Fire Island Photo Interpretation Key

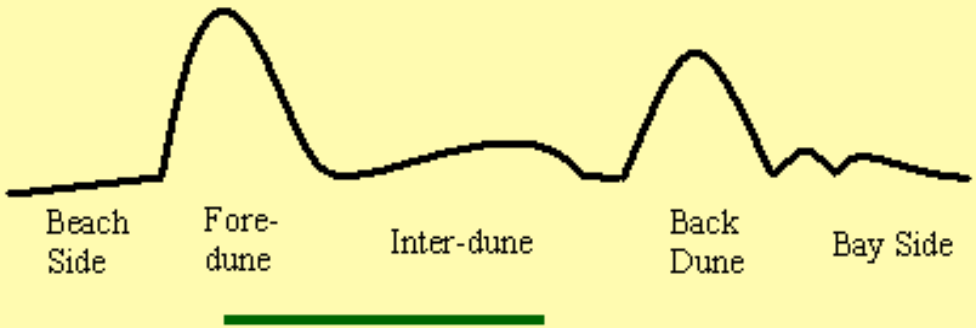
Class: Hudsonia tomentosa - Arctostaphylos uva-ursi Dwarf Shrubland (Northern Beach Heather Dune Shrubland)

TNC Alliance Code: IV.A.1.N.a.4. 6143

CMI Code: 6143

Type Locator:
Restricted to Fire Island

Cross-Section:



TNC Alliance Description: This association occurs behind primary and secondary dunes with infrequent overwash only from heavy storm surge. This is a maritime beach heather community dominated by *Hudsonia tomentosa*. *Prunus maritima* and *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* are also present with relatively low percent cover. The herbaceous layer is sparse with *Ammophila breviligulata* commonly occurring and *Polygonella articulata*, *Lechea maritima*, and *Solidago sempervirens* occasionally present. *Cladonia* species are usually present with low cover.

Photo Interpretation: This type is widespread on Fire Island and is found from the Western Inlet to the Eastern inlet predominantly, although not exclusively, in the interdune zone. The color is a very dark green with equal amounts of bright sand showing through. It is often intermingled with Ammophila brevigulata which has a light tan color. Because of this mixing, this type is also found in complex with the Northern Beach Grass Dune association.

Aerial Photo Samples:

Field Notes: *Hudsonia tomentosa* dominates this association. *Prunus maritima* and *Ammophila breviligulata* can be present in lower percentages.

Ground Photos:

Hudsonia tomentosa and *Ammophila breviligulata*

H. tomentosa and *Prunus maritima*

H. tomentosa

Similar Alliances: Ammophila breviligulata-Lathyrus japonicus Herbaceous Vegetation (Northern Beachgrass Dune): Dominated by *A. brevigulata* rather than *Hudsonia tomentosa*. On aerial photos, Beach-heather appears sparser (almost unvegetated) and sometimes patchier than *A. brevigulata.*