

## #16 *Dasyilirion wheeleri* / *Bouteloua curtispindula* - *Heteropogon contortus* Shrubland Association (P)

### Common sotol / Sideoats grama - Tanglehead Shrubland Association

This shrubland community is characterized by a moderately sparse (15%) subcanopy stratum (0.5–2 m) dominated by common sotol (*Dasyilirion wheeleri*) and a moderately dense (20–40%) field stratum (<0.5 m) co-dominated by sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtispindula*) and tanglehead (*Heteropogon contortus*). Common sotol (*D. wheeleri*) provides a consistent 10–20% cover across the community. Palmer’s agave (*Agave palmeri*) is a consistent associate that can become a second dominant, but should never become more dominant than common sotol (*D. wheeleri*). Other noteworthy, but sparse, shrubs include Wright’s beebush (*Aloysia wrightii*), evergreen sumac (*Rhus virens*), and Wright’s silktassel (*Garrya wrightii*). Sideoats grama (*B. curtispindula*) and tanglehead (*H. contortus*) provide around 14% cover each, with varying cover based on bedrock dominance. At times, especially when in close proximity to non-native grasslands, Lehmann lovegrass (*Eragrostis lehmanniana*) may become a co-dominant. Other noteworthy species include cane bluestem (*Bothriochloa barbinodis*), bullgrass (*Muhlenbergia emersleyi*), and fairyduster (*Calliandra eriophyllum*).

#### Common species

*Dasyilirion wheeleri*  
*Bouteloua curtispindula*  
*Heteropogon contortus*  
*Agave palmeri*  
*Eragrostis lehmanniana*

Overall, this community covers 1.0% (19 ha, 47 ac) of the park, predominately on moderately steep (15–35%), south-facing slopes at 1,760–2,080 meters (5,774–6,824 ft). The surface is characterized by an even mix of loose rock and gravel, with conspicuous exposed limestone bedrock throughout. The primary examples of this community are on the low slopes on the south side of Smugglers Ridge and near the Cave Trail.

