

2. (*Quercus emoryi* - *Quercus oblongifolia*) / *Eragrostis lehmanniana* Herbaceous Association (P)

(Emory oak - Mexican blue oak) / Lehmann lovegrass Herbaceous Association (P)

This herbaceous community is characterized by a very sparse (<<5% cover) tree canopy (>2 m) of Emory oak (*Quercus emoryi*) and/or Mexican blue oak (*Quercus oblongifolia*), with a dense (>40% cover) matrix of perennial grasses solely dominated by Lehmann lovegrass (*Eragrostis lehmanniana*). The canopy oaks are present as small (3–4 ft) trees that provide minimal (1–2%) cover. Alligator juniper (*Juniperus deppeana*) and velvet mesquite (*Prosopis velutina*) are the only other documented tree species. The subcanopy stratum (0.5–2 m) is characterized by a diverse but sparse (5% cover) mix of shrubs and succulents, with no consistent dominants or common associates. Documented subcanopy components include common sotol (*Dasyllirion wheeleri*), catclaw acacia (*Mimosa aculeaticarpa*), pointleaf manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pungens*), Palmer's century plant (*Agave palmeri*), desertbroom (*Baccharis sarothroides*), cactus apple (*Opuntia engelmannii*), and beargrass (*Nolina microcarpa*). The field stratum (<0.5 m) is characterized by a dense (>40% cover) matrix of Lehmann lovegrass (*E. lehmanniana*). This species accounts for virtually all cover in this stratum and only has one documented associate, Schott's century plant (*Agave schottii*).

Common species

- *Quercus oblongifolia*
- *Quercus emoryi*
- *Eragrostis lehmanniana*

This herbaceous community covers 0.1% (30 ha/74 ac) of the Rincon Mountain District and is present on the low slopes along the eastern boundary of the park, mainly between the Miller and Turkey Creek trailheads. It is restricted to south-trending hills of varying grade (10–30%) from 1,350 to 1,600 meters (4,429–5,250 ft). The surface cover is characterized by shallow and well-drained, gravelly to skeletal loamy soils underlying a dominant layer of gravel and small rocks.



Rincon Mountain District, Saguaro National Park

