

## Prunus virginiana Shrubland

COMMON NAME Choke Cherry Shrubland  
SYNONYM Chokecherry Shrubland  
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS Shrubland (III)  
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS Deciduous shrubland (III.B)  
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP Cold-deciduous shrubland (III.B.2)  
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP Natural/Semi-natural (III.B.2.N)  
FORMATION Temperate cold-deciduous shrubland (III.B.2.N.a)

ALLIANCE *Prunus virginiana* Shrubland Alliance

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 2

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM Upland

### RANGE

#### **Globally**

This association is found in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, western South Dakota, Colorado, and possibly Nevada.

#### **Wind Cave National Park**

Chokecherry shrublands are found throughout Wind Cave NP. Exemplary stands can be found in the bottoms and heads of draws in the prairie areas of the northeast part of the Park. Slopes with large stands of mixed shrubs in grassland can be found on the east side of Boland Ridge.

### ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

#### **Globally**

This association grows at the interface between the riparian areas and the adjacent upland. It usually occurs as small pockets on higher terraces or as narrow bands along the high water mark of steep banks and incised channels. It can also grow at the base of cliffs adjacent to rivers and streams where it forms impenetrable thickets.

#### **Wind Cave National Park**

Chokecherry shrubland is found in a variety of habitats. Slope varies from flat to very steep, with variable aspect. Stands are commonly found in the bottoms of draws and drainages. This type also occurs associated with rock outcrops. Some stands on slopes are the result of recent fire that killed the overlying canopy, converting ponderosa pine/chokecherry forest to chokecherry shrubland.

### MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

#### **Globally**

| <u>Stratum</u> | <u>Species</u>           |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Shrub          | <i>Prunus virginiana</i> |

#### **Wind Cave National Park**

| <u>Stratum</u> | <u>Species</u>   |
|----------------|--|
| Shrub          | <i>Amorpha canescens</i> , <i>Prunus virginiana</i> , <i>Rhus trilobata</i> , <i>Symphoricarpos occidentalis</i> ,<br><i>Toxicodendron pubescens</i> |

### CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

#### **Globally**

*Prunus virginiana*

#### **Wind Cave National Park**

*Prunus virginiana*

### VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

#### **Globally**

The *Prunus virginiana* association is a medium-height (4-6 feet, 1.5-2 m) shrubland with dense vegetation which is almost impossible to walk through. *Prunus virginiana* is the most abundant shrub. Further review of the global type is necessary.

**Wind Cave National Park**

Chokecherry shrubland at Wind Cave NP is characterized by moderate to dense shrub cover, typically in the 25-75% range. Shrub cover is generally greater in drainage bottoms and on lowermost slopes, and less on slopes. Chokecherry may be the dominant shrub species, but often other species are codominant or dominant, especially on slopes, including squaw-bush (*Rhus trilobata*), downy indigo-bush (*Amorpha canescens*), western snowberry (*Symphoricarpos occidentalis*) and poison ivy (*Toxicodendron pubescens*). In drainage bottom situations, herbaceous cover is usually sparse, less than 10%. On slopes, the shrubs typically occur in some grassland type, and graminoid cover can be greater than 75%.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

CONSERVATION RANK                      G4Q

DATABASE CODE                      CEGL001108

MAP UNITS

The chokecherry shrubland community corresponds to map unit 33, chokecherry shrubland, on the Wind Cave vegetation map. Chokecherry shrubland with standing dead trees and few or no living trees corresponds to map unit 12, chokecherry shrubland (with burned ponderosa pine).

COMMENTS

**Wind Cave National Park**

Chokecherry shrubland occurs as small stands in drainage bottoms. The stands of mixed shrubs on slopes can be somewhat larger. The chokecherry shrubland type frequently grades into the western snowberry shrubland type, and some stands are difficult to classify. On slopes, chokecherry may be uncommon or even absent; squaw-bush (*Rhus trilobata*) may be the dominant shrub in these situations. Chokecherry shrubland is a fairly common type at Wind Cave NP. Many stands were visited in preparing the vegetation map, as the type is variable and somewhat difficult to characterize.

Chokecherry shrublands on slopes are generally surrounded by grassland types. In drainage bottoms, stands are often adjacent to western snowberry shrubland, and the two types grade into each other. Chokecherry shrublands may also occur as inclusions in ponderosa pine types, as a result of fire and pine mortality.

REFERENCES

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