

# Fire Island Photo Interpretation Key



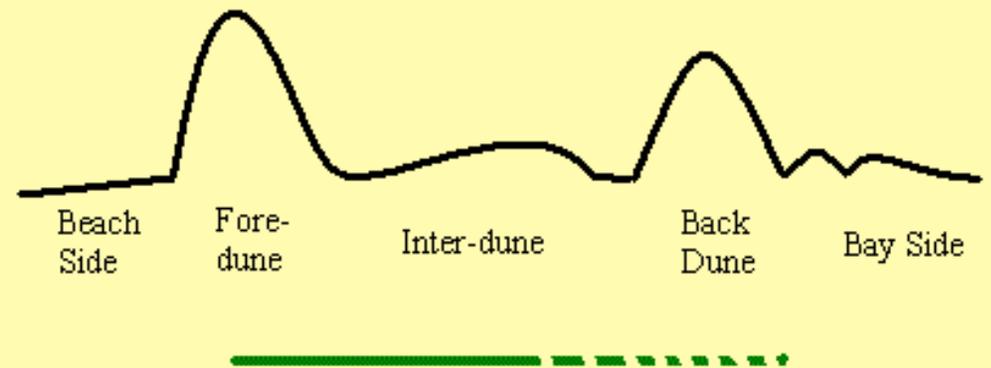
Class: *Ammonophila breviligulata*-*Lathyrus japonicus*  
Herbaceous Vegetation (Northern Beachgrass Dune)

TNC Alliance Code: V. A. 5. N. c. 2. 6274

CMI Code: 6274

Island Locator:  
Restricted to Fire Island

Cross Section:

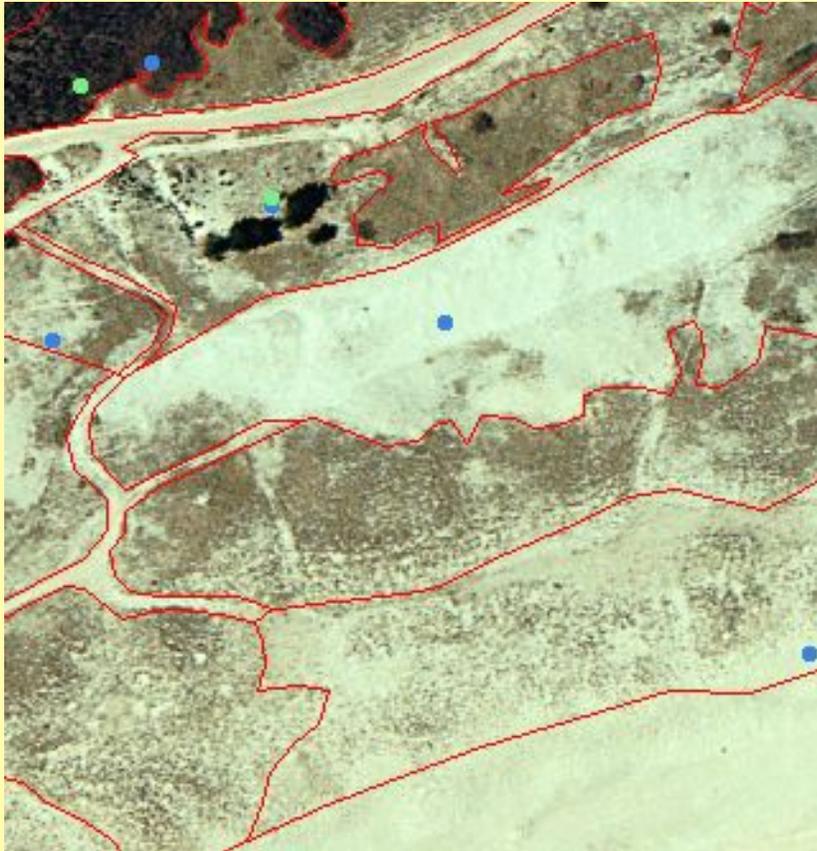


**TNC Alliance Description:** This association occurs on maritime foredunes with no soil development. The substrate is bare wind-deposited sand. This vegetation is exposed to salt spray, occasional overwash, and wind. This maritime dune grassland occurs on well-developed dune systems. *Ammophila breviligulata* is dominant throughout and occurs in scattered clumps to dense patches. *Lathyrus japonicus* and *Solidago*

*sempervirens* are usually scattered within the *Ammophila* patches with low percent cover. Other associates may include *Lechea maritima*, *Cakile edentula*, *Polygonella articulata*, and *Chamaecyse polygonifolia*.

**Photo Interpretation:** This type is perhaps the most prevalent on Fire Island. It is found on the ocean side of the interdune area from the crest through the high salt marsh. This association appears as a uniform tan when cover is high, but can have streaks of bright sand showing through. It is often found in small polygons interspersed with the Beach Heather Dune type (where it is classified as a mosaic) and with Northern Dune Shrubland polygons.

**Aerial Photos:**



*A. brevigulata* is tannish (most of what is seen in this image), unvegetated sand is lighter colored (white to light tan), and shrub/forest vegetation is darker colored.

*A. brevigulata* is splotchy and tannish (outlined in red). Other associations in this image include sparse vegetation (white - light tan), Woolly Beach-heather (white with dark spots), and low-lying *Myrica pennsylvanica*-*Prunus serotina* Shrubland (evenly dark colored)

**Field Notes:** Dominated by *A. brevigulata* with 15-90% coverage. Also may be interspersed with *Hudsonia tomentosa*, and low-lying (<1.5 m) *Myrica pennsylvanica* and *Prunus serotina* shrubs. Located along back side of foredunes, inter-dune areas, and may extend up front sides of back dunes.

#### Ground Photos:



## Similar Alliances:

***Spartina patens*-*Scirpus pungens*-*Solidago sempevirens* Herbaceous Vegetation** (Overwash Dune Grassland): An overwash (breach in the foredune) will be present in this alliance. Identified through ground survey.

***Hudsonia tomentosa* - *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* Dwarf-shrubland** (Beach Heather Dune): Dominated by *Hudsonia tomentosa* rather than *A. breviflata*. On aerial photos, Beach-heather appears sparser (almost unvegetated) and sometimes patchier than *A. breviflata*.

