FS 7 Overberg Dune Strandveld

VT 47 Coastal Macchia (90%) (Acocks 1953). South Coast Strandveld (78%) (Moll & Bossi 1983). LR 4 Dune Thicket (84%) (Low & Rebelo 1996). BHU 6 Agulhas Fynbos Thicket Mosaic (81%) (Cowling et al. 1999b, Cowling & Heijnis 2001). Including South Coast Strandveld (Moll et al. 1984). Dune Thicket (Rebelo et al. 1991).

**Distribution** Western Cape Province: Scattered patches from Rooiels (Cape Hangklip area) as far east as Cape Infanta at the mouth of the Breede River, with the largest one surrounding the Agulhas Peninsula—as a rule bordering on coastal limestone formations. Altitude 0–100 m, but reaching 160 m in places.

**Vegetation & Landscape Features** Flat or slightly undulating dune fields of Die Plaat near Stanford and those of De Hoop, supporting up to 4 m tall, closed, evergreen, hard-leaved shrublands in moist dune slacks and wind-protected valleys and up to 1 m tall, coastal thicket in many places wind-shorn along exposed littoral situations.

**Geology & Soils** Deep, Recent marine-derived calcareous sands forming dunes that line the coast (Quaternary Strandveld Formation of the Bredasdorp Group), to shelly, shallow-marine sandstones and limestones of the Bredasdorp Group deposited on underlying Table Mountain Group sandstone. The most important land types include Hb (37%), Ha (31%) and Fc (18%).

**Climate** Mainly cyclonic rainfall varying from approximately 400 mm in the east to 600 mm in the west, mainly in winter, but still with considerable summer rainfall in the eastern regions of the unit. The winter rains are accompanied by strong northwesterly winds and cooler temperatures. The winds tend to be strong southwesterly (trade winds with average velocity of 35 km per hour) in summer. Mean daily maximum and minimum temperatures 25.1°C and 7.0°C for January and July, respectively. Mean monthly maximum and minimum temperatures for Cape Agulhas 27.1°C and 7.3°C for January and June, respectively. No incidences of snowfalls have been recorded; frost is infrequent and hail occurs occasionally. Dense mist banks regularly occur through the Overberg region in autumn and winter. See also climate diagram for FS 7 Overberg Dune Strandveld (Figure 4.128).

**Important Taxa** Tall Shrubs: *Euclea racemosa* subsp. *racemosa* (d), *Metalasia muricata* (d), *Rhus crenata* (d), *R. glauca* (d), *R. laevigata* (d), *Chionanthus foveolatus*, *Cussonia thyrsiflora*, *Gymnosporia buxifolia*, *Morella cordifolia*, *Myrsine africana*, *Olea exasperata*, *Passerina corymbosa*, *Rhus lucida*, *R. undulata*, *Sideroxylon inerme*, *Tarchonanthus littoralis*. Low Shrubs: *Chrysanthemoides monilifera* (d), *Passerina paleacea* (d), *P. rigida* (d), *Pterocelastrus tricuspidatus* (d), *Aspalathus forbesii*, *Ballota africana*, *Carissa bispinosa* subsp. *bispinosa*, *Cassine peragua* subsp. *barbara*, *Chironia baccifera*, *Eriocephalus africanus* var. *africanus*, *Felicia amelloides*, *Helichrysum niveum*, *H. teretifolium*, *Lauridia tetragona*, *Otholobium bracteolatum*, *Phylica axillaris*, *P. ericoides*, *Polygala myrtifolia*, *Psoralea repens*, *Robsonodendron maritimum*. Succulent Shrubs: *Crassula nudicaulis*, *Drosanthemum candens*, *Jordaaniella dubia*, *Osteospermum fruticosum*, *Othonna dentata*, *Tetragonia decumbens*, *T. fruticosa*, *T. spicata*. Woody Climbers: *Asparagus aethiopicus*, *Cissampelos capensis*, *Solanum africanum*. Semiparasitic Shrubs: *Thesidium fragile* (d), *Osyris compressa*. Herbs: *Helichrysum crispum* (d), *Senecio elegans* (d), *Cineraria geifolia*, *Hebenstretia repens*, *Helichrysum litorale*, *Knowltonia capensis*, *Silene crassifolia*, *Stachys aethio­pica*. Geophytic Herbs: *Brunsvigia orientalis*, *Chasmanthe aethiopica*, *Romulea obscura*. Succulent Herbs: *Carpobrotus acinaciformis* (d), *C. edulis*, *Crassula expansa* subsp. *expansa*. Herbaceous Climbers: *Astephanus triflorus*, *Cynanchum africanum*, *Kedrostis nana*. Graminoids: *Ischyrolepis eleocharis* (d), *Cynodon dactylon*, *Ehrharta erecta*, *E. villosa* var. *villosa*, *Ficinia lateralis*, *Thamnochortus erectus*.

**Biogeographically Important Taxon** (South Coast endemic) Low Shrub: *Berkheya coriacea*.

**Endemic Taxa** Succulent Shrub: *Lampranthus salteri*. Geophytic Herb: *Gladiolus carmineus*.

**Conservation** Least threatened. Target 36%. Some 30% statutorily conserved in De Hoop, Walker Bay and De Mond Nature Reserves and in the Agulhas National Park. A further 11% of the unit is protected in private conservation areas, such as Andrewsfield, Brandfontein-Rietfontein, Groot Hagelkraal, Hoek-van-die-Berg, Kleinrivier, Paapekuilfontein and Waterkop. More than 5% has been transformed by urban development and cultivation. Established thickets of alien *Acacia cyclops*, *A. saligna* and *Leptospermum laevigatum* are of serious concern. Erosion very low and low.

**Remarks** Parts of this vegetation unit have a drier climate than the FS 8 Blombos Strandveld with fewer components typical of coastal thickets fringing the seaboards further east. It has also fewer succulents than the strandveld types along the western seaboard.

**References** Boucher (1974, 1977, 1978, 1994b, 1995, 1998a, 1999c), Van der Merwe (1977a), Cowling et al. (1988), Taylor & Boucher (1993), De Hoop Nature Reserve Planning Committee (2001), Zietsman & Bredenkamp (2006), L. Mucina (unpublished data).