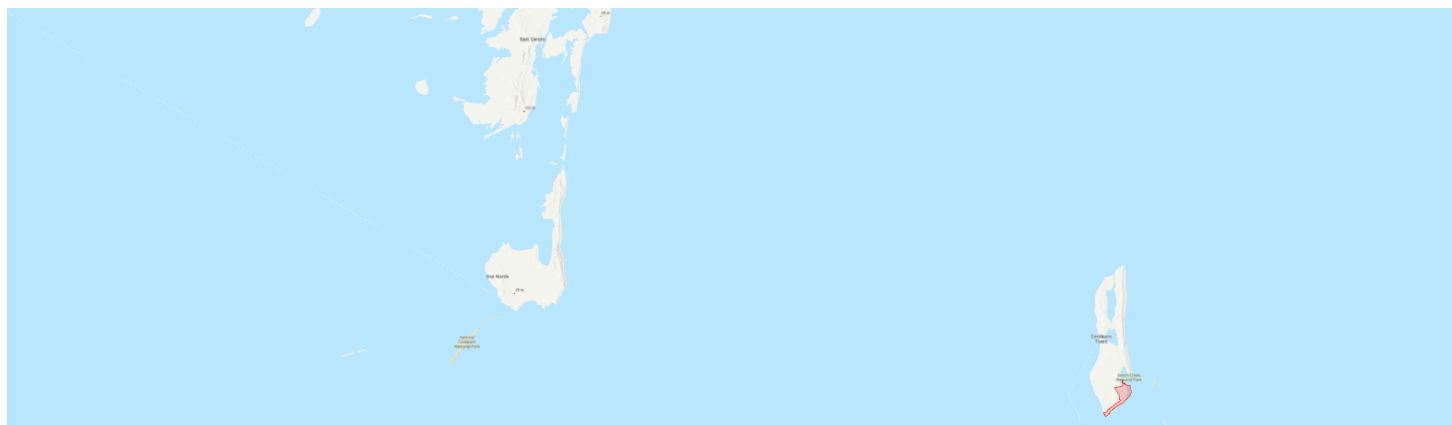


# Hawkes Nest and Gun Hill

TCL\_18



Country: **Turks and Caicos Islands**

Administrative region: **Grand Turk (Island)**

Central co-ordinates: **21.43397 N, -71.13358 E**

Area: **1.03km²**

*Chamaecrista caribaea* growing here. It is an important host plant for butterflies. The national flower of TCL, *Limonium bahamense* grows here. It is the only native member of the Plumbaginaceae family in TCL.

## Qualifying IPA criteria

A(i), C(iii)

## IPA assessment rationale

This site qualifies as a TIPA under criterion A(i), by supporting two globally threatened species. The endemic herb *Lepidium filicaule* can be found at this site, which supports both more than 1% of the global population and >more than 5% of the national population. At Gun Hill, more than 5% of the national population of *Argythamnia argentea* is estimated to grow. This site also qualifies under C(iii), as one of the five best sites for the herbaceous dune habitat.

## Habitat and geology

This site is one of the five best sites for the herbaceous dune habitat, which is primarily found along the coast south of Hawkes Nest Salina. Other major habitat types found in this TIPA are scrub and coastal scrub, with smaller areas of palustrine swamp. Grand Turk's largest mangrove swamp was also found here. The waterbodies in the area are saline (salinity similar to the nearby ocean) or hypersaline with salt encrusting at the water's edges. Two steep 10m-15m ridges can be found on the southern coast between the herbaceous dunes and Hawkes Nest Salina, and the other on the eastern coast being Gun Hill itself.

## Site description

This TIPA is found at the south-eastern end of the island of Grand Turk. It encompasses the area immediately south of Hawkes Nest Salina and the area known as Gun Hill to the north-east, extending as far as the mouth of South Creek.

## Conservation issues

This site faces high pressures from development and sand mining. Additionally, the presence of tourists and quadbikes on the sand dunes results in the trampling of plants and deterioration in habitat quality.

## Botanical significance

This site supports a population of *Lepidium filicaule*, which is highly range restricted in TCL and is assessed as globally Endangered. It is also an important site for the Vulnerable shrub *Argythamnia argentea*, with an estimated more than 5% of the national population occurring here. There is also a population of the threatened shrub

## Site assessor(s)

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**Date of first assessment:**

14th Feb 2025

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IPA criterion A species

SPECIES	QUALIFYING SUB-CRITERION	≥ 1% OF GLOBAL POPULATION	≥ 5% OF NATIONAL POPULATION	1 OF 5 BEST SITES NATIONALLY	ENTIRE GLOBAL POPULATION	SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT	ABUNDANCE AT SITE
<i>Argythamnia argentea</i>	A(i)	✓	✓	—	—	✓	
<i>Chamaecrista caribaea</i>	A(i)	—	—	—	—	✓	
<i>Lepidium filicaule</i>	A(i)	—	✓	—	—	✓	

IPA criterion C qualifying habitats

HABITAT	QUALIFYING SUB-CRITERION	≥ 5% OF NATIONAL RESOURCE	≥ 10% OF NATIONAL RESOURCE	1 OF 5 BEST SITES NATIONALLY	AREAL COVERAGE AT SITE
Herbaceous dune	C(iii)	—	—	✓	

General site habitats

GENERAL SITE HABITAT	PERCENT COVERAGE	IMPORTANCE
Shrubland - Subtropical/Tropical Dry Shrubland	—	
Marine Coastal/Supratidal - Coastal Sand Dunes	—	
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Saline, Brackish or Alkaline Marshes/Pools	—	
Marine Intertidal - Mangrove Submerged Roots	—	

Land use types

LAND USE TYPE	PERCENT COVERAGE	IMPORTANCE
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Threats

THREAT	SEVERITY	TIMING
Residential & commercial development - Tourism & recreation areas	High	Ongoing - increasing
Energy production & mining - Mining & quarrying	High	Ongoing - increasing
Human intrusions & disturbance - Recreational activities	High	Ongoing - increasing
Climate change & severe weather - Storms & flooding	High	Ongoing - increasing