

16. (*Prosopis velutina*) / *Larrea tridentata* Shrubland Association (P)

(Velvet mesquite) / Creosote Shrubland Association (P)

This shrubland is characterized by a sparse (<5% cover) canopy (>2 m) of velvet mesquite (*Prosopis velutina*) and a variably dense (10–30% cover) subcanopy (0.5–2 m) solely dominated by creosote (*Larrea tridentata*). Velvet mesquite (*P. velutina*) is a consistent dominant that grows as a large tree (4 m), providing an average of 3% cover but reaching up to 15% in some examples. These areas of higher canopy cover are typically associated with adjacent wash communities. Creosote (*L. tridentata*) is also a consistent dominant, with average cover of around 20%, sometimes reaching up to 30%. Whitethorn acacia (*Vachellia constricta*) is the most consistent associate shrub, often providing 1–2% cover. Other noteworthy associates in the subcanopy include cactus apple (*Opuntia engelmannii*), tulip pricklypear (*Opuntia phaeacantha*), and chain-fruit cholla (*Cylindropuntia fulgida*). The field stratum (<0.5 m) in this community is extremely sparse (<5% cover) and is often composed of a mix of native and non-native grasses and forbs, most notably Mediterranean grass (*Schismus* sp.), redstem storksbill (*Erodium cicutarium*), and fiddleneck (*Amsinckia* sp.).

Common species

- *Prosopis velutina*
- *Larrea tridentata*
- *Vachellia constricta*

This shrubland covers 1% (262 ha/648 ac) of the Rincon Mountain District and occurs mainly in the north-west corner of the district, between the Broadway and Douglas Spring trailheads. It occupies low-angle (<5%) lower alluvial fans and the nearly flat floodplains along some of the larger wash systems. The community's elevational range is from 860 to 905 meters (2,820–2,970 ft). Surface cover is defined by very deep, well-drained soils, commonly composed of fine silt with sparse to non-existent gravel and rock.



Rincon Mountain District, Saguaro National Park

