

9. *Ericameria nauseosa* Shrubland Association (P)

Rubber rabbitbrush Shrubland Association

This shrubland community is characterized by a subcanopy (0.5–2 m) dominated by rubber rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*), which provides approximately 15–30% cover throughout. Trees or canopy species are essentially absent; shrubs and herbaceous species define this type. Tarragon (*Artemisia dracunculus*) is often (but not consistently) a sub-dominant species, with 2–10% cover. Tarragon (*A. dracunculus*) prefers sandier areas and dry-wash side channels, while rabbitbrush (*Ericameria* spp.) prefers rockier sites. Other common associates include ragleaf bahia (*Amauriopsis dissecta* = *Bahia dissecta*), blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*), barnyardgrass (*Echinochloa crus-galli*), Fendler's globemallow (*Sphaeralcea fendleri*), sand dropseed (*Sporobolus cryptandrus*), Dakota mock vervain (*Glandularia bipinnatifida*), and sacred thorn-apple (*Datura wrightii*). Due to the inherently disturbed nature of the floodplain communities, this type is subject to change as a result of natural flood or high-flow events. At times, these events are severe enough to scour these sandy, open areas, leaving them bereft of vegetation cover and more appropriately described as strands.

This association is found growing along the edges of the floodplain, on the cobbly, alluvial terraces adjacent to the Gila River, and in open areas between or next to the adjacent riparian woodland community. This community is dispersed along the entire length of the mapped riparian corridor, covering 2.5% (26.42 ha/65.28 ac) of the project area and just 0.41% (0.89 ha/2.20 ac) of the monument, exclusively along the north boundary of the main unit.

Common species

- *Ericameria nauseosa*
- *Artemisia dracunculus*
- *Amauriopsis dissecta*
- *Bouteloua gracilis*
- *Echinochloa crus-galli*

