

Tasmanian Threatened Native Vegetation Communities

SPRAY ZONE COASTAL COMPLEX

Conservation status

Threatened: Community 36a - Schedule 3A *Nature Conservation Act 2002*

What is Spray zone coastal complex?

This is a wind-pruned salt-affected low vegetation complex comprising heathland or shrubland dominated by coastal elements and succulent herbfield. It occurs on high-energy coastlines subject to extreme salt spray and often inundation and is particularly common in the north and north-west of mainland Tasmania and the islands of Bass Strait, particularly on King Island.

Low-growing halophytic species such as *Disphyma crassifolium* subsp. *flabellatum* (rounded pigface), *Carpobrotus rossii* (native pigface) and *Sarcocornia quinqueflora* (glasswort) are common in near-shore areas, with intermittent *Leucophyta brownii* (cushionbush) and *Alyxia buxifolia* (seabox). Succulents such as *Tetragonia implexicoma* (bower spinach) and *Chenopodium glaucum* (pale goosefoot) and herbs such as *Apium prostratum* subsp. *prostratum* (sea-celery) occur sporadically, as do grasses such as *Aurostipa stipoides* (coast speargrass) and *Distichlis distichophylla* (australian saltgrass). Species of lichen encrust the rocks.

Further from the shoreline shrubs can be common but the community lacks myrtaceous dominants and is structurally limited due to exposure. Species include *Myoporum insulare* (common boobyalla), *Olearia lepidophylla* (clubmoss daisybush), *O. glutinosa* (sticky daisybush), *Leucopogon parviflorus* (coast beardheath), *Ozothamnus turbinatus* (coast everlastingbush), *Leptecophylla abietina* (seaspray pinkberry) and *Rhagodia candolleana* subsp. *candolleana* (coastal saltbush).

The largest and possibly most important sites occur on King Island at Seal Rocks and the Dripping Wells, south of Yellow Rock, near the mouth of the Pass River and south of Quarantine Bay.



An example of the Spray zone coastal complex at Seal Rocks, King Island. Stephen Harris.

To help you decide if this Threatened Native Vegetation Community is on your site, a decision tree is provided further below. This is a guide only. Assessment by a qualified ecologist is needed to confirm the presence (or absence) of a listed threatened community.

Distribution, extent and reservation status



Indicative Spray zone coastal complex distribution from TNVC 2020. Note that for this distribution image the symbology has been emphasised to improve visibility of community distribution.

The Threatened Native Vegetation Communities 2020 (TNVC 2020) distribution of Spray zone coastal complex is derived from the TASVEG 4.0 mapping of SSZ (Spray zone coastal complex). TASVEG mapping units provide only an indicative distribution of listed communities.

Spray zone coastal complex has an approximate Tasmania-wide extent of 300 hectares. Of this, 91% is mapped within the secure National Reserve System, increasing to 93% in the wider Tasmanian Reserve Estate, which also includes informal and fixed-term reserves.

A snapshot of the reservation status of Spray zone coastal complex for Local Government is available on the [Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania website](#) and via the 'By Council Area' tab at this [link](#).

Why is Spray zone coastal complex important and what are its management issues?

Spray zone coastal complex in good condition has very high species diversity, especially in the number of species of herbs, daisies, and low-growing shrubs. Species, such as *Parietaria debilis* (southern pellitory) are rare at a State-wide level and *Swainsona lessertifolia* (swainsons lesser-pea) is rare on King Island.

This complex has been extensively modified with most patches now occurring in a degraded condition. The main management issues are inappropriate grazing regimes, physical damage caused by kelp collecting and coastal recreational activities (mostly through vehicle use) and the introduction of weeds such as *Ammophila arenaria* subsp. *arenaria* (marram grass), exotic pasture grasses and herbs, *Lycium ferocissimum* (african boxthorn) and *Coprosma repens* (mirror bush).

How can the condition of the vegetation be assessed?

To help you to assess the condition of Spray zone coastal complex, the following [TASVEG VCA benchmark](#) is recommended:

- ❖ SSZ Spray zone coastal complex

What does it mean if you have a Threatened Native Vegetation Community?

If you are planning an activity that will potentially impact a Threatened Native Vegetation Community you should seek advice from the authority responsible for regulating this activity. The authority responsible will depend upon the nature of the planned activity (see *Further information*).

In the first instance you can check the [Information for landowners](#) on the Forest Practices Authority (FPA) website for comprehensive advice on when a Forest Practices Plan may be required.

Some vegetation communities can represent important habitat for threatened species. This may have implications when development applications are assessed or for land use.

Matters of National Environmental Significance as listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBCA) should also be considered to determine if the proposal will need to be assessed under that Act.

Further information

For further detail about the possible variation within Spray zone coastal complex refer to the description of the TASVEG mapping unit SSZ within the 'Scrub, heathland and coastal complexes' of the online publication [From Forest to Fjaeldmark \(Edition 2\)](#).

Further information to assist developers and their representatives in assessing the impacts of proposed developments on natural values is provided in NRE Tasmania's [Guidelines for Natural Values Surveys – Terrestrial Development Proposals](#) and the [Threatened Species Link - Activity Advice](#).

Contact details

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Is Spray zone coastal complex present at your site?

Q Is the vegetation at your site the threatened community Spray zone coastal complex?

