LIVING ON THE COAST IS EASY?
HOW NATIVE PLANTS ARE BUILT FOR LIFE NEAR THE BEACH
WHAT MAKES NORTH CAROLINA COAST SUCH A UNIQUE PLACE?
MUCH OF OUR COAST REPRESENTS THE FLORISTIC TRANSITION BETWEEN THE VIRGINIAN AND CAROLINIAN BIOGEOGRAPHIC REGIONS
NORTH CAROLINA IS A HOT SPOT FOR BIODIVERSITY!
CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL AND WE ARE ONE OF THE HOT SPOTS
HOMEOWNERS HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE POSITIVE CHANGE
YOU CAN DO YOUR PART TO KEEP NORTH CAROLINA’S COAST UNIQUE BY SELECTING AND PROTECTING NATIVE PLANTS
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WHY NATIVE PLANTS?

• Built for our coastal ecosystems
• Part of the web of relationships within each ecosystem
• Promote biodiversity in ways we might not fully realize
OUR NATIVES ARE BUILT TOUGH
APPROPRIATE PLANT SELECTION: “RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE”

- Wetland
- Maritime Forest
- Dune
OAKS
(QUERCUS SPP)
GET THE PRIZE FOR HOSTING THE MOST BIODIVERSITY
CHOOSING YOUR OAK

- live oak
- southern red oak
- white oak
- swamp chestnut oak
HOLLIES
(*ILEX SPP*)

- Evergreen and deciduous species available
- Not all are prickly
- Native bees *love the flowers*
- Berries are beautiful in winter and attract birds
- Thrive in range of growing conditions
**yaupon**: Highly adaptable

**American**: Upland and drier sites, has prickly leaves

**inkberry**: prefers shade and moist soil, but will grow in drier, sunnier sites…

**dwarf** forms available

**dahoon**: grows in low swampy areas, but adaptable to “average” garden soil
WAX MYRTLE
(MORELLA CERIFERA)

- Evergreen
- Smaller selections available
- Leaves aromatic and are food source for caterpillars of several native butterflies
- Can be used in more formally as hedging or specimen tree
- Great winter bird habitat (myrtle warbler)
THE “SUSANS”
RUDBECKIA SPP
BEAUTIFUL, BENEFICIAL GOLDENRODS...
SOLIDAGO SPP

...different from ragweed!
Solidago odora:
(anise-scented goldenrod)
Early and short-statured

Solidago 'Fireworks':
Heralds the fall, evergreen foliage

S. speciosa (showy) & S. rigidum (prairie):
Back of the border, late summer pollinator magnets

Solidago sempervirens:
(seaside goldenrod)
Late fall monarch favorite, prefers low nutrient soils
NATIVE GRASSES IN THE LANDSCAPE

- muhly grass
- little bluestem
- panic grass ‘Shenandoah’ (with Eryngium)
- panic grass ‘North Wind’
Partridgeberry
*Mitchella repens*

Evergreen groundcover for shade

Found in maritime forests

Flowers in May, berries in Fall-Winter
SILK ASTER OR GRASSLEAF GOLDENASTER

PITYOPSIS GRAMINIFOLIA

- Can grow in dry and sunny areas
- Grass-like leaves remain year-round, with flowers in fall
CORAL HONEYSUCKLE
LONICERA SEMPERVIRENS

• Heavy bloomer in early spring, but sporadically blooms all summer (& winter?)
• Favorite of hummingbirds
• Host plant for caterpillars of hummingbird moths
• Several color selections available
CROSSVINE
BIGNONIA CAPREOLATA

• Evergreen foliage - leaves great for privacy screen
• Leaves often get purple hue in winter
• Masses of trumpet shaped flowers in spring
• Adaptable to a variety of growing conditions
PLANTS TO AVOID:
COASTAL INVASIVE PLANTS

Eleagnus
(Russian or thorny olive)

English ivy

pampas grass
Public and private sector partners working together to encourage sustainable practices in coastal communities by fostering coastal landscapes that are beautiful, functional, cost efficient and environmentally friendly.
BIRD-FRIENDLY SCREEN
BEST SUITTED FOR DRY TO MOIST AREAS WITH SUN TO PART-SHADE

DESCRIPTION
All of the plants in this design were chosen to attract birds to the yard. The Wax Myrtle, Indigofera, and Black-eyed Susan provide an abundance of pollen for insects. Flowers in the spring and early summer, and berries in the late summer and fall that are attractive to birds and other backyard wildlife. Many birds also enjoy eating the seeds of the Black-eyed Susan. This design would make a great screen to increase privacy of a shed or unviewed views, but it would also make a wonderful wildlife garden area for viewing birds and other wildlife. Since only the leaves on the Wax Myrtle and Indigofera will produce flowers and berries, make sure that you choose a fertile plant in the nursery and that the area is not planted properly. Since these shrubs are native to the area, pollination can probably be achieved from wild species or nearby flowering plants. But to play it safe, plant species of these species somewhere else in your yard.

ALTERNATIVES
All of these plants should be readily available at most garden centers. You may have a choice when it comes to type of dwarf varieties are available for most of the shrubs if you order from the source.

MAINTENANCE
For the first growing season, ensure that all plants receive adequate moisture from regular or supplemental watering. Depending on weather and natural soil moisture, these plants may require watering several times per week. Match between plants to conserve water and control weeds. If needed, shrubs can be pruned in late fall or winter. Beautiuflowers can be cut back to the base every two to three years. If you want to keep it as a small shrub, but it is also deep-green left to grow. Ideal plant material provides important winter food, cover, and habitat for birds and other wildlife. Make sure to add mulch in early spring to maintain soil moisture and to keep the weeds down. A word of caution: do not burn the yard. Burn will help you achieve the most amazing, beautiful garden. At that time, cut them back to about 6” by hand or with a weedwhacker.
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