Fire Island Photo Interpretation Key

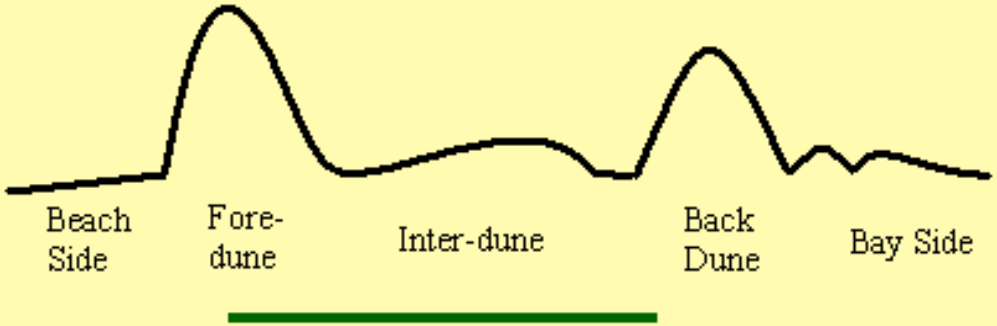
Class: Prunus serotina - Sassafras albidum - Amelanchier canadensis / Smilax rotundifolia Shrubland (Northern Deciduous Maritime Shrubland)

TNC Alliance Code: III. B. 2. N. a. 300. 6145

CMI Code: 6145

Type Locator:
Fire Island and the Floyd Estate

Cross-Section:



TNC Alliance Description: This maritime tall shrubland occurs behind primary dunes and is influenced by salt spray and wind-pruning. Soils include loamy sand over sand. This maritime tall shrubland occurs behind primary dunes and is variable in physiognomy. When present, tree canopy is fairly closed and includes *Amelanchier canadensis* with *Sassafras albidum* or *Prunus serotina* with tree height ranging from 5 to 8

meters. Where prevailing conditions limit overall height, the tall shrub layer is predominant and its canopy tends to be very dense. The top layer, either tree canopy or tall shrub, is sculpted by wind and salt spray. Species in the tall shrub layer include *Amelanchier canadensis*, *Vaccinium corymbosum*, *Myrica pensylvanica*, and *Prunus serotina*. A short shrub layer is often present with *Gaylussaccia baccata* and *Myrica pensylvanica*.Vines are generally found in the top layer with *Smilax glauca* and *S. rotundifolia* most abundant. The herbaceous layer is very sparse to absent. There is often ridge and hollow microtopography and trees tend to occur in hollows and shrubs on sandy ridges.

Photo Interpretation: This vegetation types is found on the bay side, often behind a large primary dune on wider parts of the island. It appears as a mix of brown, gray, and green with variable sized discernable crowns in most cases.

Aerial Photo Samples:

Field Notes: *Amelanchier canadensis*, *Sassafras albidum* and *Prunus serotina* are the dominant species. *Vaccinium corymbosum*, *Myrica pensylvanica* are also found in this association.

Ground Photos:

Prunus serotina tall shrub

Prunus serotina dwarfed trees

Amelanchier canadensis trees

Similar Alliances: Ilex opaca/Myrica pennsylvanica Forest (Maritime Holly Forest): Dominated by *Ilex opaca.*