

# Vegetation Community Profile

## Coastal Low Heath on rocky hill slopes and escarpments (AP0027PE)

This shrub community occurs on exposed coastal rocky slopes. The vegetation is largely treeless, and dominated by low to medium shrubs that are often wind and salt pruned. The groundcover layer is characterised by tussocks and sedges adapted to relatively harsh rocky environments. The landform elements and underlying rock is variable and is a key influence on species present at specific locations.



Coastal Low Heath on calcareous loams at Lands End (Source, T. Croft 2025).

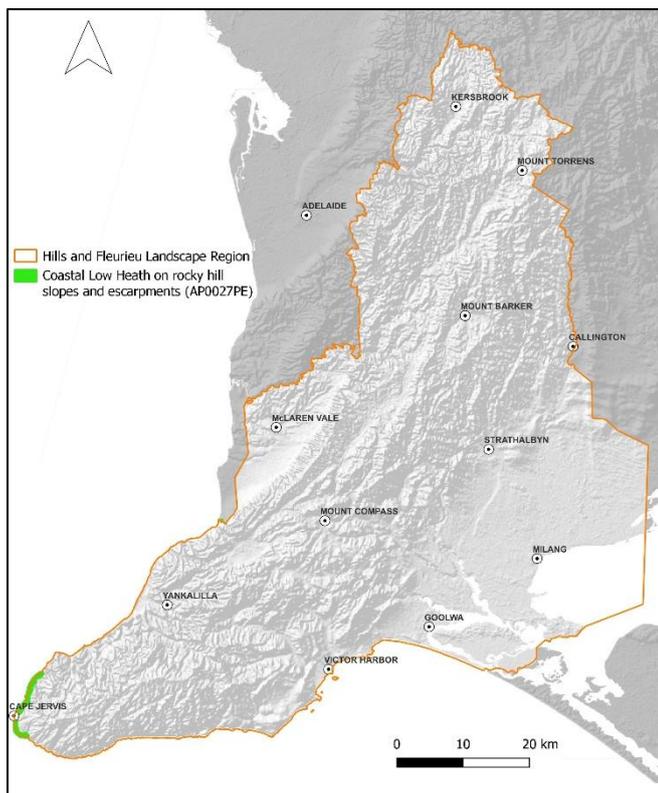


Figure 1: Pre-European distribution of Coastal Low Heath on rocky coastal hill slopes within Hills and Fleurieu Landscape region

### Distribution within the Hills and Fleurieu

This community is confined to the Cape Jervis district coastal slopes. Of the 165 ha mapped as being present before European settlement, 8 ha (5%) has been mapped in the Department for Environment and Water's extant mapping (Data SA 2025).

### Landform and aspect

The community is associated with rocky coastal hill slopes, generally west-facing.

### Soil types

Within the Hills and Fleurieu region, the calccrete coastal slopes are unique, and soils are largely calcareous sandy loams, loams and loamy sands. Where the surface rock is sandstone, shale, quartz and siltstone, such as between Rapid Bay and Second Valley (Oppermann 1998), this is described as a separate community (ML4401PE) and shallow soils range from sandy loams to loams.

### Rainfall

Approximately 500 mm to 550 mm per annum.

### Revegetation

A table of plant species likely to have occurred in this community is provided at the end of this document. Please note that the list includes species likely to occur across the plant community's entire range within the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape region. There may be other plant species that occurred on your property with a more restricted distribution. A native plant nurseries list can be found on the Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu website.

## Vegetation structural layers

### Tree Layer

Trees are generally absent with the occasional exception of isolated Quandong (*Santalum acuminatum*).

### Shrub Layer

Depending on the geology, the dominant shrub species is variable between localities. Widespread shrubs, however, include Twiggy Daisy-bush (*Olearia ramulosa*) averaging 1 to 1.5 m tall, Pale Turpentine Bush (*Beyeria lechenaultii*), Coastal Umbrella Bush (*Acacia cupularis*), Fringe-myrtle (*Calytrix tetragona*) and Thyme Riceflower (*Pimelea serpyllifolia*). Prickly Ground-berry (*Acrotriche patula*) is strongly tied to calcrete rock habitats. The combined shrub cover is typically 30% – 70%.

### Groundcover Layer

The ground layer is characterised by tussocks and sedges adapted to relatively harsh environments and shallow rocky soils including Black-anther Flax-lily (*Dianella revoluta* var. *revoluta*) and Scented Mat-rush (*Lomandra effusa*) and on calcrete, Black Grass Saw-sedge (*Gahnia lanigera*) and Clustered Saw-sedge (*Lepidosperma congestum*). Widespread groundcover shrubs include Prickly Knawel (*Scleranthus pungens*) and Climbing Saltbush (*Einadia nutans*).

## Caring for Country and native vegetation

This vegetation community reflects the landscapes and ecosystems that existed at the time of European colonisation. First Nations peoples have cared for these lands for thousands of years, maintaining deep connections to Country through knowledge, culture, and stewardship. This guide supports efforts to understand, protect and restore native vegetation in a way that respects those enduring relationships.

## Reference

Data SA (2025). Native Vegetation Floristic Areas – NVIS – Statewide. *Government of South Australia*. <https://data.sa.gov.au/data/dataset/native-vegetation-floristic-areas-nvis-statewide>. Accessed April 2025.

## Acknowledgment

We gratefully acknowledge the valuable work and research of the staff and volunteers of the South Australian Seed Conservation Centre and Botanic Gardens of South Australia. The information available on their public websites 'Seeds of South Australia' and affiliated 'www.szygium.xyz' has been widely referenced for the germination and propagation content of the Vegetation Community species lists.

Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu thank Sonia Croft and Tim Croft for their input in developing these pre-European vegetation community profiles, maps and species lists.

## Preferred way to cite this information

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When citing multiple profiles:

Croft, S & Croft, T (2025). Pre-European Vegetation Community Profiles for the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape region. *Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board*.

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## Coastal Low Heath on rocky hill slopes and escarpments (AP0027PE)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Nursery Availability*	Propagation Method**	Seed Treatment***	Seed Propagation Difficulty****	Pollination	Links to further information
<b>TREE (cover &lt; 5%)</b>							
<i>Santalum acuminatum</i>	Quandong	Y	S	HW, Sc		Insect	<a href="#">Santalum acuminatum</a>
<b>MEDIUM AND TALL SHRUBS (combined cover 30 - 70%)</b>							
<i>Acacia cupularis</i>	Coastal Umbrella Bush	Y	S	HW, Sc		Insect (Bees, Butterflies)	<a href="#">Microsoft Word - Acacia cupularis Coastal Umbrella Bush.docx</a>
<i>Acacia spinescens</i>	Spiny Wattle	Y	S	HW, Sc		Insect (Beetles, Wasps, Bees)	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Fabaceae/Acacia/Acacia_spinescens.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Fabaceae/Acacia/Acacia_spinescens.html</a>
<i>Acrotriche cordata</i> <sup>^</sup>	Blunt-leaf Ground-berry	Y	S		D	Insect	<a href="https://www.australianseed.com/shop/item/acrotriche-cordata">https://www.australianseed.com/shop/item/acrotriche-cordata</a>
<i>Acrotriche patula</i> <sup>^</sup>	Prickly Ground-berry	Y	S	Fr	D	Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Ericaceae/Acrotriche/Acrotriche_patula.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Ericaceae/Acrotriche/Acrotriche_patula.html</a>
<i>Beyeria lechenaultii</i>	Pale Turpentine Bush	Y	D		D	Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Euphorbiaceae/Beyeria/Beyeria_lechenaultii.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Euphorbiaceae/Beyeria/Beyeria_lechenaultii.html</a>
<i>Calytrix tetragona</i>	Common Fringe-myrtle	Y	C	N		Insect (Native Bees, Honey bees, Wasps, Hoverflies, Butterflies, Moths, Beetles, Flies)	<a href="https://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/gnp2/calytrix-tetragona.html">https://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/gnp2/calytrix-tetragona.html</a>
<i>Dodonaea hexandra</i>	Horned Hop-bush	Y	S, C	HW, Sc		Wind	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Sapindaceae/Dodonaea/Dodonaea_hexandra.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Sapindaceae/Dodonaea/Dodonaea_hexandra.html</a>
<i>Enchylaena tomentosa</i> var. <i>tomentosa</i>	Ruby Saltbush	Y	S, C	N, Fr, Sm		Wind	<a href="#">Enchylaena tomentosa - Australian Native Plants Society (Australia)</a>
<i>Grevillea lavandulacea</i> ssp. <i>lavandulacea</i>	Spider-flower	Y	S, C	N		Bird, Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Proteaceae/Grevillea/Grevillea_lavandulacea_ssp_lavandulacea.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Proteaceae/Grevillea/Grevillea_lavandulacea_ssp_lavandulacea.html</a>
<i>Hakea rugosa</i>	Dwarf Hakea	Y	S	N		Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Proteaceae/Hakea/Hakea_rugosa.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Proteaceae/Hakea/Hakea_rugosa.html</a>
<i>Hakea vittata</i>	Limestone Needlebush	Y	S	N		Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Proteaceae/Hakea/Hakea_vittata.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Proteaceae/Hakea/Hakea_vittata.html</a>
<i>Olearia ramulosa</i>	Twiggy Daisy-bush	Y	S, C	Sm		Insect	<a href="https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/twiggy-daisy-bush/">https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/twiggy-daisy-bush/</a>
<i>Pimelea serpyllifolia</i> ssp. <i>serpyllifolia</i>	Thyme Riceflower	N	C		D	Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Thymelaeaceae/Pimelea/Pimelea_serpyllifolia_ssp_serpyllifolia.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Thymelaeaceae/Pimelea/Pimelea_serpyllifolia_ssp_serpyllifolia.html</a>

Scientific Name	Common Name	Nursery Availability*	Propagation Method**	Seed Treatment***	Seed Propagation Difficulty****	Pollination	Links to further information
<i>Pomaderris paniculosa</i> ssp. <i>paniculosa</i>	Mallee Pomaderris	N	S	HW, Sc		Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Rhamnaceae/Pomaderris/Pomaderris_paniculosa_ssp_paniculosa.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Rhamnaceae/Pomaderris/Pomaderris_paniculosa_ssp_paniculosa.html</a>
<b>LOW SHRUBS (combined cover 1 - 10%)</b>							
<i>Hibbertia devitata</i>	Smooth Guinea-flower	N	C		D	Insect	<a href="#">Hibbertia devitata</a>
<i>Leucophyta brownii</i>	Coast Cushion Bush	Y	C, S	N	D	Insect	<a href="#">Leucophyta brownii - Growing Native Plants</a>
<i>Threlkeldia diffusa</i>	Coast Bonefruit	Y	S	Sm, So		Insect	<a href="#">ggcn001_web_vfinal.pdf</a>
<b>SEDGE/ TUSSOCKS (combined cover 1 - 10%)</b>							
<i>Dianella brevicaulis</i>	Short-stem Flax-lily	Y	S, D	HW		Insect (Native Bees)	<a href="#">Search</a>
<i>Dianella revoluta</i> var. <i>revoluta</i>	Black-anther Flax-lily	Y	S, D	N		Insect (Native Bees)	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asphodelaceae/Dianella/Dianella_revoluta_var_revoluta.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asphodelaceae/Dianella/Dianella_revoluta_var_revoluta.html</a>
<i>Gahnia lanigera</i>	Black Grass Saw-sedge	N	S, D			Wind	<a href="#">Gahnia lanigera</a>
<i>Lepidosperma congestum</i>	Clustered Sword-sedge	N	S, D			Wind	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Cyperaceae/Lepidosperma/Lepidosperma_congestum.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Cyperaceae/Lepidosperma/Lepidosperma_congestum.html</a>
<i>Lepidosperma viscidum</i>	Sticky Sword-sedge	N	S, D		D	Wind	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Cyperaceae/Lepidosperma/Lepidosperma_viscidum.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Cyperaceae/Lepidosperma/Lepidosperma_viscidum.html</a>
<i>Lomandra collina</i>	Sand Mat-rush	N	S, D	HW	D	Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asparagaceae/Lomandra/Lomandra_collina.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asparagaceae/Lomandra/Lomandra_collina.html</a>
<i>Lomandra effusa</i>	Scented Mat-rush	Y	S, D	N		Insect (Bees, Butterflies, Beetles)	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asparagaceae/Lomandra/Lomandra_effusa.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asparagaceae/Lomandra/Lomandra_effusa.html</a>
<b>TWINER/SCRAMBLERS (combined cover 1 - 10%)</b>							
<i>Comesperma volubile</i>	Love Creeper	N	S, C	HW	D	Insect (Native Bees, Honeybees, Hoverflies, Wasps, Butterflies, Beetles, Flies)	<a href="https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/love-creeper/">https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/love-creeper/</a>
<i>Convolvulus angustissimus</i>	Australian Bindweed	Y	S	HW, Sc		Insect (Bees)	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Convolvulaceae/Convolvulus/Convolvulus_angustissimus_ssp_angustissimus.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Convolvulaceae/Convolvulus/Convolvulus_angustissimus_ssp_angustissimus.html</a>
<i>Glycine rubiginosa</i>	Twining Glycine	Y	S, C	HW		Insect	<a href="#">FACT-SHEET Glycine-clandestina.pdf</a>
<i>Muehlenbeckia gunnii</i>	Coastal Climbing Lignum	N	C	N		Insect (Bees, Butterflies, Hoverflies)	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Polygonaceae/Muehlenbeckia/Muehlenbeckia_gunnii.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Polygonaceae/Muehlenbeckia/Muehlenbeckia_gunnii.html</a>
<b>HERBS (combined cover 1 - 5%)</b>							
<i>Arthropodium strictum</i>	Common Vanilla-lily	Y	S, D	Sm, St		Insect (Native Bees, Hoverflies, Butterflies)	<a href="https://aussiegreenthumb.com/chocolate-lily-arthropodium-strictum/">https://aussiegreenthumb.com/chocolate-lily-arthropodium-strictum/</a>

Scientific Name	Common Name	Nursery Availability*	Propagation Method**	Seed Treatment***	Seed Propagation Difficulty****	Pollination	Links to further information
<i>Goodenia arguta</i>	Toothed Velleia	N	S, C		D	Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Goodeniaceae/Goodenia/Goodenia_arguta.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Goodeniaceae/Goodenia/Goodenia_arguta.html</a>
<i>Goodenia pinnatifida</i>	Cut-leaf Goodenia	Y	S, C		D	Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Goodeniaceae/Goodenia/Goodenia_pinnatifida.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Goodeniaceae/Goodenia/Goodenia_pinnatifida.html</a>
<i>Helichrysum leucopsideum</i>	Satin Everlasting	Y	C	N		Insect	<a href="#">Helichrysum leucopsideum; Search</a>
<i>Leiocarpa supina</i>	Coast Plover-daisy	N					<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asteraceae/Liocarpa/Liocarpa_supina.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asteraceae/Liocarpa/Liocarpa_supina.html</a>
<i>Leptorhynchos squamatus</i> ssp. <i>squamatus</i>	Scaly Buttons	Y	S, C	N		Insect	<a href="https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/scaly-buttons/">https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/scaly-buttons/</a>
<i>Maireana enchylaenoides</i>	Wingless Fissure-plant	N	S, C	N		Insect	<a href="https://www2.csu.edu.au/cgi-bin/herbarium/db/species-2.pl">https://www2.csu.edu.au/cgi-bin/herbarium/db/species-2.pl</a>
<i>Microseris walteri</i>	Yam Daisy	Y	S	N		Insect (Butterflies)	<a href="#">Microseris walteri; Search</a>
<i>Oxalis perennans</i>	Native Oxalis	N	D			Insect (Flies, Bees)	<a href="https://www.picturethisai.com/care/Oxalis_perennans.html">https://www.picturethisai.com/care/Oxalis_perennans.html</a>
<i>Opercularia turpis</i>	Twiggy Stinkweed	Y	S	Sc		Wind	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Rubiaceae/Opercularia/Opercularia_turpis.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Rubiaceae/Opercularia/Opercularia_turpis.html</a>
<i>Pimelea micrantha</i>	Silky Riceflower	N	C		D	Insect	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Thymelaeaceae/Pimelea/Pimelea_micrantha.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Thymelaeaceae/Pimelea/Pimelea_micrantha.html</a>
<i>Ptilotus spathulatus</i>	Pussy-tails	Y	S, C, D	N, Sm		Moths, Wasps, Butterflies	<a href="https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Amaranthaceae/Ptilotus/Ptilotus_spathulatus.html">https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Amaranthaceae/Ptilotus/Ptilotus_spathulatus.html</a>
<i>Scaevola albida</i>	Pale Fanflower	Y	S, C	N		Insect (Bees, Butterflies)	<a href="#">Scaevola-albida-Small-fruit-Fanflower.pdf</a>
<i>Senecio pinnatifolius</i> group	Variable Groundsel	Y	S			Insect	<a href="#">Senecio pinnatifolius var. pinnatifolius</a>
<b>GRASSES (combined cover 1 - 5%)</b>							
<i>Austrostipa exilis</i>	Heath Spear-grass	N	S	N		Wind	<a href="#">Austrostipa exilis</a>
<i>Austrostipa flavescens</i>	Coast Spear-grass	Y	S	N		Wind	<a href="#">Austrostipa flavescens</a>
<i>Austrostipa mollis</i>	Soft Spear-grass	Y	S	N		Wind	<a href="#">Austrostipa mollis</a>
<i>Rytidosperma caespitosum</i>	Common Wallaby-grass	Y	S	N		Wind	<a href="#">Rytidosperma caespitosum</a>

If cells are blank, no information was readily available at the time of writing.

^ = limestone habitat only

**\* Nursery Availability**

N = No

Y = Yes

**\*\* Propagation Method**

C = Cuttings

D = Division

S = Seedlings

<b>***Seed Treatment Code</b>	<b>Treatment name</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
Fr	Flesh removal	Removal of fruit from seed coat
HW	Hot Water	Water just off the boil poured over the seed and allowed to stand for 8 - 24 hours
N	None	
Sc	Scarify	Mechanical abrasion of seed coat e.g. lightly scratch with sandpaper
Sm	Smoke	Soaking seeds in smoke water
So	Soak	Seed placed in rainwater for 24 hours
St	Stratify	Seed placed in freezer for 2 weeks

**\*\*\*\*Seed Propagation Difficulty**

D = Difficult