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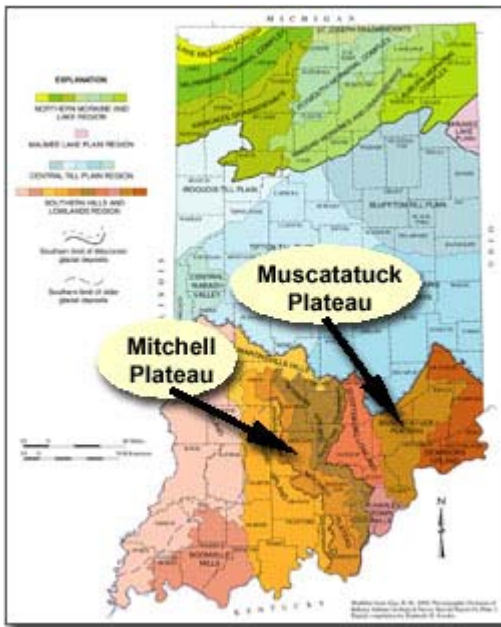
# Karst in Indiana

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Karst is a distinctive type of landscape or topography. Karst landscapes usually occur where carbonate rocks (limestone and dolostone) underlie the surface. Freely circulating slightly acidic rainwater and the water in the soil slowly dissolve the fractures in the limestone and create sinkholes, caves, and other features that characterize karst landscapes. These features are sensitive to contamination because most of the surface water flows directly into them and, therefore, is not filtered by soil and bedrock.



Map showing physiographic divisions of Indiana. Click the map for a larger view of the regions. Modified from Gray, H.H., 2000, *Physiographic Divisions of Indiana*, Indiana Geological Survey Special Report 61, Plate 1. Digital compilation by Kimberly H. Sowder.

Two well-developed areas of karst landscape are present in Indiana. The first, the Mitchell Plateau, is a broad limestone karst plateau dissected by a few major stream systems and is located in southern Indiana. This plateau developed on Mississippian limestones and extends from the eastern part of Owen County southward to the Ohio River in Harrison County.

The second karst area is located in southeastern Indiana and is known as the Muscatatuck Plateau. This plateau developed on limestones of Silurian and Devonian age.

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