

What you can see at a



MAINE AUDUBON
Scarborough Marsh Audubon Center

SALT MARSH



Atriplex patula
Marsh Orach

This plant has arrowhead shaped leaves and grows throughout the marsh. It can be used in mixed green salads.

Height: 1 foot



Limonium nashii
Sea Lavender

This beautiful flowering plant blooms July-October. It has 1 1/4" purplish blue flowers. Butterflies feed on it and its stiff stems are a favorite of spiders for webs. It is also used for dried flower arrangements.

Height: 8-24 inches



Chaetomorpha linum
Green Algae

Algae produces more oxygen collectively than any other plant. It is a nutrient-rich food source for many animals, including ducks, small fish, and amphipods.

Height: < 1 inch



Morella caroliniensis
Northern Bayberry

Wildlife benefit from the leaves, flowers, and fruit of this hardy shrub. Yellow-rumped Warblers depend on these berries during migration. People used to spread the fragrant leaves on their floors to make their homes smell better!

Height: 5-7 feet



Comptonia peregrina
Sweetfern

This shrub has fern-shaped leaves that smell strongly if rubbed between your fingers. It supports three species of caterpillar. It also repels biting insects and deer can be seen rolling in it to keep the insects away.

Height: 1-3 feet



Salicornia europaea
Glasswort

Glasswort is a soft, salt tolerant succulent plant that is often found growing in salt marshes and beaches. The young stems are edible to humans and can be used in salads.

Height: 8 inches



Solidago sempervirens
Seaside Goldenrod

Its distinctive long, lobed leaves multiply in upright clumps, an adaptation to tolerate the drying effects of salt spray. It's often used in dune restoration since it is both salt tolerant and excellent for erosion control. In the fall you can find it covered with Monarch Butterflies. Height: 1 foot



Spiraea latifolia
Meadowsweet

A lovely mounding shrub with small white and pinkish flowers in cone-shaped clusters, Meadowsweet is capable of growing in almost any condition, and is often found thriving along roadsides. Height: 3-5 feet

photo: Dan Jaffe



Sporobolus alterniflorus
(formerly *Spartina alterniflora*)
Cordgrass

It grows right along the river's edge. Run your fingers up the blade and feel the salt that is pushed out through the leaves. Height: 3 feet



Symphyotrichum novae-angliae
New England Aster

This pollinator magnet blooms late in the season, making it a critical fall nectar source for monarchs and other pollinators. It is used by the Wabanaki for medicinal purposes, including treatments for pain and fever. Height: 3-6 feet

photo: Dan Jaffe



Sporobolus pumilus
(formerly *Spartina patens*)
Marsh Hay

This grass was fed to cattle and used as mulch by colonial settlers. It forms cowlicks as it matures. It usually is seen growing several feet back from the water's edge. Height: 1 foot



Typha angustifolia
Narrowleaf Cattail

This versatile plant provides both food and protection to wildlife. Humans throughout history have used it for many purposes including as stuffing for pillows. If you see cattails, it means there is fresh water. Height: 5 feet

Why a Salt Marsh is Important

- The marsh offers a quiet resting and feeding area for migrating birds.
- It provides a nursery and shelter for animals.
- It filters sediments and pollutants from water.
- The vegetation absorbs storm water which prevents damage.
- For people, the marsh remains a peaceful place to enjoy wildlife watching, fishing, boating, and exploring nature.