey Till Plain. Surface of clayey till; well-defined moraines with intervening flat-lying ground moraine and intermorainal lake basins; no boulder belts; about a dozen silt-, clay- and till-filled lake basins range in area from a few to 200 square miles; few large streams; limited sand & gravel outwash; elevation 700'-1150', moderate relief (100')	Clayey, high-lime Wisconsinan-age till from a northeastern source (Erie glacial lobe) and lacustrine materials over Lower Paleozoic-age carbonate rocks and, in the east, shales; loess thin to absent	North: Lake Plain; northeast: limit of Berea Sandstone; east: Berea Escarpment; south: Powell and Union City/Bloomer Moraines; northern segment boundaries: Wabash Moraine and lake plain
			2.1. Berea Headlands of the Till Plain. Gently rolling to flat terrain of thin drift descending to Lake Erie; punctuated by more than 20 streamlined "whalebacks" of Berea Sandstone, 0.5 to 2.5 miles long, 30'-60' high; somewhat poorly drained; elevation 800'-1000', low relief (20')	Thin, clayey, medium-lime Wisconsinan-age till over resistant Mississippian-age Berea Sandstone	South: limit of Berea Sandstone; elsewhere: Berea Escarpment and/or margin of highest Pleistocene lake
			3. Southern Ohio Loamy Till Plain. Surface of loamy till; end and recessional moraines, commonly associated with boulder belts, between relatively flat-lying ground moraine, cut by steep-valleyed large streams; stream valleys filled with outwash and alternate between broad floodplains and narrows; buried valleys common; elevation 530'-1150', moderate relief (200')	Loamy, high-lime Wisconsinan-age till, outwash, and loess over Lower Paleozoic-age carbonate rocks and, in the east, shales	East: Berea and Allegheny Escarpments; north: Powell and Union City/Bloomer Moraines; south: limit of Wisconsinan-age till
			3.1. Union City-Bloomer Transitional Terrain. Well-defined moraines with low-relief, hummocky ground moraine like the Central Ohio Clayey Till Plain to the north; loamy till with loess cap like Southern Ohio Loamy Till Plain to the south; elevation 920'-1075', moderately low relief (30')	Loamy, high-lime Wisconsinan-age till with thin loess cap over Silurian-age dolomites	North: Bloomer Moraine and limit of loamy till; south: Union City Moraine
			3.2. Whitewater Interlobate Plain. An upland between two converging glacial lobes with hummocky moraines, moraine complexes, kames, boulder belts, and broad outwash trains/plains; contains highest elevations in Indiana (1257') and in adjacent Ohio counties (1240'); elevation in Ohio 980'-1240', moderate relief (150')	Loamy, high-lime Wisconsinan-age till and sand and gravel outwash over resistant Silurian-age carbonate rocks (north) and less resistant Ordovician-age shales and limestones (south)	North: limit of Knightstown/Farmersville Moraines and kame fields; east: high, dissected hills draining to Whitewater River
			3.3. Bellefontaine Upland. Moderately high relief (250') dissected topography with moraine complexes, boulder belts, high-gradient major streams, caves and sinkholes; few glacial depressions/kettles compared to surrounding areas; elevation 1100'-1549', includes highest elevation in Ohio (Campbell Hill, 1549')	Loamy, high-lime Wisconsinan-age till over generally deeply buried Silurian- to Devonian-age carbonate rocks and Ohio Shale	North: areas with hilltops above 1200'; elsewhere: hilltops above about 1300'
			3.4. Mad River Interlobate Plain. Area between two major converging glacial lobes with extensive outwash, outwash terraces, and bordering moraines; springs and cool, ground-water-fed surface waters; elevation 800'-1350', moderate relief (200')	Loamy, high-lime Wisconsinan-age till and sand and gravel outwash over Silurian- to Devonian-age carbonate rocks and Ohio Shale	East and north: rear edge of Cable Moraine Complex; south: outwash to Clifton Gorge; west: western edge of Mad River Outwash
			3.5. Darby Plain. Moderately low relief (25'), broadly hummocky ground moraine with several broad, indistinct recessional moraines; between hummocks are broad, poorly drained swales which held wet prairies/meadows in pioneer days; few large streams; elevation 750'-1100'	Loamy, high-lime Wisconsinan-age till and sparse outwash over Silurian- and Devonian-age carbonate rocks and Ohio Shale in the southeast	South and west: front of Reesville and rear of Cable Moraines; north: Powell Moraine; east: increasing eastward slope (see 3.6)
			3.6. Columbus Lowland. Lowland surrounded in all directions by relative uplands, having a broad regional slope toward the Scioto Valley; many larger streams; elevation 600'-850' (950' near Powell Moraine), moderately low relief (25')	Loamy, high-lime (west) to medium-lime (east) Wisconsinan-age till and extensive outwash in Scioto Valley over deep Devonian- to Mississippian-age carbonate rocks, shales, and siltstones	North: Powell Moraine; east and south: Berea and/or Allegheny Escarpments; west: flatter and higher Darby Plain
			4. Illinoian Till Plain. Rolling ground moraine of older till generally lacking ice-constructional features such as moraines, kames, and eskers; many buried valleys; modern valleys alternating between broad floodplains and bedrock gorges; elevation 600'-1100', moderately low relief (50')	Silt-loam, high-lime, Illinoian-age till with loess cap; soils leached several feet; underlain by Ordovician- and Silurian-age carbonate rocks and calcareous shales	North: Wisconsinan glacial margin (Cuba and Hartwell Moraines); elsewhere: limit of common till-covered hillslopes
			5. Dissected Illinoian Till Plain. Hilly former till plain in which glacial deposits have been eroded from many valley sides; relatively high stream density; elevation 600'-1340', moderate relief (200')	Hilltops of high-lime Illinoian-age till with loess cap; slopes of bedrock- and till-derived colluvium and Ordovician- and Silurian-age carbonate rocks and calcareous shales	East: maximum glacial margin; elsewhere: limit of general absence of till on hillslopes
			6. Galion Glaciated Low Plateau. Rolling upland transitional between the gently rolling Till Plain and the hilly Glaciated Allegheny Plateau; mantled with thin to thick drift; elevation 800'-1400', moderate relief (100')	Medium- to low-lime Wisconsinan-age till over Mississippian-age shales and sandstones	North: limit of Berea Sandstone; west: Berea Escarpment; south and east: Allegheny Escarpment
		Huron-Erie Lake Plains	**7. Maumee Lake Plains.** Flat-lying Ice-Age lake basin with beach ridges, bars, dunes, deltas, and clay flats; contained the former Black Swamp; slightly dissected by modern streams; elevation 570'-800', very low relief (5')	Pleistocene-age silt, clay, and wave-planed clayey till over Silurian- and Devonian-age carbonate rocks and shales	Northeast: Lake Erie; elsewhere: margin of highest Pleistocene lake
			7.1. Paulding Clay Basin. Nearly flat lacustrine plain; most clayey of all Lake Plain subregions; low-gradient, highly meandering streams; easily ponded soils; elevation 700'-725', extremely low relief (less than 5')	Pleistocene-age lacustrine clay over clay till and Silurian-age dolomites	Northeast: subdued ("drowned") remnant of Defiance Moraine; elsewhere: limit of lacustrine clay
			7.2. Maumee Sand Plains. Lacustrine plain mantled by sand; includes low dunes, inter-dunal pans, beach ridges, and sand sheets of glacial lakeshores; well to poorly drained; elevation 600'-800', very low relief (10')	Late Wisconsinan-age sand over clay till and lacustrine deposits; Silurian- and Devonian-age carbonate rocks and shales buried deeply.	Limit of sandy deposits and/or low dunes
			7.3. Woodville Lake-Plain Reefs. Very low relief (10') lacustrine plain with low dunes and lake-margin features, punctuated by more than 75 ancient bedrock reefs rising 10' to 40' above the level of the plain and ranging in area from 0.1 to 3.0 square miles; the oblong reefs are thinly draped with drift; elevation 600'-775'	Thin to absent Wisconsinan-age wave-planed clay till, lacustrine deposits, and sand over Silurian-age reefal Lockport Dolomite	Limit of thinly mantled Lockport Dolomite (Bowling Green Fault to the west and the Defiance Moraine to the south)
			7.4. Findlay Embayment. Very low relief (10'), broadly rolling lacustrine plain; embayment of ancestral Lake Erie in which relatively coarse lacustrine sediments collected; elevation 775'-800'	Silty to gravelly Wisconsinan-age lacustrine deposits and wave-planed clayey till over Silurian-age Lockport Dolomite	West: 775' beach ridge; north: Defiance Moraine; south: margin of highest Pleistocene lake level
			7.5. Fostoria Lake-Plain Shoals. Portion of the Defiance Moraine lightly eroded by shallow Lake Maumee with low north-south trending hillocks and shallow, closed depressions; many sandy areas; elevation 750'-825', low relief, decreasing westward (10'-15')	Silty to gravelly Wisconsinan-age lacustrine deposits and wave-planed clay till over deeply covered Silurian-age dolomite	South and east: unmodified Defiance Moraine; elsewhere: very low-relief lake plain
	INT. LOW PLATEAUS	Bluegrass Section	**7.6a and 7.6b. Bellevue-Castalia Karst Plain.** Hummocky plain of rock knobs and numerous sinkholes, large solution features, and caves; large springs; thinly mantled by drift; region straddles both Lake Plain (7.6a) and Till Plain (7.6b); 7.6a has greatest relief of any Lake Plain region (25'); elevation 570'-825'	Columbus and Delaware Limestones overlain by thin clay till in 7.6b, and thin silty and sandy Wisconsinan-age lacustrine deposits and wave-planed clay till in 7.6a	Limit of thinly mantled Columbus and Delaware Limestones, which is marked in the west by the Columbus Escarpment
			8. Erie Lake Plain. Edge of very low-relief (10') Ice-Age lake basin separated from modern Lake Erie by shoreline cliffs; major streams in deep gorges; elevation 570'-800'	Pleistocene-age lacustrine sand, silt, clay, and wave-planed till over Devonian- and Mississippian-age shales and sandstones	North: Lake Erie; south: margin of highest Pleistocene lake
			8.1 Berea Headlands of the Erie Lake Plain. Portion of the Erie Lake Plain underlain by resistant Berea Sandstone; several large sandstone headlands jut into the Ice-Age lake basin; contains several streamlined "whalebacks" of Berea Sandstone, 0.5 to 2.0 miles long, 20'-35' high; poorly drained; elevation 670'-800', very low relief (10')	Thin lacustrine deposits over thin, wave-planed, clayey, medium-lime Wisconsinan-age till; underlain by resistant Berea Sandstone	North: portion of Lake Plain underlain by soft shales; south: margin of highest Pleistocene lake
			9. Outer Bluegrass Region. Moderately high relief (300') dissected plateau of carbonate rocks; in east, caves and other karst features relatively common; in west, thin, early drift caps narrow ridges; elevation 455'-1120'	Ordovician- and Silurian-age dolomites, limestones, and calcareous shales; thin pre-Wisconsinan drift on ridges in west; silt-loam colluvium	Eastern segment: maximum glacial margin and high eastern ridges capped by noncarbonate rocks; connected by Ohio River bluffs to western segment which is bounded by nondissected till plain
APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS	APPALACHIAN PLATEAUS	Glaciated Allegheny (Southern New York) Plateaus	**10. Killbuck-Glaciated Pittsburgh Plateau.** Ridges and flat uplands generally above 1200', covered with thin drift and dissected by steep valleys; valley segments alternate between broad drift-filled and narrow rock-walled reaches; elevation 600'-1505', moderate relief (200')	Thin to thick Wisconsinan-age clay to loam till over Mississippian- and Pennsylvanian-age shales, sandstones, conglomerates and coals	West and north: resistant sandstones of the Allegheny and Portage Escarpments; south and east: Wisconsinan glacial margin
			11. Akron-Canton Interlobate Plateau. Hummocky area between two converging glacial lobes dominated by kames, kame terraces, eskers, kettles, kettle lakes, and bogs/fens; deranged drainage with many natural lakes; elevation 900'-1200', moderate relief (200')	Sandy Wisconsinan-age and older drift over Devonian- to Pennsylvanian-age sandstones, conglomerates and shales	Limit of common, sandy ice-contact features and deposits
			12. Illinoian Glaciated Allegheny Plateau. Dissected, rugged hills; loess and older drift on ridgetops, but absent on bedrock slopes; dissection similar to unglaciated regions of the Allegheny Plateau; elevation 600'-1400', moderate relief (200')	Colluvium and Illinoian-age till over Devonian- to Pennsylvanian-age shales, siltstones and sandstones	North and west: Wisconsinan glacial margin; south and east: Illinoian (maximum) glacial margin
			13. Grand River Low Plateau. Gently rolling ground and end moraine having thin to thick drift; poorly drained areas and wetlands relatively common; elevation 760'-1200', low relief (20') except near Grand River Valley (200')	Clayey, low-lime Wisconsinan-age till over deeply buried, soft Devonian-age shales and near-surface Mississippian-age sandstones and shales	North: Portage Escarpment; south and west: Defiance Moraine; southeast: increasing relief from proximity of buried Pennsylvanian-age sandstones
			13.1. Grand River Finger-Lake Plain. Very low relief (10') lake deposits in steep-sided troughs (200' relief) within the Grand River Low Plateau; cut by glacial and stream erosion; extensive wetlands; elevation 800'-900'	Surficial lacustrine clay and drift over deeply buried, soft Devonian-age shales	Margins of steeply sloping troughs containing the Grand River and parts of Rock and Mosquito Creeks
		Allegheny (Kanawha) Plateaus	**14. Muskingum-Pittsburgh Plateau.** Moderately high to high relief (300'-600') dissected plateau having broad major valleys that contain outwash terraces, and tributaries with lacustrine terraces; medium-grained bedrock sequences coarser than those in Marietta Plateau (17) but finer than those in Ironton Plateau (16); remnants of ancient Teays-age drainage system uncommon; elevation 650'-1400'	Mississippian and Pennsylvanian-age siltstones, shales, sandstones and economically important coals and claystones; Wisconsinan-age sand, gravel, and lacustrine silt; silt-loam colluvium	North and west: maximum glacial margin; southeast: transition to finer grained bedrock; southwest: transition to coarser grained bedrock
			15. Shawnee-Mississippian Plateau. High relief (400'-800'), highly dissected plateau of coarse and fine grained rock sequences; most rugged area in Ohio; remnants of ancient lacustrine clay-filled Teays drainage system are extensive in lowlands, absent in uplands; elevation 490'-1340'	Devonian- and Mississippian-age shales, siltstones, and locally thick sandstones; Pleistocene-age sandy outwash in Scioto River; Teays-age Minford Clay; silt-loam and channery colluvium	North: Maximum glacial margin; west:: carbonate bedrock; east: limit of Mississippian-age bedrock
			16. Ironton Plateau. Moderately high relief (300') dissected plateau; coarser grained coal-bearing rock sequences more common than in other regions of the Allegheny Plateau; common lacustrine clay-filled Teays Valley remnants; elevation 515'-1060'	Pennsylvanian-age (Pottsville, Allegheny and Conemaugh Groups) cycles of sandstones, siltstones, shales and economically important coals; Pleistocene (Teays)-age Minford Clay; silt-loam and channery colluvium	West: limit of common Pennsylvanian-age bedrock; north and east: gradation to finer rock sequences
			17. Marietta Plateau. Dissected, high-relief (generally 350', to 600' near Ohio River) plateau; mostly fine-grained rocks; red shales and red soils relatively common; landslides common; remnants of ancient lacustrine clay-filled Teays drainage system common; elevation 515'-1400'	Pennsylvanian-age Upper Conemaugh Group through Permian-age Dunkard Group cyclic sequences of red and gray shales, and siltstones, sandstones, limestones and coals; Pleistocene (Teays)-age Minford Clay; red and brown silty-clay loam colluvium; landslide deposits	North and west: transition to medium-grained Lower Conemaugh rocks; east: Flushing Divide
			17.1. Little Switzerland Plateau. Highly dissected, high-relief (generally 450', to 750' along Ohio River) plateau; mostly fine-grained rocks; red shales and red soils relatively common; landslides common; high-gradient shale-bottomed streams subject to flash flooding; no remnants of ancient Teays drainage system; elevation 540'-1400'	Similar to Marietta Plateau but lacking Pleistocene (Teays)-age Minford Clay	North: transition to medium-grained rocks; west and south: Flushing Divide; east: Ohio River

* Section names modified from Fenneman (1938, 1946).