

# LANDSCAPING FOR THE COAST

This document contains landscaping designs intended for anyone interested in growing native North Carolina plants in their gardens and yards. Two types of designs are included in this series: borders and screens. Borders define edges and organize spaces in your yard but also can work as stand-alone gardens. Ideal locations are along walkways, driveways, fences or road frontage. Screening designs block unwanted views and increase privacy. Ideal locations for screens are along the street front, between houses, or in front of fences, air conditioning units, trash cans and gas tanks.

## WHY PLANT NATIVE?

Native plants play important roles in the coastal ecosystem. Incorporating them into developed landscapes is key to sustaining our coastal communities. These plants are attractive, versatile and resilient. Native shrubs and trees are more likely to withstand the effects of storms because they are adapted to harsh coastal conditions. Wildlife also relies on native plants for nourishment and shelter.

## USING THESE DESIGNS

Each template provides the design intent, ideal site conditions, an illustration of the design at maturity, a detailed planting guide, plant quantities, spacing, and seasonal bloom or berry color (gray indicates inconspicuous blooms or berries). Alternative plant suggestions and maintenance tips are included as well.

All designs have the same dimensions and can be modified or combined, such as by adding curves. When combining designs, you may need to move or rearrange plants to address crowding along edges. Also, the suggested number of perennials creates maximum density and effect from the start. If you are comfortable with less dense gardens, use fewer perennials.

When considering planting locations, do not place tall-growing plants below electrical power lines or where they pose hazards to built structures. Also avoid installing trees or shrubs above or near septic fields and close to mature trees. At least three days before you start digging, call 811 or 1-800-632-4949 for a free service that will mark your buried publicly managed utility lines.

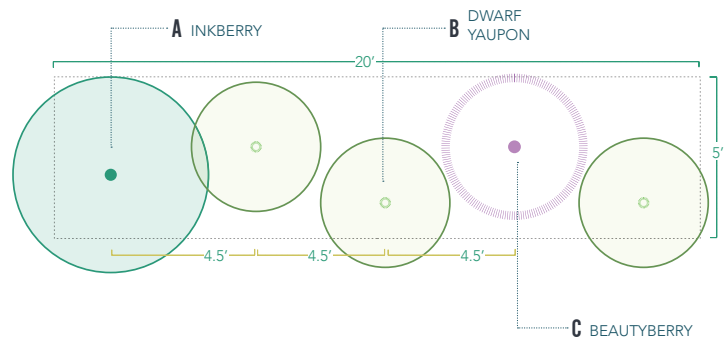
## Elevation View

- Illustrates plant heights, horizontal spacing and visual appearance such as shape, texture and color.
- Shows the garden at maturity. It will take a year or more before a newly planted garden starts filling out.



## Plan View

- Depicts plants, layout and spacing for a 20-foot-by-5-foot area.
- Plants are color-coded and labeled with dimensions at maturity. Plants will be smaller when installed.
- Spacing is given "on center" (O.C.), indicating the planting distance between the center of one plant to the center of the next, regardless of plant size at installation.



## Plant Selection

KEY	QTY	COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	PLANT TYPE	SPACING	SEASONAL COLOR																
						J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D					
A	3	Sweetbay magnolia	Magnolia virginiana	TREE	10' O.C.																	
B	31	'Fireworks' goldenrod	Solidago rugosa 'Fireworks'	PERENNIAL	18" O.C.																	
C	14	Orange coneflower	Rudbeckia fulgida	PERENNIAL	18" O.C.																	

## Worksheet and Other Resources

Gridded worksheets can help you determine where the designs best fit on your property. A printable worksheet, plant guides and other resources on native plants are available online: [go.ncsu.edu/CoastalLandscapes](http://go.ncsu.edu/CoastalLandscapes).

### SYMBOL KEY

#### SUN EXPOSURE

- 6+ hours of sun per day
- 3-6 hours of sun per day
- < 3 hours of sun per day

#### SOIL MOISTURE

- Areas that are dry and drain quickly
- Areas that retain moisture but drain well
- Areas that are typically wet

## SELECTING PLANTS

- Check botanical (scientific) names to make sure you are purchasing the correct plants.
- Larger, more mature plants have immediate visual impact in the landscape and typically have more developed root systems. Purchase the largest plants that fit your budget.
- Flowering perennials and grasses may take two growing seasons to reach maturity, while shrubs could take several years. Trees will take even longer.
- Look for trees with a pot size of 7 to 15 gallons and shrubs of 3 to 5 gallons.
- Perennials and grasses typically come in quart, gallon and occasionally 3-gallon sizes. Plug plants may also be an option but will take longer to fill in and may need more care the first year than larger plants.
- When buying perennials in large quantities, smaller 4-inch pots or 2-inch plugs are more affordable. Note that plugs planted in sandy and dry soils will require intensive watering during establishment. For cost savings, consider purchasing fewer plants and dividing in subsequent years.
- Plan ahead to find plants through your local nursery or other sources so you have them when you are ready to plant.

## GENERAL MAINTENANCE TIPS

- During the first year, ensure that all plants receive adequate moisture from rainfall or supplemental watering. Most plants require 1 inch of water per week. A thorough soaking is more effective than frequent sprinkling. On dry sites, new plants may require watering several times per week.
- Mulch between plants to conserve water and control weeds. About 2 inches is a sufficient amount.
- To encourage reseeding of perennials, remove or thin out mulch around these plants in the autumn.
- Use nonintensive maintenance techniques to increase wildlife habitat value:
  - Tolerate some level of insect damage. Don't use pesticides.
  - Leave dead stems from perennials standing as shelter for pollinators and birds until spring. At that time, cut back by hand or with a string trimmer to 4 to 6 inches.
- Plant between October and early April for optimal success. Plant grasses in the spring.

## Sample Landscape

This example layout shows how the templates might be adapted to a 0.4-acre residential lot. The plantings by the road and parallel to the house screen out unwanted views. Along the patio, a pollinator border adds beauty and wildlife value. A low, evergreen border and foundation plantings at the end of the house provide year-round

green foliage, direct foot traffic and absorb stormwater. The shoreline border helps stabilize the ground and provides a clean edge behind land that should be mowed only twice a year. This "no-mow" area minimizes landscaping installation and maintenance costs, provides important wildlife habitat and stores a variety of seeds.

