Salt Tolerant Plants
(★ denotes plants that are especially salt tolerant)
(∆ denotes plants that are especially tolerant of occasional salt flooding)
(◊ denotes plants that tolerate wet conditions and/or occasional brackish flooding)

Trees

*Celtis occidentalis* - Common Hackberry ∆
- native
- not the prettiest tree, but has an interesting habit and is very tolerant of poor soil, drought, occasional floods, wind, and urban conditions
- beneficial to native wildlife
- 40-60’ tall and wide, older with age, fast

*Diospyros virginiana* - Common Persimmon ∆
- native
- known for its attractive, edible fruit
- moderately slow to 35-60’ tall by 20-35’ wide
- can get good fall color
- tolerates sandy soil, tidal flooding, wind, and beachfront conditions

*Ginkgo biloba* - Ginkgo or Maidenhair Tree
- living fossil
- great fall color
- male vs. female
- 50-80’ tall by 30-40’ wide, variable
- long lived, tolerant of wind, salt, occasional flooding, and nuclear warfare

*Gleditsia triacanthos* - Thornless Common Honeylocust ★
- native
- grows quickly to 30-70’ tall with equal width, open spreading crown, light enough to grow grass under
- drought and very salt tolerant, beachfront and occasional tidal flooding

*Juniperus virginiana* - Eastern Redcedar ★∆
- native, evergreen blue-green foliage
- strong wood
- females have attractive blue fruit
- slowly to 40-50’ tall by 8-20’
- long-lived, tolerant of drought, marsh, sand, salt, tidal flooding, and beachfront conditions
**Magnolia grandiflora** - Southern Magnolia
- native, evergreen
- beautiful fragrant white flowers in late spring to early summer
- one of my favorite trees in other people’s gardens, messy
- 60-80’ tall by 30-50’ wide, slow to medium
- tolerant of wind, occasional salt flooding, full sun to partial shade, long-lived

**Magnolia virginiana** - Sweetbay Magnolia ♦
- native, deciduous to evergreen depending on variety
- creamy white fragrant flowers in late spring
- not as messy as So. Magnolia
- moderately fast, variable size 20-60 tall
- will grow in sun to a fair amount of shade, tolerant of brackish flooding

**Hardy Palms**
- Rhapidophyllum hystrix - Needle Palm
- Sabal minor - Dwarf Palmetto☆
- Trachycarpus fortunei - Windmill Palm

**Pinus taeda** - Loblolly Pine
- native, evergreen
- 60-90’ tall, fast
- tolerant of occasional tidal flooding and salt spray, poor and sandy soils

**Pinus thungbergii** - Japanese Black Pine ☆
- dark green foliage on artistically arranged branches, no two grow alike
- 20-40’ tall and wide, though variable and can get bigger
- prefers coastal conditions, tolerant of sandy soil, salt spray, and beachfront conditions

**Quercus phellos** - Willow Oak ☆
- native
- small willow-like leaves, variable fall color
- 40-60’ tall by 30-40’ wide, but larger with considerable age
- tolerant of many conditions including salt, near-beachfront, and occasional flooding

**Quercus virginiana** - Live Oak ☆△
- native, evergreen but drops leaves in spring
- distinctive horizontal branching
- slow to 40-80’ tall by 60-100’ wide, rarely reaches full size in SE Virginia
• tolerant of sandy soil, occasional tidal flooding, beachfront conditions, and salt spray

*Robinia pseudoacacia* - Black Locust
• native
• very fragrant, wisteria-like, white flowers in mid-spring
• grows quickly to 30-50’ tall by 20-35’ wide
• tolerant of salt, sandy soil, and occasional flooding

*Taxodium distichum* - Bald Cypress ◊
• native
• 50-70’ tall by 20-30’ wide
• bright green needled growth goes russet in fall
• extremely tolerant of flooding soils, brackish water, also normal soil, extremely wind tolerant
• cypress knees

*Vitex agnus-castus* - Vitex, Chaste Tree
• small tree or large shrub depending on how it is treated
• blue flowers in early summer, deadhead for fall bloom
• bees love it
• interesting history
• grows moderately fast to 15 tall and wide, or more
• very drought tolerant, will grow in sand, tolerates beachfront conditions
• NEVER plant *Vitex rotundifolia* (Beach Vitex), very invasive

**Shrubs**
*Aronia melanocarpa* - Black Chokeberry ◊
• native
• white flowers in spring, near-black fruit in fall attracts birds, great fall foliage
• 3-6’ tall and wide, dwarf selections available
• tolerant of salt, drought, and wet

*Baccharis halimifolia* - Saltbush, Groundsel Shrub ☆△◊
• native
• fleecy white clouds of flowers in late summer
• 5-12’ tall and wide, moderate
• tolerant of regular salt flooding, and marshy soils, will also grow in other poor soils

*Clethra alnifolia* - Clethra, Summersweet, Sweet Pepperbush ◊
• native
• fragrant white flowers in early summer, pink available too, attractive to native pollinators
• nice yellow fall color
• 4-8’ tall, can spread wider, makes colonies
• prefers partial shade, in moist to occasionally wet soils, salt tolerant, can grow by marsh edge

**Cupressus sempervirens** - Italian Blue Cypress
• blue green foliage, evergreen
• grows 20-30 tall by 2-3’ wide, should be staked when young
• very drought tolerant, can take beachfront conditions

**Eleagnus x ebbingei** - Silverberry Eleagnus
• evergreen
• silver foliage
• fragrant ivory flowers in late fall, olive to red fruit, birds like
• grows quickly 8-10’ tall and wide
• very drought, salt and sand tolerant, does well in beachfront conditions
• other species also do well in coastal conditions but there is potential invasiveness from this genus

**Euonymus fortunei** - Wintercreeper Euonymus
• evergreen, usually variegated with several combinations, different winter color
• grow quickly to 4-12” tall depending on variety by several feet wide, will climb if given the opportunity
• will grow in sun or shade, tolerant of dry soils and sand, salt tolerant, does not like swampy soil

**Euonymus japonicus** - Japanese Euonymus
• evergreen, usually variegated
• grows moderately fast to 6 tall and wide, depending of variety, dwarfs available
• will grow in sun to shade, adaptable to soils, salt, and oceanfront tolerant
• scale insects can be an issue

**Hydrangea macrophylla** - Bigleaf Hydrangea
• beautiful flowers in late spring to early summer, flower color pH dependent
• grows moderately fast to 4-6’ tall and wide depending on variety
• prefers partial shade, thrives in coastal atmospheres, not drought tolerant

**Ilex glabra** - Inkberry Holly
• native, evergreen
• dark green foliage, black berries
• tolerant of wet soils, flooding, salt, full sun to fair shade

*Ilex vomitoria* - Yaupon Holly ★△◊
• native, evergreen
• females have red berries
• grows moderately to 15-20’ tall by 10’ wide, dwarf and weeping forms common
• very adaptable, sun to mod. shade, tolerant of wet or dry, salt spray, and occasional flooding

*Juniperus* species - Juniper
• evergreen, different foliage colors
• growth habit is size depends on species and cultivars
• tolerant of dry soil, sand, salt spray

*Ligustrum lucidum, L. japonicum* - Waxleaf Ligustrum, Japanese Privet
• evergreen
• white flowers in early summer, fragrant?
• grows quickly to 10-20 tall by less wide depending on species
• full sun to shade, adaptable, tolerant of salt spray, occasional flooding, once established drought tolerant, can take heavy pruning, potential invasiveness, never plant *L. sinense* (Chinese Privet)

*Morella cerifera* - Wax Myrtle ★△◊
• native, evergreen (except in severe winters)
• females have gray fruit some birds like
• grows moderately to 10-15’ tall and wide, can be kept shorter with pruning or limbed up to make a small tree
• full sun to part shade, tolerant of oceanfront conditions, standing water either fresh of brackish

*Nerium oleander* - Oleander ★
• evergreen, but suffers badly in severe winters
• beautiful flowers in summer, several colors
• in SE Va. only reaches 6-8 tall, larger further south
• very drought tolerant, salt tolerant, heat tolerant, and does well in beachfront conditions
• very poisonous

*Opuntia* - Prickly Pear Cactus ★
• native (believe it or not)
• large evergreen pads, yellow flowers, burgundy red fruits, edible, thorny
• extremely tolerant of salt and drought
**Pittosporum tobira** - Japanese Pittosporum, Mockorange
- evergreen, some variegated
- very fragrant white flowers in spring
- grows slowly to 6-8 tall, rarely reaches full size in SE Va., dwarf forms available
- very heat, drought, salt and beachfront tolerant, not tolerant of severe winters, best left for Norfolk and Va. Beach or in a sheltered, yet sunny location

**Pyracantha koidzumi** and **P. coccinea** - Pyracantha
- evergreen, white flowers in spring, red to orange berries in fall
- moderately fast 6-18’ tall and wide depending on variety, shrub with a vine-like habit
- tolerant of dry soil, occasional flooding

**Raphiolepis indica** - Indian Hawthorn
- evergreen, white to pink flowers in spring, black fall fruit
- most varieties grow mod. slow to 3-4’ tall and wide, larger sizes available
- full to part sun, very drought, heat and salt tolerant, can take beachfront conditions, disease issues

**Rosa rugosa**
- flowers in late spring through summer, usually hot pink but white and other colors available, attractive rose hips
- very tolerant of salt, sand, heat, and beachfront conditions

**Tamarix ramosissima** - Tamarix, Saltcedar
- unusual pink feathery flowers in spring
- blue green foliage
- very tolerant of salt, sand, and beachfront conditions
- invasive in some states

**Yucca species**
- native evergreen
- tall white flower stalks in early summer
- very drought, salt, sand, and heat tolerant, beachfront

**Vines**
**Campsis radicans** - Trumpet Vine
- native
- trumpet shaped orange-red flowers in summer
- vigorous and rampant, 30-40’ tall or more
• can take occasional flooding and beachfront conditions, late to leaf out, loves heat

_Gelsemium sempervirens_ - Carolina Jessamine ◊
• native
• bright yellow, very fragrant in late March
• evergreen twining vine to 10-20’ tall, vigorous
• full sun to pt. shade, can take occasional flooding, beachfront conditions, does not like to get too dry

_Lonicera sempervirens_ - Coral or Trumpet Honeysuckle
• native
• orange red to red flowers have a yellow to orange throat, trumpet shaped and attracts humming birds
• reddish purple new foliage, deciduous in cold winters, semi-evergreen in mild ones
• grows quickly to 10-20’ tall
• full sun to shade, more flowers in sun, tolerant of heat and humidity, occasional flooding

_Parthenocissus quinquefolia_ - Virginia Creeper
• native
• new leaves are bronzy green, great fall color purple to red
• extremely vigorous, tolerant of beachfront conditions, sand, salt flooding, tough!

_Passiflora incarnata_ - Purple Passion Vine
• very showy blue flowers in late spring through summer
• vigorous, grows quickly to 30’ tall
• full sun to pt. shade, tolerant of beachfront conditions, and occasional flooding

**Grasses**
_Cortaderia selloana_ - Pampas Grass
• large white plumes in late summer
• light green foliage
• can grow to 8’ tall and wide, or more, dwarf forms available
• tolerant of beachfront conditions, sand, and drought

_Leymus arenarius_ - Dune Grass, Lyme Grass ☆
• steely blue foliage
• 3-4’ tall and wide
• tolerant of sun to pt. shade, occasional flooding, drought, very salt tolerant
• can be invasive
**Miscanthus** species - Maiden Grass
- graceful thin foliage (some variegated) and attractive flowers in late summer
- several varieties and sizes available
- tolerant of oceanfront conditions sand and drought, but responds well to good care
- potential invasiveness

**Panicum virgatum** - Switch Grass
- native
- attractive foliage in several colors, nice plumes
- 3-6’ tall
- tolerant of beachfront, sand, full sun, drought, and occasional flood

**Spartina patens** - Saltmeadow Cordgrass ☆△
- native
- bright green foliage in summer, goes golden in fall
- requires regular tidal flooding to thrive, exceptionally salt tolerant
- S. alterniflora - Saltmarsh Cordgrass, taller

**Perennials**

**Agapanthus africanus** - Lily of the Nile
- bold strap-like foliage
- lt. to dark blue, white flowers in summer
- very tolerant of drought, heat, salt and occasional flooding, not for reg. wet areas

**Canna** ◊
- bold tropical foliage comes in many colors and variations
- big colorful flowers
- need consistent moisture

**Delosperma cooperii** - Ice Plant
- fleshy succulent foliage
- bright purple flowers most of the spring summer and into fall
- very drought tolerant

**Dianthus gratianopolitanus** - Cheddar Pink
- low grower with attractive silvery blue foliage
- magenta, pink, white, to red flowers in late spring, sporadic into summer
- very heat, drought, salt and sand tolerant, needs good drainage

**Echinacea purpurea** - Purple Coneflowers
• native
• pink flowers in late spring through summer, unusual cones, good food source for birds
• tolerant of occasional flooding

_Eryngium aquaticum_ - Marsh Rattlesnake Master ◊
• southeastern native
• blue sea-holly-like flowers summer into fall, attractive foliage
• 3-4 tall by half as wide
• likes wet feet, including brackish water

_Gaillardia_ - Blanketflower ☆
• native
• colorful summer flowers, oranges red and yellow
• very tolerant of drought, salt, sand and beachfront conditions, occasional flooding
• not tolerant of poor drainage or too much water

_Hemerocallis_ - Daylily ☆
• multiple colors available, easy to grow
• tolerant of beachfront conditions, but respond well to good moisture and care, tolerant of occasional flooding

_Hibiscus moscheutos_ - Common Rose Mallow ◊
• native
• large pink, red to white blooms in late summer
• tolerant of salt, occasional flooding, and moist to wet soils
• late to emerge in spring

_Kosteletzkya virginica_ - Seashore Mallow ☆△◊
• native
• large pink to white flowers in summer
• tolerant of standing brackish water, salt, and flooding

_Lavendula stoechas_ - Spanish or French Lavender
• evergreen foliage is a silvery blue-green, very fragrant
• pale purple flowers in late spring
• tolerant of heat, sand and beachfront conditions, not tolerant of poor drainage, heavy mulch, or very rich soil

_Leucanthemum_ - Becky Daisy
• easy to grow with show white flowers with yellow centers
• tolerant of heat, sand, and beachfront conditions, not tolerant of poor drainage
**Limonium carolinianum** - Carolina Sea Lavender
- native
- wispy blue/purple flowers in summer
- tolerant of beachfront conditions or marshy soil, very salt tolerant

**Nepeta** - Catmint
- aromatic silver green foliage
- flower color can be blue, lavender, white to rose
- drought tolerant, attracts bees, butterflies, hummingbirds - deer resistant

**Perovskia atriplicifolia** - Russian Sage
- handsome silver foliage and blue flowers
- tolerant of sand, beachfront conditions, and drought

**Rosmarinus officinalis** - Rosemary ✡
- aromatic edible foliage, blue flowers in winter
- tolerant of beachfront conditions, sand, heat, and drought, not tolerant of poor drainage, and overly rich soil

**Rudbeckia fulgida** - Blackeyed Susan
- native
- black and gold flowers in summer
- tolerant of beachfront conditions, heat, sand, and drought

**Santolina chamaecyparissus** - Santolina, Lavender Cotton ✡
- very aromatic foliage can be green or silver, yellow flowers
- very tolerant of heat, drought, sand, salt, and beachfront conditions

**Sedum x ‘Autumn Joy’**
- fleshy, silvery green foliage, pink flowers in late summer, good winter interest
- tolerant of beachfront conditions, drought, sand, and salt
- many other sedums would fit the bill as well

**Sempervivum** - Hens and Chicks
- unusual fleshy foliage, occasional flowers are bizarre
- tolerant of beachfront conditions, sand, salt, heat and drought, do not overwater or put in really rich soil

**Solidago sempervirens** - Seaside Goldenrod ✡∆
- native
- golden yellow flowers late in summer to early fall
- tolerant of beachfront conditions, heat, drought, sand, and occasional flooding
- *S. canadensis* is also very good

**Stachys byzantina - Lamb’s Ear**
- grown primarily for silvery foliage that is nice to touch
- tolerant of beachfront conditions and sand, not tolerant of poor drainage, and overly rich soil

**Symphyotrichum species - Aster**
- Native
- several species, colorful flowers, usually in late summer or early fall
- tolerant of occasional flooding

**Tradescantia pallida - Purple Heart**
- grown primarily for its fleshy purple foliage
- small pink flowers
- tolerant of drought, heat, and beachfront conditions

**Tulbaghia violacea - Society Garlic**
- violet pink flowers in late summer
- attractive foliage, unpleasant aroma
- tolerant of heat, drought, and beachfront conditions

**Annuals**

**Begonia x semperflorens-cultorum - Wax Begonias**
- fleshy bronze (sun) or green foliage (shade), white, pink or red flowers

**Coreopsis - Coreopsis, Tickseed**
- self-seeding annuals, or short lived perennials
- yellow flowers most of the summer

**Cosmos bipinnatus - Cosmos**
- tall pink, white, purple flowers in summer to fall

**Gazania - South African Daisy**
- multiple colors, oranges, yellows and whites
- very heat, drought and sand tolerant

**Lantana** ★
- many color combinations
- heat, drought, sand and beachfront tolerant
- discuss Miss Huff
**Portulaca** - Purslane, Moss Rose
- low groundcover in multiple colors, fleshy foliage
- very heat, drought, sand and salt tolerant

**Senecio cineraria** - Dusty Miller
- grown primarily for its silver foliage
- heat, drought, sand and tolerant of beachfront conditions
- sometimes perennial