

#8 *Larrea tridentata* Shrubland Association (P)

Creosote bush Shrubland Association (P)

This shrubland community is characterized by an open subcanopy stratum (0.5–2 m), dominated by widely spaced creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) and a diverse but inconsistent mix of additional shrubs and perennial grasses. Average total cover of creosote bush (*L. tridentata*) is around 10%, ranging up to 20%. Catclaw acacia (*Senegalia greggii*) provides inconsistent, low cover across the community, averaging about 2%, with rare areas of increased cover where it competes for dominance with creosote bush (*L. tridentata*). Velvet mesquite (*Prosopis velutina*) is another occasional species, most common at the margins of the community. Broom snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*) is the most-common perennial component in the field stratum (<0.5 m), including scattered areas of dominance with cover approaching 10%, but averaging only 2% across the monument. Littleleaf ratany (*Krameria erecta*) and winterfat (*Krascheninnikovia lanata*) are sparse shrubs with occasional areas of noteworthy cover. Numerous perennial grasses, including purple threeawn (*Aristida purpurea*), bush muhly (*Muhlenbergia porteri*), sand dropseed (*Sporobolus cryptandrus*), tobosagrass (*Hilaria mutica*), and black grama (*Bouteloua eriopoda*), provide patchy cover throughout.

Common species

- *Larrea tridentata*
- *Senegalia greggii*
- *Prosopis velutina*
- *Gutierrezia sarothrae*
- *Krameria erecta*
- *Bromus rubens*

This shrubland occurs predominately at the Castle unit, covering 12% (36 ha/90 ac) of the total area, mainly on the low-angle mesa shoulders and summits. At the Well unit, this community is restricted to a mesa top that accounts for 5% (5 ha/12 ac) of the total area. Surface cover is typically dominated by a mix of gravel and bare soil, with higher rock cover where slopes increase.

