

22. *Fouquieria splendens* - *Prosopis velutina* / *Dodonaea viscosa* Shrubland Association (P) Ocotillo - Velvet mesquite / Florida hopbush Shrubland Association (P)

This shrubland is characterized by a canopy stratum (>2 m) (10–20% cover) of ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*) and velvet mesquite (*Prosopis velutina*), a subcanopy stratum (0.5–2 m) (15–25% cover) dominated by Florida hopbush (*Dodonaea viscosa*), and a variable (15–30% cover) field layer (<0.5 m) dominated by fairyduster (*Calliandra eriophylla*) and/or rockloving spikemoss (*Selaginella rupincola*). Ocotillo (*F. splendens*) consistently provides 5–10% cover, occasionally up to 15%. Velvet mesquite (*P. velutina*) is a less-consistent dominant, ranging from 1% to 12% cover. The subcanopy is dominated by Florida hopbush (*D. viscosa*), which provides 5–15% cover, sometimes up to 20%. The dominance of this species is diagnostic of this community. Cactus apple (*Opuntia engelmannii*) is a consistent associate that can occasionally be dominant, with up to 5% cover. Other noteworthy associates include staghorn cholla (*Cylindropuntia versicolor*), catclaw acacia (*Senegalia greggii*), turpentine bush (*Ericameria laricifolia*), common sotol (*Dasyliion wheeleri*), Thurber's desert honeysuckle (*Anisacanthus thurberi*), littleleaf false tamarind (*Lysiloma watsonii*), showy goldeneye (*Heliomeris multiflora*), and Thurber's cotton (*Gossypium thurberi*). The field layer is a diverse mix of subshrubs, perennial grasses, and spikemoss. Rockloving spikemoss (*S. rupincola*) cover ranges from absent to a dominant 25% cover; this species is most common where bedrock is high. Fairy-duster (*C. eriophylla*) can also range from absent to a dominant 10% cover. In areas of lower bedrock, or at higher elevations, native perennial grasses can provide a noteworthy 5–10% cover. Common associates include sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*), alkali sacaton (*Sporobolus airoides*), and slender grama (*Bouteloua repens*).

Common species

- *Fouquieria splendens*
- *Prosopis velutina*
- *Dodonaea viscosa*
- *Selaginella rupincola*
- *Calliandra eriophylla*

This shrubland community covers about 0.5% (147 ha/364 ac) of the Rincon Mountain District and occurs on the western slopes just above Rincon Valley. It mainly occupies low, moderately steep backslopes from 1,036 to 1,280 meters (3,400–4,200 ft). The surface cover is often dominated by expanses of bedrock, boulders, and coarse gravel, with shallow and well-drained soils.



Rincon Mountain District, Saguaro National Park

