

## #7 *Prosopis velutina* (*Senegalia greggii*) / (Mixed Perennial Grass - *Gutierrezia sarothrae*) Shrubland Association (P)

Velvet mesquite (Catclaw acacia) / (Mixed Perennial Grass - Broom snakeweed) Shrubland Association (P)

This shrubland community is characterized by a subcanopy stratum (0.5–2 m) dominated by velvet mesquite (*Prosopis velutina*), with one common associate, catclaw acacia (*Senegalia greggii*), and a field stratum (< 0.5 m) composed of a variable mix of short-statured shrubs and perennial grasses. Velvet mesquite (*P. velutina*) is well-distributed in a generally low-statured (1–2 m), shrub-like growth form. It accounts for an average of 10% cover across the association, with areas ranging up to 30%. Catclaw acacia (*S. greggii*) is a consistent, common associate, with cover averaging 3% and ranging up to 8%. Creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) is a patchy associate that is most common at the Castle unit. The field stratum (<0.5 m) is characterized by a diverse mix of small shrubs and perennial grasses.

Broom snakeweed (*G. sarothrae*) is the most dominant small shrub across this community, providing cover that averages to 6%. However, individual cover values are highly variable, ranging from less than 1% up to 18%, with the highest cover occurring at the Well unit. Bush muhly (*Muhlenbergia porteri*), New Mexico feathergrass (*Hesperostipa neomexicana*), and tobosagrass (*Hilaria mutica*) are the most widespread perennial grasses, with highly variable cover ranging from 0 to 8%.

This shrubland type is found on broad, low-angle alluvial terraces and toeslopes at both units of the monument. The community covers 10% (31 ha/76 ac) of the Castle unit and 32% (33 ha/82 ac) of the Well unit. Surface cover is characterized by sandy alluvium dominated by bare soil, with considerable biological and physical soil crusts throughout. Surface rock and gravel are rare surface cover components, with variable litter cover depending on overstory.

### Common species

- *Prosopis velutina*
- *Senegalia greggii*
- *Larrea tridentata*
- *Gutierrezia sarothrae*
- *Hesperostipa neomexicana*
- *Muhlenbergia porteri*

