

#### 14. (*Parkinsonia microphylla*) / *Larrea tridentata* Shrubland Association (P)

(Yellow paloverde) / Creosote Shrubland Association (P)

This shrubland community is characterized by a sparse (<5% cover) canopy (>2 m) of yellow paloverde (*Parkinsonia microphylla*) and a variably dense (10–30% cover) shrub layer (0.5–2 m) solely dominated by creosote (*Larrea tridentata*). Yellow paloverde (*P. microphylla*) is consistently present (1.0) as large (4 m), scattered trees with average cover of around 3%, but reaching toward 15% in some examples. Creosote (*L. tridentata*) provides consistent (1.0) dominance throughout the subcanopy stratum (0.5–2 m), with average cover of around 20% and up to 30% in some areas. The field layer (<0.5 m) within the community is extremely sparse (<5% cover), with associates that include desert zinnia (*Zinnia acerosa*), rough menodora (*Menodora scabra*), Christmas cactus (*Cylindropuntia leptocaulis*), and brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*).

This community is contained within a three-association map class that covers 3.6% (983 ha/2,429 ac) of the Rincon Mountain District and is mainly distributed throughout the northwest corner of the park, north of the Cactus Forest Loop Road, between the Broadway and Douglas Spring trailheads. It is restricted to low-angle (<5%), lower alluvial fans from 860 to 905 meters (2,820–2,970 ft). In general, the surface cover is defined by very deep and well-drained, fine-loamy soil underlying a layer of coarse (5–10 cm) gravel. Sometimes, the soil can be quite shallow and characterized as a skeletal loam. In both cases, there is likely a layer of caliche at a variable depth below the soil surface.

##### Common species

- *Parkinsonia microphylla*
- *Larrea tridentata*



Rincon Mountain District, Saguaro National Park

